

Heard through

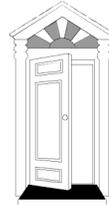
The OPEN DOOR

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Editors: Chylene Daub & Shirley Giebel

Samaritan's Gift of Time, Talent and Funds Replaces Bethel's Missing Lectern

During what is remembered as the “great decluttering” of 2019 in preparation for a new pastor and family to occupy the parsonage, our lectern disappeared and no one has come forward to know where it went, or why. A search for it found no trace.

The piece wasn't a stand-alone furnishing. It matched the wood and light finish of the pulpit, the altar and the baptismal fount. The altar bears the names of those who contributed it. The pulpit does not. The baptismal fount's plaque tells us it was made and given to Bethel by Harry Schrader of the Schrader Funeral Home in 1937.

The temporary music stand borrowed from the choir became the “lectern” for use by each Sunday's liturgist. Unstable--and with limited space for a hymnal and liturgist's scrip--it was also deemed “ugly”. The liturgist's portion of Bethel's Sunday service is carried on Facebook and U-Tube.

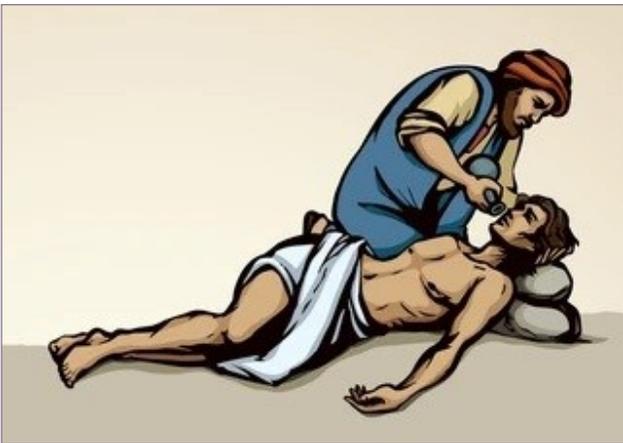


Brought to the Governing Board. Matt Swanstrom, after hearing the wooden lectern had been removed and never found, asked the Board “if it would be possible to pay someone to build one. I knew cost would be a concern.”

A Neighbor of the Swanstroms and Walshes. Matt thought of his neighbor and friend, Dan Anich. “He sold his St. Louis Bobcat business and retired. He loves carpentry and working with wood. I was hopeful he would be willing to make the new piece and, if so, not charge a lot of money for it” Matt says.

Samaritan's Gift of Time, Talent and Funds (continued)

Next Step. “Don, Dan and I met at the church where we took measurements and pictures of the existing pulpit. It is constructed of premium solid white oak lumber and finished with two coats of polyurethane. Dan Anich said yes! He began work on the piece in early September of 2022 and had it finished around the 25th of October,” Matt says. The new piece matches the existing pulpit with the exception of a “stoop” or step that was added and can be let down to accommodate shorter people or children using the lectern.



A Good Samaritan and Friend of Bethel Church.

As Christians we recognize carpentry plays a big part in the life of Jesus. Good works like that of the Good Samaritan are important elements of faith. Matt tells us that Dan Anich has repeatedly turned down payment for his work. He has the receipts for time and materials: Forty hours of labor, and \$1,000 dollars in materials. Though he has been asked several times to accept payment, he has refused.

Recently a name plate honoring Dan Anich was attached to the new lectern by Ron Guentz. Matt says, “Don and I have repeatedly asked Dan to come to church to receive his well-deserved praise. He is a very humble man and does not want a big deal made of it. Nevertheless, we at Bethel recognize the importance of this gift—and the giver.

Thank you Dan Anich!

Scouts' Corner — Getting to Know “Our Scouts”

There has been a lot of Scout activity at Bethel. First off is a big thank you from our Bethel gardeners and the whole congregation to Dustin Hatcher from Troop 456. Dustin took on cleaning the garden beds in preparation for the coming year's spring planting. A big job! Pictures only tell part of the effort and work necessary. Dustin will receive his Arrow of Light service award for this very much appreciated Bethel church need.



Saturday February 4 Fellowship Hall rang with enthusiastic shouts of Cub Scout Pack 3456 as the annual Pinewood Derby took place. The derby cars are home-made four wheeled vehicles scouts make to go fast down a sloping runway in a race. Even if they are not first across the finish line, they are all winners in building their vehicles and that downhill moment of suspense. The following photos are from the 2023 event.



Scouts' Corner — Getting to Know “Our Scouts” (continued)



Scout Sunday was an impressive gathering for Bethel's February 12 Sunday Service. Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 456 and Cub Scout Pack 3456, leaders and parents filled four rows of front pews. Boy Scout Troops 3456F and Troop 0456B, filled one back row from which they made their way down the center aisle bearing the flag.



Bethel supports two Boy Scout troops and two Cub Scout packs. They all know each other but are all independent operations. Our longest support has been for the Cub Scout pack, which has been in place for 72 years. Our support for the Boy Scout troop is almost as long at 56 years. This year a change was required by the Scout organization that the Charter for this sponsorship be presented to the sponsor. Pastor Jeff accepted the written document and it becomes part of Bethel's work. A special fellowship gathering following the service brought Scouts, their families and members of Bethel's congregation together. Enjoy the photos!



Start Collecting Your Coins, Folks

Mozambique Bucket Challenge Returns

The Mozambique Bucket Challenge is making a comeback at Bethel during the month of March. The friendly competition pits the ladies against the gentlemen of the church to bring in the most (and heaviest) coins for the benefit of the Mozambique Initiative.

For several years now, Bethel UMC has made significant contributions to the Missouri Conference of the UMC to support the Mozambique Initiative in South Africa. Bethel has a “sister church” in Chonguene, Mozambique, where we have helped provide essential needs for the people. A project called the “Source of Life” benefited an orphanage at Chonguene. Through its contributions, Bethel helped to build a brooder house and supply it with 100 baby chicks, as well as to supply resources for the people to plant an orchard.

The Source of Life project was later adopted by the Missouri Conference, and expanded efforts to help the people of Mozambique especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. They were able to provide emergency food and medical relief, including mobile clinics for community health.

More recent projects have included providing solar panels for folks who have no electricity in their homes, and constructing wells for the communities that need them. Some of the wells are operated by hand-pumps, and some are solar powered. There were more than two dozen well projects underway in this fiscal year.

The Covid pandemic temporarily closed schools and churches all across Mozambique, just as it did in the USA, and Bethel has not had the Bucket Challenge. Now we have the opportunity to continue this fun project to raise funds for our sister church.



St. Patrick — Patron Saint of Ireland Remembered in Legends

St. Patrick is the beloved Patron Saint of Ireland credited with spreading Christianity all across Ireland in the fifth century, but he is just as well known for the legacy of legends attributed to him. He is remembered for using a shamrock, with its three leaves, to explain the Holy Trinity to Irish converts. The leaves represented the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three also could stand for Faith, Hope and Love. This is why the shamrock is associated with St. Patrick's Day observed on March 17 each year. March 17 is believed to be the date of his death, and is the Feast Day for St. Patrick.



Historians believe that St. Patrick was born in about 387 AD in Roman Britain which was primarily Christian. His father was Calpornius, a deacon and a local official. At the age of 16 he was kidnapped by Irish pirates when they raided his father's villa. He was taken to Ireland and sold into slavery. For the next six years, he was made to herd sheep for his master. During this time he turned to his faith for strength. Later in life, St. Patrick wrote about a dream advising him that a ship would be coming and it would be his opportunity to be rescued. He escaped, found the ship and obtained passage to Britain, eventually returning to his family.

Patrick always felt a closeness to God. He spoke of another dream he had after returning to Britain. In the dream, he was handed a letter by a man named Victoricus that beseeched him to return to Ireland and walk among the people. To prepare for this, he studied in Europe and was ordained into the priesthood. He believed it was his mission in life to return to Ireland and spread Christianity. He responded to the call and journeyed across Ireland, baptizing and confirming, teaching the word of Christ. He was said to have converted chiefs and kings and even whole clans. More than once he was cast into chains, and was in constant fear of martyrdom, but he was beloved by the people. Although he was never canonized by the Catholic Church, St. Patrick is known as the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland. He is thought to be responsible, at least in part, for the Christianization of the Picts and Anglo-Saxons.

St. Patrick is not to be confused with Palladius who was sent to Ireland by Pope Celestine I in 431. He too, was a bishop for the Irish people. Late in his life, St. Patrick retired to Saul where it is believed he wrote his Confessio, an autobiography detailing his time of captivity and his mission to serve Ireland. It is said that he died on March 17, 461, at Saul, where he had built his first church. He is buried in Down Cathedral, Downpatrick. His grave was marked in 1990 with a granite stone. Many churches are named in his honor, including St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

A Place of Remembrance... Comfort...Peace...History

Bethel Cemetery Brings Everyone Closer to Our Lord

The loss of a loved one is a grief shared by all mankind. When a person passes away, he or she leaves family and friends to mourn. They also leave countless memories that live in the hearts of those who knew them. Their brief time on earth is engraved into a stone, simply stating their name, date of birth and death. Perhaps they are identified as “beloved” Mother or Father, son or daughter. Those who are laid to rest in the Bethel UMC Cemetery are in a peaceful place, and they are part of history.



The tombstone of Julius Hardt is located next to a tree. Hardt Road was named after this local farmer.

Many of the early settlers of West St. Louis County are at rest in Bethel’s Cemetery. They can be easily recognized by their surnames that we know by roads named for them: Eatherton, Hardt, Strecker, Hencken, Ossenfort, and more. Many were German settlers who came to America in the 1840’s, and made their home in Missouri. They became neighbors with folks from all over the world.

The Bethel Cemetery is older than the church itself. The founders of Bethel were searching for a place to build a new house of worship in 1873. The congregation had been meeting since about 1858, for a time in a stone church near the intersection of Wild Horse Creek Road and Hardt Road. They were blessed with a donation from the St. Louis Marble Company of two acres on which to build a new sanctuary and also acquired the acreage for the cemetery. Some of the graves in the cemetery are dated back to 1852 and 1853, and many others are dated in the 1860’s. One of the first burials in the cemetery after Bethel received the ground was for William Atwell in August, 1873. Bethel’s sanctuary was dedicated in 1875.

The first custodian for the church and caretaker of the cemetery was Richard Austin, who was a freed slave who had been owned by a Mr. Frazier and still lived with him. Gravel was donated for the first roads into the cemetery and it was hauled in by teams of horses or mules. It is interesting to note that all burials in the Bethel Cemetery are with those interred facing east. This was an old custom that holds that the deceased person should lie facing the rising sun.



Joel Frazier died in 1892. He had a general country store at Fox Creek.

A Place of Remembrance... Comfort...Peace...History (*continued*)

Through the years, the Bethel Cemetery has been maintained by men whose names are well known by our church members: George Gaehle, Harvey Krueger, Bill Kesselring, and currently Mike Lantz along with Gary Hayes, Eddie Kreinkamp and Jerry Walkie. The cemetery is always well maintained and a welcoming place for those who come to grieve and to visit their loved ones.

A special section of the cemetery, near the center at the south boundary, has been designated as a “Garden of Remembrance.” As many as 40 graves are located in this area without headstones. It is thought to be the resting place of slaves and their families. Bethel maintains this area untouched, out of respect for these graves.

The oldest part of the cemetery, which is immediately south of the church building, is notable for the ornate upright stones. Each stone tells a story. Reading the names, and the circumstances, is a visit to the life experiences of folks who have found their way to Heaven. There are the very young, some, as has been noted in song: “went to Heaven without any names.” The date of the death can be 100 years ago, and still, we can share their sorrow. Young men who served in countless wars, the widower who lost her husband and was left with little children at her feet, children who died of diseases that we no longer have to fear. Sometimes we find the more fortunate ones who lived to an old age, even 100 years.

A recent walk through the Bethel graveyard revealed graves of soldiers from both World War I and World War II, the Korean War and even the Civil War. There are at least two headstones marked “Unknown Soldier”—CSA, which stands for the Confederate States of America. These were placed there in 2003 to mark the soldier’s graves that were moved to Bethel in 1972 from the Bartold Cemetery. Mike Lantz says there are other graves of men who fought in the Civil War, with simple white stone markers and no name. Other soldiers from the Civil War who are identified include: Benjamin McDaniel, Private Company K, Missouri Lt. Artillery, Civil War. This young man was born in 1844. The war began in 1861, when he was only 17 years old. He survived the war, and lived until 1926. Also, PVT William A. Vaughn, also a soldier in the Civil War. Again, this young man was born in 1844, and lived until 1915. Many people who lived through the Civil War are buried at Bethel as well. Soldiers from the World Wars and Korea: E. Monroe Maxey, U.S Navy, WWI; Arthur L. Payne, Cpl., WW I; John D. Hughes, Cook, US Army, WW I; James Roscoe Bausch Sr., PVT US Marine Corp, WW II; Roy T. Athey, Sgt. US Army, WW II, Purple Heart; Harvey H. Walka Jr., CPL, US Army, Korea, Purple Heart. This is far from a complete list of our military men who are at rest at Bethel. On Memorial Day, the church places US flags on all of the graves of those who served our country whether during wartime or peace.

A Place of Remembrance... Comfort...Peace...History (*continued*)

Graves also tell the heart rendering stories of those from the past. Families who lost children at age 1, 2 and 8; a baby girl who lived only 3 days, and another who died at age 4. Many of these children died of pneumonia, typhoid, scarlet fever, or diphtheria, and even from measles. In the east corner of the cemetery is a handsome stone for Daniel Andrae, who died on July 28, 1865, at the age of 16. There are two young boys who died of drowning in a pond, and others who were drowned in the Meramec River. Others died in accidents and some in violent deaths. The stories of tragedy never end, but all have found peace at Bethel Cemetery.



Luther Witt lived less than three years. He is buried near his family.



Daniel Andrae died in 1865, at the age of 16.

In 2005, the Wildwood Historical Society compiled a comprehensive record of people who are buried in the Wildwood and West St. Louis County area. “At Rest in Wildwood” is an incredible book that locates more than 90 cemetery sites, many of which are family plots. Bethel Cemetery is a prominent location for burials, one of only five or six church-based graveyards that were available before 1900. The book also lists almost 5,000 names of those deceased with the date of their birth, death and the cemetery site where they are buried. The book includes a list of entries and articles about deaths that were published in the “St. Louis County Watchman,” with records for the years 1881 to the early 1900’s.

George Gaehle

George Gaehle, manager of the cemetery for many years, understood the importance of these stories and how a cemetery can be a place of comfort for the surviving families. Everyone who knew George was aware of his deep Christian faith. He is known for his personal messages about the Bible and God’s plan for our lives.

“Do you know what the word BIBLE stands for?” George would ask. Then, with a smile he would explain: “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth.” He did not see the cemetery as a final resting place. He believed in the description of the Rapture in the Bible, that when Jesus returns to earth He will call up all those who are at rest in Jesus and they will rise up, and along with those living on earth, will be taken up into Heaven to live with Jesus. Therefore, George saw each grave as a “launching pad” to Heaven. He said that he consoled a mother who had lost her son and had come to Bethel to buy a burial plot. George told her: “You are not buying a grave. You are buying a launching pad.”

A Place of Remembrance... Comfort...Peace...History *(continued)*

George spread the word of Jesus every day of his life. He taught a Sunday School class, he was a tireless worker for Bethel UMC, and he was a long-time member of Gideons International. George was a veteran of the Korean War, serving in the Navy aboard a tanker ship in the dangerous seas, refueling destroyers. After the war, he was offered a job with the Missouri Army National Guard as a communications technician, and later trained to be an engineer repair technician. He was deployed with a combat engineer battalion to Honduras to build roads and help the people. While preparing for the trip, instead of packing extra clothing or other personal items in his footlocker, George packed it full of Spanish language Bibles so that he could distribute them to the people there. George also had a motto that he shared with everyone: “Keep Looking Up!”

George had another skill that assisted him in the cemetery. He could locate unmarked gravesites with a pair of “divining rods.” This ancient practice, also called “dowsing,” is accomplished by using two rods, bent into an L shape. The person walks slowly across the site in question, and the rods will start to swing together. Although this is not a scientific method, and does not work for everyone, George Gaehle was about 95 % accurate in his attempts. He was asked to employ his dowsing skills to locate graves all across Eastern Missouri.

Bethel Cemetery is a Walk Through History

Bethel Cemetery provides a final resting place for people of all walks of life and all ages. There are innocent little children, and there are folks who traveled from the other side of the world to start their new life in America. They were farmers and ranchers, store owners and politicians, men who worked on the railroads, or in mines or quarries. They were carpenters and stonemasons, and many also served their country as soldiers. They were mothers of large families who worked tirelessly on the family farms, and made sure that their children attended school and church and learned the stories of the Bible. They came to an untamed countryside, cleared the land to build their homes, had dealings with Indians, suffered through wars and pandemics, and helped their neighbors. They believed that God was on their side. In other words, they were the people who helped to build America. Their work on earth is done, and now they rest in peace at Bethel Cemetery.



A.J. Link lived from 1857 until 1930. He and his family share this marble stone.

Why is Easter not always on the same date like Christmas?

History tells us we have to go back to AD 325 to find an answer. Roman Emperor Constantine convened the first council of Christian bishops in the city of Nicea which today would be somewhere in the country of Turkey. Their deliberations resulted in the Nicene Creed we are told—the first uniform Christian doctrine.



But the “player” that has the most to do with Easter’s changing date is the moon! Specifically what is known as the Paschal moon, the Greek for “Passover.” *John 6:4* puts Jesus’ crucifixion near Passover. Passover is the celebration of Jews freed from Egypt and is often known as the Exodus.

Passover and Easter are linked by this moon and the spring equinox set by the council as March 20. So in our western Christianity Easter is always celebrated following the Paschal full moon. This can range from March 22 - April 25.

Traditions also change. Easter bonnets have passed out of the Easter scene. New clothes, especially for children, are largely a thing of the past, Easter still brings out larger congregations but for many families there are other activities to attend. Bethel still celebrates a strong Palm Sunday, and children are invited for an Easter egg hunt and Bible story. Easter and the Sundays of Lent leading up to that special Sunday are important.



The promise of Jesus never changes. We celebrate the risen Christ especially at Easter time and relive the Scriptures of hope and promise and certainty. We look back at old photos of Easters gone by and enjoy the evolution of traditions. While the date of Easter changes each year, we still preserve and honor the unchanging message of Easter and its promise.

Happy Easter season everyone!

Who Needs a Bunny When We Have Katie, the Easter Bunny Dog!!!



Since 1988 (best estimate), Bethel has held its annual Easter Egg Hunt. A favorite feature now is Katie, the Easter Bunny Dog in her bunny ears. Katie is not just a furry friend, but a trained and registered therapy dog. She seems to enjoy the children, and her role, as much as the children enjoy her. Note the smiles on Katie and Alison Verbeck's grandkids from last year's event.

This year's hunt kicks off at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 8.

For all the community's kids! Bethel hosts its annual Easter Egg Hunt for all the youngsters in the community. Along with hearing the Easter story, they participate in crafts and games, and enjoy refreshments. Circus Kaput will also have a clown amazing the audience by turning balloons into animal shapes with a few magic twists of the wrists! Then the hunt is on for an endless supply of eggs! Thanks go both to the crafters who fill those plastic eggs and to our congregation that donates the candy!

Bits & Pieces

Spring is nudging at the door with a March 20 due date this year. Seeds are already pushing through into little plants at Barb Jacobs place. After all the annual plant sale is on again, but not until May 13th. But the arrival of seed catalogs and the smell of the earth on some of our warmer days inspire thoughts of a bountiful garden. More information to come.



Putting Bethel Church on the Map!

This is just a teaser—for now. Wildwood is planning a number of events to make the most of the Route 66 connection—which also happens to run past Bethel. There is an opportunity to join in with activities that are an opportunity for Bethel to reach out to our community and be noticed. For the month of April Wildwood is having a Route 66 Scavenger Hunt, and Bethel is on the list of Route 66 locations for people to visit and get a “selfie” photo to enter. Diane Schoenefeld is our point person with the Wildwood committee and we will hear more soon.

Ruth A, Diane D, Shirley G, Louella, and Diane S,
Thanks for your donation of stamps. — **Bethel UMC**



Bethel family,

Thank you so much for the sweets, gifts and an extra generous Love Offering. I'm not new to Bethel, and yet the outpouring of love and affection is both amazing and heart warming. Thanks again for your continuous love and recognition. — **Pastor Jeff and Carol**

Bethel family,

Thanks so much for last week's donations to Circle of Concern. Our cart was overflowing due to your generosity! Thanks again to all who contributed and those that help deliver to Circle of Concern. — **Bethel UMC**



OPEN Praise Team

Anyone with singing or instrumental musical talents interested in helping the praise team please get in contact with Shirley Martka ASAP.

Giving

In an effort to make you aware of our ongoing income and expenses Bert, our treasurer, has calculated our monthly expenses and we have provided a total of our offerings for the given month as follows:

Total estimated monthly expenses:	\$11,300
Total offerings received as of 2/20/23:	\$10,248

Circle of Concern

They are currently in need of the following items:
pasta sauce, cereal, snacks,
canned chicken, chili, stew, rice, beans, oatmeal,
condiments, baking items, body wash, shampoo, conditioner,
cleaning products, pads, tampons, cold/flu medicine

Please leave non-perishable food donations in the shopping cart next to the elevator. Thanks for your donations!



On The Calendar @ Bethel

Bethel Fitness—Mondays & Thursdays @ 9am

Crafters & Prayer Shawl Warriors—Thursdays @ 9:30am

Christian Perspectives Class—Sundays @ 9am

Viewing of The Chosen—after Sunday services

Dartball—Friday, March 3 @7pm

Board Meeting—Tuesday, March 7 @7pm

Dartball—Friday, March 10 @7pm

Listening For God’s Voice (cemetery walk)—Saturday, March 11

Communion & Town Hall Meeting—Sunday, March 12

Juliets’ Luncheon—Tuesday, March 14 - Big Chiefs @ 11:30

Dartball Banquet—Friday, March 17

Viewing of The Chosen—Friday, March 24 @5pm

Viewing of The Chosen—Friday, March 31 @5pm

Fellowship Time

Join us for coffee in fellowship hall after worship every Sunday. All are welcome.

Nursery

Childcare provided during Sunday service.

We are blessed to have a good number of gifted lay leaders willing to help make our Zoom service a success.

Our schedule for March is as follows...

Date	Devotion	Music	Lead	Prayer	ZOOM	PPT
3/5	PJeff	Shirley	Carolyn	PJeff	TBD	TBD
3/12	PJeff	Shirley	Louella	PJeff	TBD	TBD
3/19	PJeff	Shirley	Diana	PJeff	TBD	TBD
3/26	PJeff	Shirley	Don	PJeff	TBD	TBD

The ZOOM & PPT Teams arrange their own schedules.

We welcome additional volunteers, please call if interested. Training is provided.

Contribution Recordkeeping Schedule

	Sheila	RuthAnne/Bert	Bert	Bert	
March	5	12	19	26	

Counters Schedule

	Dale/Sheila	RuthAnne/Bert	RuthAnne/Suzi	Bert/Debbie	
March	5	12	19	26	



Bethel United Methodist Church
17500 Manchester Road
Wildwood, MO 63038-1907



**March 2023
News!**



Bethel United Methodist Church

***Love God,
Love Others,
Serve All!***

Please Join Us Sunday For Service

Service will be **LIVE** in the sanctuary
@ **10 a.m.** or you can use one of the following:

Church webpage: www.bethelunitedmethodist.org

Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/BethelUMCWildwood> **"Like Us" on Facebook.**

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/BethelUMCWildwood>

Zoom: Please contact the church office at 636-458-2255 to receive the link.