

The Bethlehem Star



The newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
www.bethlehembayridge.org

November 2017

In this month's Beth Star...

- Message from Pastor Paul
- Calendar, activities, schedule, including Healing Center Sunday, Bethlehem Women's Group, Youth Group, and more
- Church Council highlights
- Reports from The Healing Center, The Bay Ridge Center and the Lutheran Counseling Center



Friday, Nov 10
6:30 PM
Bethlehem
Women's Group



Sunday, Nov 12
10:30 AM
Healing Center
Sunday



Sunday Nov 19
10:30 AM
Thanksgiving Sunday



Sunday Nov 19
12:00 PM
Youth Group Movie &
Pizza



The second 500 years.
Always reforming.

Join us for all of our services and events



Our Mission

To serve God and God's people. To live our faith daily through worship, and providing education, support, nourishment, compassion, good counsel, love, and service to the larger community welcoming all who join us in this mission.



Our Welcome

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a **Reconciling in Christ** congregation. People of all sexual orientations and gender identities are welcome within the membership of this congregation and are encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of this Christian family.

Pastor Paul's Monthly Message for November

Dear Members and Friends,

In the month of November, we have a wonderful progression of themes for our Sunday worship services. In troubled times, it is good to continue to see the big picture and concentrate on what we can control and accomplish.

On Sunday, November 5th we celebrate All Saints Sunday. In the Lutheran tradition, we do not elevate saints to a higher position in the kingdom of God. Instead, we realize that all God's people are saints. In the bible, Paul begins his letters by greeting "the saints" in the churches he started. He is referring to the entire Christian community. In our lives, all of us have people past and present who have guided us with love, support and Christian nourishment. It is great to have a day set aside to thank God for these people who have been such a positive influence on our lives. Yes, we have control over our thankfulness for the saints in our lives!

On Sunday, November 12th we celebrate Healing Center Sunday. Bethlehem is blessed with incredible ministries. We have our school, our senior center, our meal programs, and our Healing Center. We embraced the Healing Center ministry back in 2008. We continue to support this ministry with our finances, our space and our hard work. Taking care of God's people who have been negatively impacted by intimate partner violence and violence in the home is a mission we collectively share in our Christian community at Bethlehem. Yes, we have control over our active support of our ministries!

On Sunday, November 19th we celebrate Thanksgiving Sunday. We are reminded of the incredible blessings in our lives. We have loved ones, food and shelter. We have our church, our faith, and we have each other. We need to focus on the positive blessings in our life, rather than get dragged down by our challenges and the troubles of the world. Negativity can cause us to withdraw and fail to be the people God wants us to be. Thanksgiving is a celebration in which we concentrate on all that we have in our lives to be thankful for. Yes, we have control over our attitude of thankfulness!

Finally, on Sunday, November 26th we celebrate Christ the King Sunday. What could be better than acknowledging Christ as the Lord of our life? Having Jesus as our focus and striving to follow the example he has set for us, is truly the way we want to live. It is the loving, sacrificial Spirit of Christ that this world needs and it is up to us to be Jesus' presence in this violent, hurting world. It is Jesus who gives us the strength to overcome all the challenges we face. It is Jesus who gives us the perseverance to keep going in troubled times. Yes, we have the ability to put Christ the King in charge of our life!

Please notice that I used the word "celebrate" to describe each Sunday theme. We gather, as the church of Christ, to celebrate each week. Celebrate the saints, celebrate the Healing Center, celebrate our spirit of Thanksgiving, and celebrate Christ the King. This is what Christians have done and will continue to do no matter what. We celebrate!

In God's Service,

Rev. Paul H. Knudsen

Pastor

November at a Glance


11/2 @ 7:15 p.m. -- SW Brooklyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd
11/5 @ 9:00 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship (No Conf class or SS)
11/6 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bay Ridge Center Board of Directors
11/10 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bethlehem Women in the Joy Room
11/12 -- Regular Sunday morning schedule w/ Healing Center Sunday
11/14 @ 7:00 p.m. -- LES School Board
11/17 @ 6:00 p.m. -- LES Game Night in the Joy Room
11/19 -- Regular Sunday morning schedule w/ Thanksgiving Sunday
11/19 @ 12:00 p.m. -- Youth Group: Movie and pizza
11/21 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Church Council
11/26 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship (No Conf class or SS)

Coffee hours are held in the Fellowship Room.



November 2017

Services | Activities | Special Events | Meetings

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 7:15 pm SW Bklyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd 7:15 pm-AA	3 7:00 pm-Scouts	4 6:15 pm-AA 7:30 pm-AA
5 NO SS/Confirmation Class NO Adult Bible Class 9:00 am—Worship	6 6:30 pm Bay Ridge Center Board of Directors 7:00 pm-AA	7	8	9	10 6:30 pm Bethlehem Women's Group Meeting in the Parsonage 7:00 pm-Scouts	11 6:15 pm-AA 7:30 pm-AA
12 9:15 am-Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am-SS & Confirmation 10:30 am-Worship w/ Hearing Center Sunday followed by Coffee Hour	13 7:00 pm-AA	14 7:00 pm LES School Board	15	16	17 6:00 pm LES Game Night In the Joy Room 7:00 pm-Scouts	18 6:15 pm-AA 7:30 pm-AA
19 9:15 am-Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am-SS & Confirmation 10:30 am-Worship w/ Thanksgiving Sunday followed by Coffee Hour 11 PM-Tenik Group Pizza and Men's	20 7:00 pm-AA	21 7:00 pm Church Council	22	23  7:15 pm-AA	24 No Scouts	25 6:15 pm-AA 7:30 pm-AA
26 NO SS/Confirmation Class NO Adult Bible Class 10:30 am-Worship followed by Coffee Hour	27 7:00 pm-AA	28	29	30		
				7:15 pm-AA		

SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

10/1 – 149
10/8 – 82
10/15 – 125
10/22 – 233
10/29 – 102

Bethlehem: The Growing Church!

MONTHLY OFFERING

August: \$4,824.00
September: \$9,482.00
October: \$13,288.00

God's great work at Bethlehem needs your financial support!

FELLOWSHIP

11/12 – Healing Center Sunday Coffee Hour
11/19 – Thanksgiving Sunday Coffee Hour
11/26 – Coffee Hour

ADULT BIBLE CLASS

Every Sunday morning In the Parish Room
9:15 – 10:15 a.m. led by Carl Jacobsen

YOUTH MINISTRY

11/19 – After Worship Service - Movie & Pizza



VOLUNTEER?

Anyone interested in partaking in the Worship Service, as Communion Preparers, Communion Assistants or Lectors, please speak to Dennis Monsen!

Coffee Hour Volunteers ~ so we can enjoy food and fellowship every week! Please sign up!

BIRTHDAYS

11/3 – Wei Jiang
11/4 – Ria Khristi
11/14 – Matthew Dunn
11/15 – Ann DeMarco
11/16 – Joshua Bravo
11/18 – John Sletholt
11/20 – JoAnn DelPin / Laura Caruso
11/22 – Chloe Sletholt
11/23 – Judy Pietrafesa
11/28 – Andrea Narozniak
11/30 – James Michael Swiontak

ANNIVERSARIES

11/7 – Gail & Steve Solby
11/18 – Michael & Judy Pietrafesa
11/28 – Karen Eggleston & Ray Palermo

NURSING HOME

Christine Scanlon, Reymundo Lariosa

HEALING & STRENGTH

Robert Serrano, Hermicenda & Hery Vallecillo, Billy Whelan, Doris Whelan, Donna & Indal Balkissoon, Bob Muselli, Lon Dayhoff, John Maceda, Caroline Hildreth, Shirley Tuccillo, Peter Fistanic, Marcus Caban, Ann DeMarco, Lenny Thompson, Anna Aboltins, Karen Kozoriz, Dawn Valentine, Helen Wires, Ed Shipwright, Carl and Mindy Jacobsen, Anne Okun, Anna Marie Zarr, Anna Atilas, Laura Woltman, Rose Barron, Marietta Blanchette, Helge Henriksen, Edna Weber, Ken Weber, Mia Frangoulis, Joseph Musco, Sheri Wilborn, Beverly Malmbeck, Kevin Flannery, Sr., Mike Riquier, John Fowler, Kristine Larsen, Adam Torres, Ruth Kennedy, Robert Hofmo, Mike Roszko, David Stayer, Julie Dawson, Cathy Keogh, Maureen Whalen, Marie Lane, Maryann Clark, Sal Turturici, Christine Landi, Twins – Cody and Owen, Kent Norvin, Claire Capron, Gianna Pizzimenti, Jerry Farnen, Shawn Walters, Edith Zito

Best Wishes

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers* 

IN SYMPATHY

Evangelos Geroulanos
October 23rd
Love and condolences to Spery Tslierides, our 2nd Grade teacher on the loss of her father.

Peter Tierney
October 20th
Love and condolences to the Tierney and Reilly Families.

Church Council Highlights — October 17, 2017 Meeting

Bay Ridge Center (presented by Pastor Paul)

- On Monday, October 23rd there is a meeting with the NYC Department For The Aging (DFTA) to present architectural plans for the proposed new senior center building in the vacant lot next to the parsonage. Seeking DFTA's approval on the architectural plan and the annual funding increase to cover the rental cost. The proposal involves the owner constructing the building and the Bay Ridge Center renting the new facility with an option to buy.

Worship & Music (presented by Dennis Monsen)

- The Worship/Music Commission met on Tuesday, September 26th. Worship experiences were planned through the end of the calendar year.
- The decision was made to go back to the 1st setting in the hymnal, rather than using the worship booklets. This change will be made beginning with the Advent season in December.

Lutheran Elementary School (presented by Pastor Paul)

- The 60th anniversary worship service and birthday party will take on Sunday, October 22nd.
- The School Board will meet on October 24th to discuss the year-end financial report for the year ending August 30, 2017. The budget for the current school year will also be presented and approved.

Property (presented by Steve Solby)

- The Reformation banner has been attached to the fence in the front of the church. Additional banners will be ordered slightly shorter in length so they will fit nicely on the front exterior wall of the church between the two bump outs. Hopefully this will cut down on the exposure to the wind and enable the banners to last longer.
- Sidewalk cement work began on October 16th in the front of the 415 Ovington Ave. apartment building. The entire sidewalk needs to be replaced due to damage from tree roots and age.
- Next work items:
 - Waterproof and repair the front of the 411 Ovington Ave. building.
 - Waterproof the alleyway side of the church.

Sunday School (presented by Kathy Finkelstein)

- Sunday School continues to grow. There are over 20 children regularly attending and there are 16 children in the confirmation class.
- We will provide an easel, so Sunday School posters, etc. can be displayed in the narthex of the church.
- A Sunday School program will involve raising money for the Sunday School of a church impacted by the recent hurricanes.

Healing Center (presented by Laura Caruso)

- The Healing Center Board of Directors met on October 11th.
- Grant monies look positive for this fiscal year, but it is always a challenge.
- Still working on getting TD Bank to host our annual Thank You Reception in December.
- The Healing Center had a table at the annual 3rd Avenue festival.
- Healing Center Sunday will be November 12th.
- The client/children Christmas Party will be December 14th.
- The annual Teen Dating Violence Awareness Walkathon will be April 14, 2018.
- Fundraising income did not meet expectations in 2017. The board of directors was challenged to be more intentional about fundraising in 2018.
- The Healing Center Board of Directors passed a resolution regarding the use of the Johnson Memorial Fund. A process was put in place to ensure the responsible handling of these funds, with appropriate financial reporting and approvals.

Church Council Highlights — October 17, 2017 Meeting (continued)

Evangelism (presented by Deacon Tony)

- Phone calls were made to shut in members.
- Tony attended an Evangelism workshop sponsored by St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Babylon.

Fellowship (presented by Kathy Finkelstein)

- The Bethlehem Women's Group will meet on Friday, October 20th.
- A fellowship luncheon is being planned for Reformation Sunday, October 29th.

Public Relations (presented by Pastor Paul)

- On a regular basis people compliment us on the church website. It is always current and it provides all the necessary information. It is pleasing and easy to navigate. We are truly blessed to have Ray Palermo as our volunteer webmaster. He does an incredible job!

Finance Report (presented by Pastor Paul)

- The September 2017 financial report was reviewed and accepted as presented. The overall financial health of the church is very good.

Pastor's Report (presented by Pastor Paul)

- Visitations (4), Funerals (1), Baptisms (1), Weddings (0)
- Nice to have significant special worship services on a regular basis. These include Bible Sunday, First Communion Sunday, LES 60th Birthday, Reformation Sunday, Healing Center Sunday and Thanksgiving Sunday.
- Youth activities set up for the next few months. They include a movie, Christmas Caroling and the Koinonia winter retreat.
- Property sale:
 - Litigation against us by the buyer stating a delay in the selling process. Our lawyer is actively defending us against these unfounded claims.
- Pastor will attend the annual fundraiser for Salam Arabic Lutheran Church on November 4th. We will give a benevolence gift of \$500. It is important to support this Christian ministry to the Middle Eastern population in our community.
- The motion was made and passed to participate in TD Bank's Affinity Membership Program. It is simply a way for church members and friends who have accounts in TD Bank to enable an annual contribution to be made to the church or school by TD Bank. There is no cost to individuals and no account information is disclosed.
- Lutheran Counseling Center financial support for the local SW Brooklyn satellite location was presented. All gifts from the site's creation in 2011 were itemized. Bethlehem has been very generous.
- 2017 Benevolences will include:
 - A church affected by the hurricane in Houston, Texas = \$500
 - A gift to the Lutheran church office in San Juan, Puerto Rico to assist in hurricane relief = \$500
 - Lutheran Disaster Response = \$500
 - Seafarer's International House = \$1,000
 - Bay Ridge Cares = \$500
 - Reconciling Works = \$1,000
 - Habitat for Humanity, NYC = \$500



Dear Members and Friends,

It's that time of year again, when the days feel shorter and the nights are getting colder. It's that time of year where we can sit back and reflect on all the things that have happened to us this past year, good or bad. It's the time of year when we can take a few steps back and realize how grateful we should be for every gift that we are given.

By definition, gratitude means "the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness." Since we were young, our parents taught us to always be thankful for the things we received in life, whether it be something small, or big.

We may not realize it, but we take a lot of things for granted. Each of us is able to get up and out of bed, take transportation, walk or call a cab and get to the Bay Ridge Center. We are able to brush our teeth, take a shower and dress ourselves. We are able to spend time with friends, go on trips or take a relaxing walk on our own. These are the things we should be thankful for every day.

In what ways can we show gratitude? Sometimes a simple "thank you" to a random stranger for holding a door for you, or for letting you cut in front of them in line, can really change the outlook of their day.

On a personal note, I recently assisted a member of the Center when she had fallen and gotten hurt. A few days later, I received a hand-written letter, in which she expressed how thankful she was for my help. More than anything, that letter made my day. I have it hanging up near my desk to remind myself every day that there are people out there who really appreciate all that you do for them.

During this season of Thanksgiving let us be more mindful of gratitude and take the time to give thanks for what is good in our lives.

"Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has plenty; not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some." - Charles Dickens

Nicole Jendryka

Director of Senior Center Services



Dear Bethlehem,

It has been a busy and exciting first two months of school as we kicked-off a year-long celebration of our 60th anniversary. Thank you all for being a part of the October 22nd church service and birthday party.

In the first six weeks of school we have hosted two children's authors; held our annual Pre-School Pumpkin Patch; introduced the "Fall Festival" to Grades 1- 5; took Grades 7 & 8 for a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge as a part of their architecture program; and were blessed to have professional artist and LES dad, Sam Wisneski, teach a month of mural painting to Grades 5 – 8. These are some of the many ways we are able to enhance the classroom experience and create opportunities to foster community.

We have been busy with service opportunities as well. Our families were generous with donations that were sent to Puerto Rico to help them recover from the hurricane devastation; raised money for the Lutheran Relief Fund that helps all victims of the many natural disasters; and held our annual Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser. November's mission projects will include raising money for City Harvest and collecting canned goods for the Bay Ridge Food Pantry. Our Chapel program has a strong message about being called to serve and to take care of others.

These wonderful programs and events compliment the great work taking place each day in the classroom. Our teachers have been hard at work embracing new teaching goals, methodology, and curriculum. This year we are focusing on how we teach literature and writing, and the measurable benchmarks set at each grade level.

November 28, 2017 is National Giving Day. We will share the link to our giving page and would be grateful for any support from our Bethlehem family. Philanthropic giving helps to make these wonderful initiatives possible.

Wishing you a wonderful Thanksgiving,

Corinne M. King



The Healing Center

For the next couple of months, you will hear from Healing Center staff and their work. This month our Youth Coordinator talks about our Daughters of the Lotus teen program.

Dear Friends,

Happy Thanksgiving,

The Healing Center's Daughters of the Lotus program has a multimodal approach which cultivates and guides young women through the journey of self-determination, so they can discover and nurture the power they have within, their individuality, and their strengths. Our program is successful because we provide a supportive and inclusive safe space for the young women we work in collaboration with. Far too often the young women are told their opinions and insight are of no importance due to their age, race, gender, and immigration status. At Daughters of the Lotus we provide opportunity for the young women to express insight from their deepest fears to their political viewpoints in an environment that will not judge their ideas and perspectives. The success of the program relies on the participants feeling comfortable to ask questions they could not ask elsewhere. Daughters of the Lotus is unique in that we tailor the curriculum to discuss relevant and influential events and media as they happen.

Journaling, poetry, and other forms of expressive arts are used in the curriculum, so they can freely express their feelings and experiences. The young women can voice who they are and who they want to be. Not only do expressive arts allow teens to connect with themselves and their subconscious, it also promotes problem solving skills, a fundamental piece of human development. We have seen our young women thrive with the use of spoken word. One participant inspired by the abuse she witnessed as a child created a piece about teen dating violence. She performed her original work at an open mic, and in front of 300+ people at the New York City Teen Dating Violence Awareness Walk-A-Thon. Creativity helps them align together, share their experiences, and relate to each other, which builds community and is a great confidence builder for our young women. Another participant especially flourished and found her voice. When she first arrived at Daughters of the Lotus she was very timid, and quiet, while apprehensive at first, when she did share with the group she was intuitive and intelligent. Within three months she pinpointed the obstacles she faced, identifying her high school as having low expectations about her college aspirations and the high school's approach to sexual harassment complaints. She and her classmates were targeted for disciplinary actions for their involvement in expressing their dissatisfaction of the current administration handling of academic and sexual harassment issues. With the assistance of the DOL program she armed herself with her rights as a student and met with her dean and guidance counselor, making them aware of the sexual harassment that is prevalent at the school and contesting the disciplinary actions sought against her. I am delighted to report she has made great strides and is a thriving, gifted student applying to top tier colleges with a bright future ahead.

For more information about our teen program please call 718-238-5138, I can also be reached by email at srodriguez@thehealingcentemy.org

Sincerely,

Stephanie Rodriguez

Youth Coordinator

#BeThe1To - Suicide Prevention

By Chris Abatelli, LMHC, LCC Psychotherapist

It is estimated that 36,000 Americans commit suicide every year and that over 800,000 attempts of suicide occur in a year. These attempts might be avoided through education, understanding, and professional help. Unfortunately, many who make suicide attempts never seek the professional care needed and may believe that there is no way out of his/her situation.

Survivors of those who die from suicide are left with so many unanswered questions. When a friend is depressed or shows symptoms of being suicidal, many people are still afraid to ask the direct question, "Are you thinking of hurting or killing yourself?", for fear that the comment may actually plant this idea in her head, even if she wasn't thinking of it. Scientific research shows that this is not the case. Instead, it is the one comment that may lead your friend to seek the help she needs. Clinical psychologist and suicide expert William Schmitz, Psy.D, states that bringing the subject up suggests that you care and may encourage her to open up to you, share her feelings of despondency, and be the catalyst to her seeking the professional help she needs.

There are some simple steps one can take to help: ACE (Ask, Care, Escort) is an acronym to help you remember what to do when you believe someone you know is considering suicide.

Ask: Have the courage to calmly ask if the other person is considering thinking of committing suicide. Be an active listener, maintain eye contact, be present and focused on the other person, be non-judgmental, show empathy in your body language. DO NOT listen to respond, listen to understand what she is feeling. If your friend reveals a plan to harm herself, do not keep the plan a secret. Realize your limitations.

Care: Make sure to calmly control the situation. If she reveals a plan of harm, let her know there are others who care and have the tools to help her! Advise her to seek a professional therapist for help, whether through a support group or individual therapy.

Escort: Don't leave the person alone. Bring her to a doctor, therapist, pastor, youth leader, teacher, or any trusted adult. It is always better to err on the side of caution. Risking your friend's anger with you for getting her to someone who can help is better than risking that person's life. If needed, call the national suicide prevention hotline at 1-800-273-8255. The person on the other end of the line is skilled in getting the help needed and will guide you and/or your friend. The worst thing you can do in a crisis is to do nothing.

Once the friend is safe and receiving help, continue to talk to her for days or weeks afterwards, letting her know that you care and are there for her. Make sure you don't take on the responsibility of your friend's safety by yourself. For more information and help, visit <http://www.sprc.org/>.

Thanks to a generous grant from St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church's Mission Fund, LCC has Suicide Prevention and Intervention Seminars available AT NO COST for your church's youth group (ages 12 to 17). The seminar will teach teens what to do if a friend may be suicidal and will help them create their own personal safety plan. Call us today at 1-800-317-1173 to arrange your seminar today.

Healing Center Sunday



November 12, 2017

10:30am-12:00pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church will be celebrating The Healing Center for providing services to victims and survivors of domestic violence.

Join us for coffee hour after service and meet our Board of Directors and Staff.

Adult **Bible**
Class



Sunday Mornings
9:15 – 10:15 a.m.
In the Parish Room

led by Carl Jacobsen

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

4th & Ovington Avenues

Brooklyn NY 11209

718-748-9502

www.bethlehembayridge.org

Sunday Worship Service at 10:30 AM

All are welcome here



Visit us on
Facebook

For the latest, please
follow us on
Facebook

[www.facebook.com/
Bethlehembayridge/](http://www.facebook.com/Bethlehembayridge/)

Follow | Like | Share