

Parish of the Hills



Go and Make Disciples

DECEMBER, 2023

# PARISH VISITOR

Parish of the Hills



## Christmas Giving

Some years ago, I hesitate to confess this, I, a man, read a Christmas article in a women's magazine. I want you to know it was an exception—not the rule—I want you to know that I am a 100% true man. I like football, steaks medium-rare, and I read Tom Clancy novels. And my favorite magazine is Sports Illustrated. But I just love this true story that I read once upon a time in Family Circle, a story written by Patricia Paden of Missouri. Let me share it with you. Mrs. Paden wrote:

“My brother and sister and I were feeling sad because the drought of the ‘30’s had driven us from our home. Christmas would be a time of transition, spent with our Kentucky grandmother while our parents looked nearby for a suitable house and farmland.”

“Grandma was a woman whose first memory was of adults whispering that Lincoln had been shot, and she was a great storyteller. One afternoon, Grandma settled herself by the stove and watched us children at play. My sister, Amy, and I had laid out all our dolls: large dolls with closing eyes and hair that we could comb, and our prized china dolls. We each had several of these china dolls, with movable arms and legs. My sister’s favorite was Morgan, a boy doll dressed in a short blue suit. Grandma looked at the dolls and started reminiscing. ‘When I was your age, I always wanted a china doll, but all my sister and I had were ragged dolls. Once we went to a rich girl’s Christmas party, and there on the bed was a china doll. Oh, how I wanted to hold that doll! But I dared not, for if I had broken it, my whole family would have had trouble paying for it. So, I just stroked its arm—I never even picked it up.’”

### Parish of the Hills United Methodist Churches

Office Address: 400 Doty Street  
Mineral Point, WI 53565  
Phone: (608) 987-2700

Office E-mail: [pohumc@gmail.com](mailto:pohumc@gmail.com)  
Parish Website: [parishofthehills.org](http://parishofthehills.org)  
Conference email: [www.wisconsinumc.org](http://www.wisconsinumc.org)

Office Hours: M, T, Th, F  
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Bethel UM Church: Located on the Corner of  
State Hwy. 39 & W  
8:00 a.m. — Worship

First UM Church: 400 Doty Street, MP  
9:15 a.m. — Worship  
Handicapped Accessible

Linden UM Church: In the Village on Hwy. 39  
10:30 a.m. — Worship  
Sunday School 9:15-10:15 (see schedule)

Pastor Gary Cole until 12/31/23  
Cell: (414) 517-9392  
E-mail: [gwcole@gmail.com](mailto:gwcole@gmail.com)

Marcia Ajer, Administrative Assistant

Enjoy  
The  
News



Nearly in tears, Amy asked, “Did you ever get your china doll, Grandma?”

Grandma had a faraway look as she answered, “Life has given me seven children and many good things, but no, I never got my china doll.”

When Christmas Day came, we all gathered for our celebration. One gift stood out from the rest; it was addressed to Grandma in Amy’s kindergarten handwriting. Grandma opened the box and there, in his blue-suited splendor, was Morgan.

Grandma gasped. “Morgan will be too homesick if he stays with me,” she said. But my sister was firm: “Morgan must stay with you, Grandma, so at last you can have a china doll.”

For many years, Amy received letters and cards from Grandma concerning Morgan’s health and happiness. “I put Morgan in the south window for a spell,” Grandma would write. “He was looking pale and needed some sun.” Years later, Morgan was bequeathed to Amy. Now each year during the holiday season, he reminds us of a wise Kentucky grandma and the precious gift of a small girl at Christmas time.

## Mineral Point News

*By: Donna Toay  
and Marcia Ajer*

A lovely service by Revs. Gary Cole and Barb Cook with funeral luncheon after was held for family and friends of Nancy Reynolds (Bethel) on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC. Many thanks to the Bethel ladies and Reynolds friends and family for serving this luncheon.

Two successful (300 each) pasty sales were held on October 14<sup>th</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all the workers from First and Bethel, organizers and buyers – you were great! We had a lot of fun and a nice profit was made on both to help heat our church this winter! Thank you! Thank you to everyone who donated, came & enjoyed the fellowship!

Another successful “heat the sanctuary” fund raiser Silent Auction was held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was such fun, well attended, well organized and had lots of interesting items to bid on. A light lunch was served after with time for fellowship.

The baptism of Amiya Ann Yancy took place on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, during the 9:15 a.m. worship service at First UMC. Amiya is the daughter of Jonathan and Marissa Yancy and the granddaughter of Jane O’Flaherty. Pastor Gary Cole conducted the worship and baptismal service. Many friends and family members attended this special service.

Our church was decorated by special elves (Margie Stephenson and Marilyn Trevorrow) just in time for the first Sunday of Advent, December 3<sup>rd</sup> with beautiful fresh boughs & wreaths on our doors, advent candles, nativity scene on the alter, poinsettias and candles & swags in our beautiful stained glass windows! We always have out-of-town visitors who enjoy visiting our church during the holidays and are so pleased with their positive comments.

Our fourth fund raiser in a month & a half was our “Old Fashion Holiday Bake Sale & Bazaar” was held in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8:30-12:00. There was a steady flow of shoppers who enjoyed a variety of homemade baked goodies! This was another fun, successful fund raiser for our church. Our event was part of Candlelight shopping weekend in Mineral Point with Gallery Night, Fireworks, Santa Day at Shake Rag Alley, Christmas Madrigal Dinner Theatre at the Walker House, Trinity’s Bazaar & Faith Lutheran’s Annual Cookie & Candy bake sale too!

Our newly formed Ladies Circle met on Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> and again on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall. Mary Martin has graciously accepted the position of Chairperson of Nurture and Care! Please let her know if a get well, birthday or anniversary card should be sent to someone in our church family needs a visit or call the office if you feel someone is in need of a pastoral call.

Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> this year. There will be no evening service at First UMC but Linden UMC's Children's service will be at 6:30. Our New Year's Eve service will also be held at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>. This will be Pastor Gary Cole's last service with us. We wish him well as he returns to continue his retirement.

Pastor Michael Hammonds has been appointed & will start in January – details TBA

Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year as we prepare for the coming of our Lord.

**Bethel News**  
*By: Cindy Reynolds-Doyle*

Let's spread the greeting of the season, Merry Christmas everyone! Spreading cheer is a wonderful thing to do all year around. At Christmas time our faith moves us to care and share more than ever. Gifting can be a joyful way to celebrate. Remembering others who may be facing difficulties in their life is a place to start. Your act of kindness can bring hope and a loved feeling to someone in need. Celebrate the Christmas spirit in all the ways that you can. Share the Christmas message of Love, Joy, Hope and Peace with friends and family.

#### **FALL SUPPER REPORT**

The Bethel Fall Supper, Bazaar and Auction was held on Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. The weather cooperated for this long time fall event. The Country Bazaar in the church entryway was filled with a wonderful selection of items. Our church dining room was filled all evening long. We served one hundred and forty people. The auction following the meal was well attended. Thank you to Auctioneers Jim McNeill and Justin Doyle for conducting a lively auction with enthusiastic bidders. Trevor Jacobson, along with young helpers assisting included Quade, Gentry and Meritt Doyle. We were very pleased our fall fundraiser was successful in every way. A big thank you to those who prepared food for the meal and donated items for the bazaar and auction. The generous monetary donations were

also greatly appreciated. Thank you to everyone who joined us for the evening. We look forward to seeing you next year at our Bethel Fall Harvest Supper.

#### **BAPTISMS AT BETHEL**

The baptism of Silas Leo Rolli took place on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, during the 8:00 a.m. worship service at Bethel Church. Silas is the son of Alex and Emily Rolli and the grandson of Chris Rolli. Pastor Gary Cole conducted the worship and baptismal service. Many friends and family members attended this special service.

Everly Elizabeth Meligan was baptized on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, at Bethel Church. Pastor Gary Cole conducted the worship and baptismal service. Everly is the daughter of Ben and Savannah (Lawinger) Meligan and the granddaughter of Ted and Janet Lawinger. The church was filled with many friends and family members. Everly's family enjoyed a time of fellowship and celebration cake in the church dining room following the service.

We welcome Silas and Everly to our Bethel Church Family and wish them many blessings on their faith journey along with their families.

#### **MEMORIAL TRIBUTE**

With great sadness our Bethel Congregation extends our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Nancy (Fitzsimmons) Reynolds. My Aunt Nancy passed away on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023. She was truly a pillar of our church in every way. She was part of the Bethel Church Family as an infant and was a devoted member her whole life. She took on many roles over the years and will be long remembered as our talented church pianist. She and husband Merton served as our church custodians for fifty years. Nancy was an inspiration to many and truly a kind and caring person. We will strive to continue her love for Bethel Church and this very special church family.

Members of the Bethel Church congregation helped organize and serve the funeral luncheon following the memorial service for Nancy, on Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Pastor Barb Cook and Pastor Gary Cole conducted the

memorial service in the Mineral Point United Methodist Church. Nancy's family performed a number of beautiful musical selections in tribute to their loved one. Nancy would have been so very proud of her family for planning and participating in a beautiful and loving memorial service.

A longtime friend of Bethel Church, Bob McNeill, passed away on Saturday, November 11, 2023, at the age of 95. He attended Bethel when he was just a young boy. He often shared stories of Sunday School Picnics and special programs he attended. Bob would make his way each year to Bethel for the fall supper and bring along family members. He looked forward to the auction and was a fun spirited bidder. Having brother Jim McNeill as the auctioneer created even more fun. The two McNeill brothers have always been well known as story tellers and mischief makers. They could be counted on to entertain the audience. We send our sincere sympathy to the Bob McNeill family. He will be missed by many.

#### **HANGING OF THE GREENS**

Preparing our church for the Christmas season took place on Friday morning, December 1<sup>st</sup>. The crew of helpers hung pine garlands, placed pine and candles on the windowsills, set the Christmas Tree in place and added the lights and ornaments. Two wreaths with bright red bows were hung outside the front entrance to the church. Once the decoration is complete a warm peaceful feeling radiates throughout the church and spreads hope and joy to us all. Thank you so much to those who were available to help hang the greens!

#### **SNOWFLAKE SUNDAY**

We will celebrate Snowflake Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> during the 8:00 a.m. worship service. It is our tradition to remember loved ones as we hang special snowflake ornaments on the Christmas Tree. This is a very touching and meaningful sign of the season at Bethel. Christmas traditions play a key role in our own families, as well as our church family. Old and new traditions are to be cherished.

#### **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION SUNDAY**

Our church Christmas program will be included in the morning worship service on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Special music provided by soloists, choir members and the chime players will bring joy to all who attend. Our church pianists, Jeanne Massey and Jennifer Reynolds will add their talents to this special service along with coordinating the presentations. Our Sunday School Children will participate in the Christmas Story play. Livia Doyle, and Cindy Reynolds-Doyle will help in planning this part of the program. Refreshments and fellowship will follow the service. Sunday School Children will hand out traditional treat bags to all who attend. Everyone is invited to come join us on this Christmas Celebration Sunday.

#### **CARE AND SHARE MISSION**

Once again, we will collect warm winter wear clothing for children ages four years through fifth grade to be donated to Mineral Point Elementary School Children. Hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, socks, underwear, coats and snowpants are needed. We will be collecting through the winter months. Your donations are appreciated!

#### **HEARFELT THANK YOU**

Music most certainly plays a key role during this festive season. Joyful and inspirational music fills the air in great celebration. Favorite Christmas carols warm our hearts and bring back special memories. Our worship services throughout the year are ever more meaningful accompanied by special musical selections. We have been very fortunate to have talented musicians devoted to providing music at Bethel. Our sincere thank you to pianists, Jeanne Massey, and Jennifer Reynolds for their very important contribution to Sunday morning services and special programs at Bethel Church. Your church family is very appreciative of your efforts.

#### **BEST WISHES PASTOR GARY**

Our entire Bethel Church Congregation thanks Pastor Gary for spending the last four months as Parish of The Hills Pastor. In this brief time, we came to appreciate Pastor Gary's inspirational Sunday Sermons and warm sense of humor. He touched our lives with many blessings and

strengthened our faith. We invite Pastor Gary to join us anytime at Bethel, as we will always think of him as part of our church family. We wish Pastor Gary well as he journeys on in his retirement.

Pastor Michael Hammonds has been appointed & will start in January – details TBA

#### **THE SEASON OF GIFTING**

Our Bethel Church Family is thankful for the kind donations and support given throughout the year that allows us to keep the doors open at our little country church. All are welcome to worship with us on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m. and join us at any of our church functions. Our Sunday School is open to any interested young people. We welcome visitors anytime. Be a part of our church family and celebrate Bethel's 143 years of sharing God's Love.

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:** Everly Meligan (1<sup>st</sup>), Trevor Jacobson (6<sup>th</sup>), Dennis Schaaf (7<sup>th</sup>), Carol Small (10<sup>th</sup>), Danielle (James) Reed (14<sup>th</sup>), Caroline Reynolds (16<sup>th</sup>), Deb Douglas (10<sup>th</sup>), Katie Fitzsimmons (28<sup>th</sup>) and Cora AnneMarie Reed (31<sup>st</sup>).

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY:** Jeff & Chris Reynolds (18<sup>th</sup>).

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:** Katelyn Oellerich (2<sup>nd</sup>), Helena Oellerich (2<sup>nd</sup>), Quayde Doyle (7<sup>th</sup>) and Rob Massey (15<sup>th</sup>).

**MAY YOU BE A SPECIAL BLESSING IN EVERY LIFE YOU TOUCH!**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!**

**Linden News**  
*By: Dixie Edge*

Thank you to everyone for your patience during the month of November while the church was being painted. The church looks awesome! Thank you to Tilmer Thompson for painting the sanctuary, and to Jeanette Vivian for helping us

clean. Thank you also to the men who helped move pews, so scaffolding could be put up. Our community church is truly blessed with so many giving people.

Sympathy is extended to the Dustin Baker Family and Friends, who passed away in October. Dustin is the son of Randy and Karla and brother of Tim (Amanda).

Funeral services were held at the Church on December 12<sup>th</sup> for Gene Lindauer. Gene's parents were Homer and Lula Lindauer. Gene was married in the Church and all five of his children were baptized here. Our Sympathy to the Lindauer family.

Condolences go out to the Kitelinger/Lindner families. Sally Kitelinger passed away on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Kitelinger and Lindner families have been part of our church community for many years.

The Sunday School children sang in church on Sunday November 19<sup>th</sup>. It's such a joy to watch these young ones sharing their talents with the congregation.

Congratulations to Mackenzie and Brian Steffes Jr on the arrival of their baby boy; Brian Paul Steffes III. Grandparents are George and Bobbi Faull.

Josh and Kali Draves welcomed their new baby boy; Baylor Aden Draves on Saturday, November 25<sup>th</sup>. Baylor joins his three brothers Bryler, Brayson and Brixton. Baylor's great grandmother is Linda Nichols.

Bob and Delores Stevens welcomed two more great grandchildren; Eli Robert Shaffer born to Dylan and Bekah Shaffer on November 18<sup>th</sup>. grandparents are Jennifer and Jon Shaffer, Eli joins big sister Emberlyn. Lakelynn Joyce Einerson was born to Hannah Stevens and Austin Einerson on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, grandparents are Mark and Jennifer Stevens, Lakelynn joins big brother Landen. Congratulations to all.

Congratulations to Carley (Richards) Drakas who has finished her medical education and has joined the Gunderson Boscobel Area Hospital and clinics primary care team as a NP.

The church women have been hard at work planning the cookie, candy and baked goods sale event for this Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> from 8 to noon. Donations are welcomed and should be brought to the church on Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> after 5pm.

In loving memory of Romy Mae Sazema (daughter of Kayla Sazema and granddaughter of Rhoda Rule) and in honor of Jack Schmelzer (son of Jessica Schmelzer and grandson of Jackie Caygill), Kayla and Jessica have started a yearly fundraiser that will provide totes and blankets to local hospitals to give to parents whose newborns are transferred to a nearby NICU.

NICU parents are often rushing to be by their newborns side, without any comforts from home. To follow their Facebook page, where you can read more and find information on donating, go to: "Wherever You May Romy".

Christmas Eve service will begin at 6:30 pm on December 24<sup>th</sup>. The Sunday School teachers and students have been working hard and are anxious to share what they've been working on.

There will be no service Christmas Eve morning this year. The Sunday School will take a break after Christmas and will start back up on February 11<sup>th</sup>.


Please plan on joining us for our annual Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>. Serving starts at 8am.

We have been blessed to have Pastor Gary Cole filling the pulpit for the last four months. He will be retiring, again, at the end of the month. Cheryl Keeney and her daughter Corey will be back to share their talents with us. Church services are at 10:30. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns that you would like help with. Contact Bob Spurley 608-574-1223, Dixie Edge 608-574-3213 or Pam Reddell 608-341-8517.

### Home Rules

Always be honest, count your blessings, bear each other's burdens, forgive and forget, be kind and tender hearted, comfort one another, keep your promises, be supportive of one another, be true to each other, look after each other, treat each other

like your friends, but most important, love one another deeply from the heart.



*When we give from the heart, we receive unexpected blessings—especially the joy of making a difference in someone's life.*

December 03	Sunday School Fund
December 10	Apportionments
December 17	Improvement Fund
December 24	Boiler Fund - heat
December 31	MP Rescue Squad
January 07	MP Fire Department
January 14	Apportionments
January 21	Community Connections Free Clinic
January 28	Improvement Fund



*Twenty Third Psalms for Busy People*  
*The Lord sets my speed, I shall not rush. He makes me stop and rest in a quiet time. He provides me with moments of stillness that restores my serenity. He leads me to be efficient and calm of mind. He gives me peace. Even though I have a great many things to accomplish, I will not fret for I feel His presence. His power and strength keep me in balance. He gives refreshment in the midst of my activities. By the love and grace of His Holy Spirit my joy and energy are renewed. Harmony and effectiveness are the fruits of my hours. I shall walk at the speed my Lord sets and dwell with Him now and forever.*

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!**



# DECEMBER 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<p>26</p>  <p>SILENT NIGHT</p>	27	<p>28</p> 	29	<p>30</p>  <p>THE REASON WE Celebrate</p>	<p>1</p> <p>World Aids Day</p>	<p>2</p> <p>8:30-12 Holiday Bake Sale &amp; Bazaar At 1<sup>st</sup> UMC</p> <p>7:30-12 Faith Lutheran Cookie &amp; candy sale</p> <p>10-2:30 Trinity 65<sup>th</sup> Holiday Fair</p>
<p>3</p> <p>All 3 churches cancelled due to road conditions (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent)</p>	4	5	6	<p>7</p> <p>Hanukkah (Chanukah) begins</p>	8	9
<p>10</p> <p>8:00 Bethel Svc with communion &amp; Snowflake Sunday 8:30 Choir practice 9:15 1<sup>st</sup> Svc with Choir &amp; communion 9:15-10:15 Sunday School at Linden 10:30 Linden Svc with communion 7:00 Trinity's Lessons &amp; Carols</p>	11	<p>12</p> <p>1:30 Ladies Circle meets at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC</p> <p>Eugene Lindauer funeral at Linden</p>	13	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 Ad Council meets at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Collate Parish Visitor (Bethel)</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:00-12:00 Linden Cookie &amp; Candy Sale</p>
<p>17</p> <p>8:00 Bethel's Svc &amp; Christmas program 9:15 1<sup>st</sup> Svc 9:15-10:15 Sunday School at Linden 10:30 Linden Svc</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Charles Wesley's Birthday (1707)</p>	19	20	<p>21</p> <p>Winter Solstice/First Day of Winter</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:00-8:00 free "Skate with Santa" Ley Pavilion, Harris Park, Dodgeville</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>Merry Christmas!</p>
<p>24</p> <p>8:00 Bethel Svc 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:15 1<sup>st</sup> Svc w/Choir 6:30 Linden Svc with Children's Program</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>Merry Christmas</p>	26	27	28	29	30
<p>31</p> <p>8:00 Bethel Svc 9:15 1<sup>st</sup> Svc 10:30 Linden Svc (Pastor Cole returns to retirement)</p>	<p>1</p> <p><u>New Year's Day</u></p>  <p>Happy New Year!</p>	2	3	4	<p>5</p> <p>Twelfth Night</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Epiphany of The Lord</p>

