"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." (Philippians 1:3–5)

Dear Bethel Family,

There's an old saying that life is what happens while you're busy making other plans. If you'd told me a few years ago where the journey of ministry would take us together, I would've smiled and said, "Let's see what God has in store." Well, here we are at a significant bend in the road.

I'm writing to share with you, as most of you already know, that I'm changing pastoral relations, having accepted a call to serve as the Community of Faith Support Minister for the East Central Ontario Regional Council. While I'm excited about this new chapter; supporting congregations across a wider regional church family, it also comes with the bittersweet reality of saying goodbye to Bethel as your minister.

Saying goodbye is never easy, but as I'm writing this, the overwhelming feeling in my heart isn't anxiety; it is gratitude and joy. Just like Paul wrote to his friends in Philippi, every single time I think of you, I give thanks. We've shared so much around the communion table (my first Sunday with you was, in fact, World Communion Sunday) in the pews, over endless pots of coffee and tea, and in all those quiet, ordinary moments where the holy quietly sneaks in. We've prayed together, wrestled with scripture, laughed until our sides hurt, and walked through times of sorrow with genuine grace. That is what true partnership in the gospel looks like, and it's been a gift to share that partnership with you.

Now, as Bethel begins its own next chapter, I want to tell you something I know with utter certainty: you are going to be fine. In fact, you are going to be more than fine.

Ministries shift and faces change, but the foundation of Bethel doesn't rest on who happens to be standing in the pulpit on Sunday morning. It rests on God and it lives through each one of you. Your warmth, your generosity, your deep love for one another, and your heart for the wider community are woven into the very fabric of who you are. God has been doing wonderful things in and through Bethel long before I arrived, and God's Spirit is certainly not packing up a box and heading down the road with me.

Coming Events

Saturday, December 5th
9:00 a.m. to noon
UCW Bake Sale

Advent Services – 11:00 a.m.

Advent 1- November 30th
Communion
White Gift

Advent 2 -December 6th

Advent 3 - December 13th
UCW Soup and Sandwich Lunch and Christmas sing-a-long
after the service.

Advent 4 - December 20st

Christmas Eve Family Service
December 24th – 4:30 p.m.
Refreshment following the service

NOTE: No Bethel Worship Service
December 27th and January 3th

Special Notice

Do you feel that there never seems to be enough opportunities to share wonderful Christmas music! Mark this on your calendar! On Sunday, December 13th following the UCW's Soup 'n Sandwich Lunch, we will enjoy together a simple low-key Christmas Sing-a-long. This will be an opportunity for members of the Bethel Family to enjoy together some favourite Christmas hymns and songs.



Rev. Lynne cont'd

You'll continue to move forward, to welcome the stranger, to feed the hungry, to sing your hearts out, and to do God's good, faithful work in the world.
While my role is changing, the good news is that I am not vanishing off the map. As Community of Faith Support Minister and serving within ECORC, I'll be just down the road cheering you on from a slightly different vantage point.
Thank you for your love, your grace, and your enduring partnership in the gospel. May God bless you, keep you, and lead you into a future brimming with hope.
With deep love, peace, and every blessing,

Rev. Lynne

Search Committee
The process of seeking a full-time minister for our congregation has begun. A committee of six Bethel representatives is working together, with the support of a Pastoral Liaison from the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council, and following the established United Church process.
The Search team, over the coming weeks, will be preparing a profile of Bethel and identifying the qualities, gifts and expectations we are seeking in our future minister. Your input is an important part of this process. A survey is available for those who attend Bethel, and we encourage everyone to take the time to complete it. The congregation will also be given an opportunity at a Congregational Meeting to review and. approve our final submission before it is submitted to the Regional Council
The Search Committee members are: Paul Coutts, Kathleen Williamson, Lynne Evans, John Gray, Sandra Walker, Joyce Firlotte.

A Note About PAR
(PAR) Pre-authorized Remittance allows you to make a donation automatically each month. You may change the amount or cancel easily. PAR donations provide a stable income flow for your church. Our treasurer, Sandra Walker, handles all the details of donations in confidence. If you should wish to set up PAR, please be in touch with Sandra
treasurer@bethelchurchrideauferry.ca

A Message from the Bethel Stewardship Committee
Good stewardship is about caring for and sharing the resources God has provided. Good stewardship nourishes communities and in turn nourishes our spiritual health. (UCC Stewardship Seconds - Called to be the Church – THE JOURNEY)

At Bethel, as a congregation, we try to make lives better. In doing so, our lives and our spirituality are stronger. Our outreach begins within the Bethel Family as we support and care for one another whenever we see a need either individually or in groups.

As well, Bethel has long had a strong outreach into the local community.
Special community outreach programs this year have included our special Lenten campaign to support and learn about the Hospice Hub and our current October Stewardship Project where the focus has been to raise monies for and awareness of the Alzheimer Society of Lanark Leeds and Grenville. Their programs assist people in our community with Alzheimer's and other Dementias … and also support their caregivers.
Another opportunity for sharing our resources will take place on White Gift Sunday (Sunday, November 29th). Rather than bringing white paper-wrapped gifts on White Gift Sunday, white envelopes will be available in the pews. You will be invited to place a contribution in the envelopes in support of the local Food Banks – The Table (Perth) and the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank in Smiths Falls who are reporting an ever increasing community need.
The Food Banks will also be supported through the Memory Ball project again this year.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of one another and our broader community. You are an amazing loving caring church family.

Karen Hunt
Stewardship Committee Chair

Rev Christine Lowson

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes
E.E. Cummings

Like many of you, I've been blessed with great teachers [in and outside of the classroom]. Our Grade 5-6 teacher at Bronx Park Elementary School in LaSalle, Quebec, introduced us to the poetry of E.E. Cummings and I'm forever grateful. I love this poem and how it inspires gratitude, delight and affirmation.

I write this first note to Bethel United with thanks and gratitude for the opportunity to join you and participate in your ministry for the next 3 months.

Here's a wee bit about me: I am a daughter, a sister, a mom, a friend, partner and a woman of faith. I enjoy reading daily devotions and library books and our flower garden is another sanctuary May to October [Richard tends the veggie garden]. I walk and hike, cycle and swim. I do love God's wondrous world. I also love quickly put together adventures with family and friends. I am always delighted to attend a writer's festival event. Most recently, my daughter, Margaret, and I took in a "narrative-based medicine" discussion in Kingston.

I am motivated by something Rabbi Abraham Heschel offered years ago: "Never once in my life did I ask God for success or wisdom or power or fame. I asked for wonder, and he gave it to me." I do prayerfully try to pay attention to the wonder God offers us in this life. It's amazing where it pops up!

I've been a minister for near 30 years [1st and only vocation] and have marveled often at the gift of being ordained to Word, sacrament and pastoral care. Stories abound and I'm looking forward to worship, prayerful times, and cups of tea, visits, and opportunities to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world together.

I'll close this wee introduction by sharing more of E.E. Cummings, "I thank you God":

(*i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the day great happening illimitably earth)*

how should tasting touching hearing seeing breathing any-lifted from the no of all nothing-human merely being doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

I know this is a time of change and transition for Bethel United, please know that I am holding you in prayer and in God's grace.

Christine

A message from the Official Board

Greetings everyone,
As we transition from beautiful fall colours to cold temperatures, shoveling snow and scraping windshields, we, as a congregation, are also going through a transition period. As we say goodbye and thank you to Rev. Lynne, we look ahead to welcoming Rev. Christine Lowson as our interim Minister.
As our search committee goes through the process of locating our new Minister, we can look ahead to new challenges and opportunities, and, as we have seen in the past, this congregation bands together in times of need. As we look toward 2027, we can be assured that as a congregation, as a team, we can continue to be an active presence in our community.
In the words of the legendary Red Green, "Keep your stick on the ice, we're all in this together"

Paul Coutts
Bethel Official Board Chair