

# The Bethlehem Star



The newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
www.bethlehembayridge.org

## March 2018

### In this month's Beth Star...

- Message from Pastor Paul
- Calendar, activities, schedule, including Lenten services, 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, Mar 16  
6:30 PM  
Women's Group St. Patrick's dinner



Sunday, Mar 18  
12:00 PM  
Youth Group Pizza & Movie



Thursday, Mar 29  
5:00 PM  
Passover Seder & Maundy Thursday Worship service



Sunday, Apr 1  
10:30 AM  
Easter Sunday service



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 March

Dear Members and Friends,

I always enjoy the first school chapel service of the month. Why? Because, Mr. Kevin leads the chapel and provides the message. I know what you are thinking. Pastor Paul likes this chapel the best because he doesn't have to prepare anything or do anything. Incorrect! As a pastor, it is usually me that has the responsibility of giving the sermon or the message. It is great to be motivated and inspired by someone else. Mr. Kevin does this every time.

Today's chapel service was no exception. Mr. Kevin gave a very interesting take on the story of Jesus clearing the temple of all the sellers and money changers. He made the statement that "Jesus was not nice" in this story. One of our adorable young students said out loud, "I have never heard 'Jesus' and 'not nice' in the same sentence before." Mr. Kevin described Jesus overturning tables and chasing people and animals out with his whip of chords. He was angry and telling people that he would not have his Father's house turned into a den of thieves. Jesus was causing a commotion and disturbing something that was considered acceptable by the religious community of his day.

More examples of "un-nice" behavior were given from Jesus' life. He called the Pharisees and Scribes a brood of vipers. Not so nice to refer to people as snakes. Jesus upset the religious leaders by healing people on the Sabbath, breaking the Sabbath rules. He told Peter, "Oh, ye of little faith," when he starting to sink when he was walking towards Jesus on the water. Jesus regularly made people uncomfortable with what he had to say. If you had money, beware, because it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a person of wealth to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus was not nice!

Mr. Kevin informed the LES students that he did not consider it a compliment to be called "nice." Being nice doesn't demonstrate any depth of character. If we are to follow Jesus' example, nice doesn't fit. Jesus was much more interested in doing what was right, and being loving, kind, compassionate, and sacrificing. It wasn't important to be nice.

God is not interested in superficial nice-ness. God wants us to stand up and do the right thing no matter how people react. Sometimes people might feel uncomfortable. Sometimes they might even get angry at us, but people got mad at Jesus too. God wants us to truly be loving, kind, compassionate and giving, and God wants us to speak out against those who are not. This is the example Jesus gave us to follow. Wonderful message, Mr. Kevin!

In God's Service,

*Rev. Paul H. Knudsen*

Pastor

## March at a Glance

- 3/1 @ 7:15 p.m. -- SW Brooklyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd
- 3/4 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship service
- 3/5 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bay Ridge Center Board of Directors
- 3/7 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Lenten Prayer & Reflection
- 3/9 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Scout Blue & Gold Dinner
- 3/11 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship service w/ Scout Sunday
- 3/13 @ 7:00 p.m. -- LES School Board
- 3/14 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Healing Center Board of Directors
- 3/14 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Lenten Prayer & Reflection
- 3/16 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bethlehem Women's Group in the Joy Room
- 3/18 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship service
- 3/18 @ 12:00 p.m. -- Youth Group Movie & Pizza
- 3/20 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Church Council
- 3/21 @ 6:00 p.m. -- Bay Ridge Center Community Advisory Board
- 3/21 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Lenten Prayer & Reflection
- 3/24 @ 10:00 a.m. -- Bay Ridge Center March for Meals
- 3/25 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship service w/ Palm/Passion Sunday
- 3/29 @ 5:00 p.m. -- Passover Seder
- 3/29 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Maundy Thursday Worship
- 3/30 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Good Friday Worship

Coffee hours are held in the Fellowship Room.

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday Worship

March 25th @ 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Passover Seder

March 29th @ 5:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Worship

March 29th @ 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday Worship

March 30th @ 7:00 p.m.

Easter Morning Breakfast

April 1st @ 8:45 a.m.

Easter Morning Worship

April 1st @ 10:30 a.m.

# March 2018

Services | Activities | Special Events | Meetings

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:15 pm SW Bklyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd 7:15 pm—AA	2 7:00 pm—Scouts	3 6:15 pm—AA 7:30 pm—AA
4 9:15 am—Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am—SS /Confirmation 10:30 am—Worship followed by Coffee Hour	5 6:30 pm Bay Ridge Center Board of Directors 7:00 pm—AA	6	7 7:00 pm Lenten Meditation & Prayer	8 7:15 pm—AA	9 7:00 pm Scout Blue & Gold Dinner 6:15 pm—AA 7:30 pm—AA	10
11 9:15 am—Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am—SS /Confirmation 10:30 am—Scout Sunday Worship followed by Coffee Hour	12 7:00 pm—AA	13 7:00 pm LES School Board	14 6:30 pm Healing Center Board of Directors 7:00 pm Lenten Meditation & Prayer	15 7:15 pm—AA	16 6:30 pm Bethlehem Women's Group in the Joy Room 6:15 pm—AA 7:30 pm—AA	17
18 9:15 am—Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am—SS /Confirmation 10:30 am—Worship followed by Coffee Hour 12 pm—Youth Group Movie & Pizza	19 7:00 pm—AA	20 7:00 pm Church Council	21 6:30 pm Bay Ridge Center Community Advisory Board 7:00 pm Lenten Meditation & Prayer	22 7:15 pm—AA	23 7:00 pm—Scouts	24 10:00 am Bay Ridge Center March for Meals 6:15 pm—AA 7:30 pm—AA
25 9:15 am—Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am—SS /Confirmation 10:30 am—Palm Sunday Worship followed by Coffee Hour	26 7:00 pm—AA	27	28	29 5:00 pm Passover Seder 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Worship	30 7:00 pm Good Friday Worship	31 6:15 pm—AA 7:30 pm—AA

## SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

2/4 – 105  
2/11 – 55  
2/14 (Ash Wednesday) – 30  
2/18 – 66  
2/25 - 69

Bethlehem: The Growing Church!

## MONTHLY OFFERING

December 2017: \$21,723.00  
January 2018: \$8,458.00  
February 2018: \$8,629.00

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

## FELLOWSHIP

3/4 – Coffee Hour  
3/11 – Scout Sunday Coffee Hour  
3/18 – Coffee Hour  
3/25 – Coffee Hour  
3/29 – Passover Seder

## ADULT BIBLE CLASS

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

## YOUTH MINISTRY

Movie & Pizza: 3/18 – 12:00 PM

## SAVE THE DATE

Norwegian Day Parade  
Sunday, 5/20 @ 1:00 p.m.  
— Gary Solberg is selling pins \$5 each



## 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!
- Altar Flowers in honor / memory of loved ones – sign up poster in the Church Narthex

## BETHLEHEM WOMEN'S GROUP

All Bethlehem's women are welcome and encouraged to be part of this group. It's a way to connect with other women of all ages in the church; we invite younger women to be a part of the group, forming friendships for fun and fellowship, along with activities and projects. Everyone's thoughts and suggestions are welcome.

Our photo prayer cards are available to members not feeling well/homebound/in nursing homes. Also, the prayer cards make great gifts for yourself or a friend, they are \$10.00 each.

## MEETINGS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

We meet on the 3rd Friday of the month at 6:30 pm in the Joy Room at the Parsonage.

Please contact Lisa Johansson for any information on the following activities. Call/text 917 873-8799/[lisakatt81@aol.com](mailto:lisakatt81@aol.com)

- Friday 3/16 @ 6:30 pm.  
Come and enjoy a Corned Beef and Cabbage Buffet. Get your green on and celebrate St. Patrick's Day which has become a global celebration.
- Friday 4/20 – Sunday 4/22  
Koinonia Spring Women's Retreat - Highland Lake, NY An amazing weekend for you to be surrounded by God's creation.
- Saturday 5/19 9:30 am - 3:00 pm  
Bay Ridge Center's Sidewalk Sale – we have reserved a table to sell items donated by BLC Women.
- Future Outings which are in planning stages no dates have been set:

Sight & Sound Theater in Lancaster PA – to see "Jesus A Timeless Story of Relentless Love" and lunch at Good "N" Plenty in Lancaster. Bus trip with L & M Bus Tours / The following dates are available, however still getting feedback: Saturdays May 19, September 29, and December 15

The Museum of the Bible in Washington DC



## BIRTHDAYS

3/6 – Russell Skop  
3/7 – Christine DeMarco  
3/10 – Abby Bakke  
3/13 – Mindy Jacobsen/Yvonne Balkissoon/Caitlin Brown  
3/15 – Sarah Jane Roszko  
3/17 – Marty Finkelstein  
3/20 – Ken Stephansen  
3/22 – Mia Nicole Frangoulis  
3/23 – Eric Kaiser  
3/26 – Barbara O’Shea  
3/27 – AnneMarie Larsen/Nancy Haynes/Pastor Phyllis Haynes  
3/28 – Gail Solby/Ashley Campbell/Logan Campbell  
3/29 – Irene Jacobsen/ Isabella Valencia

*Best Wishes*

## 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, Edna 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, Edith Zito, Barbara Muselli, Joe & Dottie Gizzarelli, George Stuart, Lynne McLaughlin, Chloe Sletholt, John E. Sletholt, Barbara Vlaovic, Ralph Villano, Manghild Olsen, Mary Sandoval, Mary Bond, Rosemarie & Neil Gallo, DJ Nicol, Andy Temple

*In Our Thoughts  
& Prayers* 

## STRENGTH & PROTECTION

Joseph Gordon, Paul Boackle, Joshua Roman,  
Nico Hernandez Medina

## Church Council Highlights — February 20, 2018 Meeting

### **Bay Ridge Center (presented by Pastor Paul)**

- The construction of a new senior center is still a main focus of the administration and board. The NYC Department for the Aging is supportive of the plan. Hopefully, this will move forward in the next few months.
- The March for Meals (walkathon) will take place on Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Worship & Music (presented by Dennis Monsen)**

- Positive worship experiences included Three Kings Sunday (1/14), Annual Meeting Sunday (1/28), Ash Wednesday service (2/14).
- An organ assessment took place and it is clear that work should be done to help maintain and restore our instrument. An initial phase will begin shortly.
- The Worship/Music Commission will meet on Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Lutheran Elementary School (presented by Pastor Paul for Doris Dunn)**

- The School Board recommended John Sletholt as a new member of the School Board. The motion was made and unanimously passed to enable John to officially join the School Board.
- Re-registration has begun for the 2018-2019 school year. A letter accompanied the re-registration material, informing the parents of the additional staff changes/retirements planned for next year. A fully developed staffing plan was shared in order to avoid any parental concerns.
- Work has already begun in planning the annual Dinner/Dance fundraiser on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Property (presented by Steve Solby)**

- Will be meeting with John from Sure Foundation to help prioritize our property improvement list for 2018. We want to move forward on the highest priority items first. Much of our work, however, involves weekend activity, so we don't disturb our weekday ministries.

### **Sunday School (presented by Kathy Finkelstein)**

- The current Sunday School material involves a Lenten theme. This matches well with our Sunday morning worship.
- A Piggy Bank project in March will bring money in for hurricane victims in Houston, Texas.
- The Sunday School children have created a poster that will be displayed in the narthex of the church very soon.
- The Sunday School children will sing at our Sunday morning worship on Mother's Day.

### **Healing Center (presented by Laura Caruso)**

- Antonia did a nice job of presenting the Healing Center ministry at our annual meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- A part time program manager has been hired (Sandra Torres). This will help free up Antonia for more Executive Director functions.
- A \$7k grant from the NY Women's Foundation was received and Antonia has applied for all the annual discretionary funding grants.
- The Teen Dating Violence Awareness walkathon is scheduled for April 14<sup>th</sup>.



## Church Council Highlights — February 20, 2018 Meeting (continued)

- The focus of the Board of Directors was discussed at the last board meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Financial health will be the primary focus. Board meetings will go to monthly, with the board taking on the responsibility of fundraising. Antonia will move from managing day to day operations, to working more on development. This discussion was well received by the board.

### **Evangelism (presented by Deacon Tony)**

- Deacon Tony will take on the leadership role for the Wednesday Lenten Reflection & Prayer services at 7:00 p.m. The council was encouraged to attend.

### **Fellowship (presented by Lisa Johansson)**

- The Bethlehem women celebrated Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year at their meeting on Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. They will meet again on Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Several women have signed up for the Koinonia Women's Weekend, April 20 – 22.

### **Public Relations (presented by Ray Palermo)**

- The new resized banners need to be ordered. The Lenten banner should include the mid-week Prayer & Reflection services at 7:00 p.m.

### **Finance Report (presented by Pastor Paul)**

- The January 2018 financial report was reviewed and accepted as presented.

### **Pastor's Report (presented by Pastor Paul)**

- Visitations (15), Funerals (3), Baptisms (0), Weddings (0)
- A motion was made and passed to change all evening services to 7:00 p.m. This should give people enough time to get home from work, but not make it too late for our members.
- The youth group had a great time at Koinonia. The conditions were great for winter activities in the snow. The spiritual theme for the weekend was "Traditions" (which ones we should keep and which ones should be left in the past).
- The annual meeting successfully accentuated the wonderful work of our church and our ministries in 2017.
- Property sale: No change in status to the sale of our 415 Ovington Ave. apartment building.
- The first benevolence gifts were approved for 2018. \$500 will be given to both our Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts on Scout Sunday in March.
- The election of officers took place. The following slate was approved unanimously.
  - President: Laura Caruso
  - Vice-President: Ray Palermo
  - Treasurer: Christine Puelle
  - Secretary: (vacant)



Dear Members and Friends,

At the core of the Meals on Wheels (MOWs) service is a nutritious meal, companionship, and a watchful eye on the health and safety of our seniors. For those who have trouble getting around, we bring the service to you.

For millions of Americans, MOWs is literally the difference between remaining in their own homes or needing to relocate to a nursing facility. Research proves that when seniors have the right support, they gain greater quality of life, need fewer hospital stays and live longer.

For many seniors, the trusted MOWs worker who shows up every day with a hot meal and a warm smile is the only person they see or speak with all day. This special delivery is the reason to get up in the morning, something to look forward to, and a reminder to take good care of themselves.

Along with the inevitable impacts of aging come the increased risks of medical emergencies, falls and other accidents. The safety check that accompanies each meal delivery helps to reduce falls, trips to the hospital or premature institutionalization. It also ensures that, in the case of an emergency or problem, medics will be called, families will be notified and our seniors will not be forgotten. Millions of American families sleep better at night and can continue their daily routines and responsibilities because they know that Bay Ridge Center is keeping a watchful eye over their loved ones and raising a red flag if something doesn't seem just right.

And, MOWs saves money. We provide a senior with daily meals for an entire year for roughly the same cost as one day in the hospital.

Bay Ridge Center provides MOWs for over 600 older adults in our community every day. We need our community's support to continue to meet the growing need.

Please join us on March 24th to March for Meals and raise awareness of how much this service helps our seniors.

Thanks for your support.

*Kim Larachi*

Director of Meals on Wheels



Bay Ridge Center is a non-sectarian, non-profit agency funded in part through grants from the New York City Department for the Aging and the New York State Office for Aging.



Dear Friends,

March 8, 2018 is International Women's Day; this year's theme is #PressforProgress. With the World Economic Forum's 2017 Global Gender Gap Report findings telling us that gender parity is over 200 years away - there has never been a more important time to keep motivated and #PressforProgress.

This is the time to recognize and celebrate women's achievements. Women in our families, in our communities, and in our lives. Women who have strived for change, women who have come forward to share their stories about domestic violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Women are breaking the silence, no longer having to live with the secret, no longer feeling shame or "who would believe" them.

The issue of violence against women whether in instances of intimate partner violence, harassment at the work place, or not receiving equal pay, are human rights issues that affect women now and throughout history. We are living at a time where we can make a difference and be a catalyst for change. As we think about international women's day and the women in our own lives present and women who have gone before us, women who struggled to make ends meet, who worked long hours in factories without equal pay and in horrific conditions. Let us honor their memory by taking a day of action or doing something in their remembrance.

At the Healing Center, we recognized the need to address the issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault that has affected many of the women that come to the center. On Thursday, March 8, 2018 we will celebrate with a day of action by organizing, a public Speak Out to bring awareness and make known that sexual harassment is not acceptable. We will meet in front of Generoso's Bakery located at 5812 5th Avenue. All are welcome to participate and support the women who will share their stories.

Please save the date for the NYC Teen Dating Violence Awareness Walkathon on Saturday, April 14, 2018. Walkathon register information is available at [www.thehealingcenterny.org](http://www.thehealingcenterny.org).

If you are interested our upcoming event or know someone who needs our services please contact us at 718-238-5138. All calls are confidential.

I asked for your continued prayers and thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

*Antonia Clemente*  
Executive Director

## I Believe You

By The Rev. Thomas S. Taylor, STM, LCSWR, PhD, LCC Psychotherapist

No part of our society is immune from the sober realization that our leaders are being exposed as a source of the abuse of power over those under their care, control and influence. Virtually every level of our shared public lives has been stunned by the almost daily revelations of various forms of abuse and mistrust of public figures from politics, entertainment, education, healthcare, sports and religion. We corporately and individually share pain, disappointment, and a sense of betrayal of trust upon hearing of yet another case of abuse.

These stories are not just “out there”, but they are also “in here”. By that I mean, in our roles as congregational members and leaders, we are entrusted by others who share their stories of pain. These courageous voices are nurtured by our sacramental ministry but also yearn for our ministry of counsel, sympathy, support, guidance and healing.

In fact, as I listen to these stories – when shared to me in person or shared nationally – I hear something shifting. Voices that have been silenced, or ignored, or belittled, are speaking up and being heard. These voices and stories, with their variety and diversity, expand our range of viewpoints so we stand on new terrain. Sometimes I am so shaken I mumble to myself, “Jeeze, I didn’t really know how bad it was”. These stories reach beyond the abuses of our public leaders in our work environments to our homes. For example, the Mayor’s office reports an average of 230 calls a day to the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline and an average of 250 calls a day to the NYPD reporting intimate partner abuse.

Years ago, I listened to a woman describe her story of being abused by a trusted leader in the community. After she finished, I paused to take it all in, and then said, “I believe you”. The look of surprise and relief on her face at being heard, at being believed, was striking and unforgettable.

“I believe you” gave her new life as the secret was shared.

Times like these tempt us to feel cynical. Yet, when we see a survivor of abuse find a new life of safety and healing, our cynicism turns to hope as we witness that person move from death to life. We as a community of faith can be a sanctuary for similar voices and stories that need to be heard and believed.

We believe you.

*The Rev. Thomas S. Taylor, STM, LCSW-R, PhD, is counselor-in-residence at Advent Lutheran Church in New York, NY, and at LCC’s Bronxville site, helping individuals, couples and families with a variety of mental health issues. He is a Certified Psychoanalyst, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with an ‘R’ status and a Prepare/Enrich certified trainer.*

Call the Lutheran Counseling Center at 516-741-0994 or 1-800-317-1173 or e-mail us at [Center@lccny.org](mailto:Center@lccny.org) for more information or to set an appointment. LCC has eight counseling sites in and around metropolitan New York. Visit our website at [www.lccny.org](http://www.lccny.org).

Adult **Bible**  
*Class*



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

led by Carl Jacobsen

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

4<sup>th</sup> & Ovington Avenues

Brooklyn NY 11209

718-748-9502

[www.bethlehembayridge.org](http://www.bethlehembayridge.org)

## Sunday Worship Service at 10:30 AM

### All are welcome here



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