

The Bethlehem Star

The newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
www.bethlehembayridge.org

September 2017

In this month's Beth Star...

- Message from Pastor Paul
- Calendar, activities, schedule, including LES Opening Day, Rally Sunday, Congregational BBQ, and more
- Church Council highlights
- Reports from The Bay Ridge Center and the Lutheran Counseling Center



Sunday
10:30 AM
Worship Service
followed by coffee
hour



Sunday, Sept 10
10:30 AM
LES Opening Service
followed by
Reception at LES

Rally Sunday & Bar-B-Que

Sunday
Sept 17
10:30 Service
12:00 BBQ



Friday, Sept 15
6:30 PM
Bethlehem
Women's Group



Sunday, Sept 24
10:30 AM
Bible Sunday
Adult Bible Study
@9:15

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 September

Dear Members and Friends,

In the month of August we had two gospel lessons that focused on the apostle Peter. The first gospel lesson told the story of Jesus walking on the water and Peter asking Jesus, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But, when Peter noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and he began to sink. Jesus' response, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

The second gospel lesson involving Peter told the story of Jesus asking his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" They responded that some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Jesus continued, "But, who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Peter responded correctly, and Jesus proclaimed, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it."

There are two messages I wish to share with you about Peter. First, Peter was far from perfect. In the first story, Peter lost his focus and began to worry about the wind and the sea. He doubted Jesus and he began to sink. We remember Peter after Jesus was arrested. People questioned him about his connection with Jesus and Peter denied that he knew Jesus, not once, but three times. In the early days of the church, Peter was very closed minded about who could be a follower of Jesus. He was not open to non-Jewish believers until God came to him in a dream to enlighten him about the good news of Jesus being for all people.

This same imperfect Peter, however, in the second gospel lesson boldly proclaimed who Jesus really was. He declared, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Peter got it right, and then he went on to be the leader of the church in Jerusalem. He preached the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection, even in the midst of severe persecution. He truly was the rock on which the church was built and his life ended in crucifixion, because of his love and service to the risen Lord.

As we begin this new church/school year, I want to begin with a significant message. Peter provides that message for us. Our wonderful Bethlehem community is filled with flawed people. Sorry, but I look at you from the pulpit, I see our children in chapel, I greet parents as they drop off and pick up their kids, I see the seniors in our center and all those associated with our Healing Center. Not one of us is perfect. Yes, like Peter, we often fail.

But, Peter did something right. Peter focused on Jesus. He began to sink, when he took his eyes off of Jesus, but he was the rock of the early Christian church, because he knew who Jesus was. Great things don't happen because we are flawless. Great things happen because we listen to Jesus' words, follow Jesus' direction, and focus on Jesus in our life. Jesus speaks, Jesus leads, Jesus lifts us up to accomplish incredible things. Yes, Jesus, you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!

In God's Service,

Rev. Paul H. Knudsen

Pastor

September at a Glance

- 9/3 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship
- 9/7 @ 7:15 p.m. -- SW Brooklyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd
- 9/10 @ 10:30 a.m. -- Sunday morning worship w/ LES Opening Service
- 9/10 @ 12:00 p.m. -- LES Orientation and refreshments on Playground
- 9/11 -- LES opening day of school
- 9/12 @ 7:00 p.m. -- LES School Board
- 9/15 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bethlehem Women's Group in the parsonage
- 9/17 -- Regular Sunday morning schedule w/ Rally Sunday (SS & Confirmation class begins)
- 9/17 @ 12:00 p.m. -- Opening BBQ behind the parsonage
- 9/19 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Church Council
- 9/24 -- Regular Sunday morning schedule w/ Bible Sunday (+ Adult Bible Class @ 9:15 in Parish Room)
- 9/24 @ 12:00 p.m. -- Youth Group in the Joy Room
- 9/25 @ 6:30 p.m. -- Bay Ridge Center Board of Directors
- 9/26 @ 7:00 p.m. -- Worship/Music Commission in the parsonage

Coffee hours are held in the Fellowship Room.



September 2017

Services | Activities | Special Events | Meetings

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10:30 am—Worship followed by Coffee Hour	4 7:15 pm—AA	5	6	7 7:15 pm SWEdgyn Lutheran Council @ Good Shepherd 7:15 pm—AA	8	9 7:15 pm—AA
10 10:30 am Worship w/ LES Opening Service 12 pm - LES Open House and Refreshments on the Playground	11 LES Opening Day Of School 7:15 pm—AA	12 7:00 pm LES School Board	13	14	15 6:30 pm ELC Women's Group Joy Room 7:15 pm—AA	16
17 9:15 am SS & Confirmation Class begins. 10:30 am—Worship w/ Rally Sunday 12 PM Opening BBQ behind the Parsonage	18 7:15 pm—AA	19 7:00 pm Church Council	20	21	22 6:00 pm Scouts Open House w/BBQ 7:15 pm—AA	23
24 9:15 am—Adult Bible Class in the Parish Room 9:15 am—SS & Confirmation 10:30 am—Worship w/ELC Sunday followed by Coffee Hour 1:25M Youth Group in the By Room	25 6:30 pm Eg Ridge Center Board of Directors 7:15 pm—AA	26 7:00 pm Worship /Music Commission in the Parsonage	27	28	29 7:00 pm—Scouts 7:15 pm—AA	30 7:15 pm—AA

SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

6/4 – 118
6/11 – 139
6/18 – 81
6/25 – 40

7/2 – 52
7/9 – 57
7/16 – 70
7/23 – 66
7/30 – 59

8/6 – 56
8/13 – 52
8/20 – 47
8/27 -53

Bethlehem: The Growing Church!

MONTHLY OFFERING

June: \$6,621.00
July: \$7,961.00
August: \$4,824.00

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

FELLOWSHIP

9/3 – Coffee Hour
9/10 – Refreshments on the LES Playground
9/17 – Opening BBQ
9/24 – Coffee Hour

ADULT BIBLE CLASS

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



WEDDINGS

August 5th
Gilda Lynn PeNaco & Dennis Cerutti, II

YOUTH MINISTRY

9/24 @ 12 PM
Joy Room, Pizza and Planning!!

BLC WOMEN'S MINISTRY

9/15 @ 6:30 p.m.
Joy Room

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/fellowship every week!
Please sign up!

INSTALLATION OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Elizabeth Bohrer
Kathy Finkelstein
Kathy Kaiser
Paul Knudsen
Aaron Pahwa
Hannah Puelle
Christine Smith

BIRTHDAYS

9/1 – Elliott Okun
9/3 – Steve Wilson
9/4 – Helen Roszko
9/8 – Eva Rabi
9/10 – Max Martinez
9/16 – Adam Brown
9/18 – Elaine Caruso
9/26 – Michael Smith
9/30 – Jocelyn Bravo

Best Wishes

NURSING HOME

Christine Scanlon, Reymundo Lariosa

IN SYMPATHY

June 20th
Norma McGrath
Condolences to Norma's family and friends.

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers* 

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, d Shipwright, Carl and Mindy Jacobsen, Anne Okun, Anna Marie Zarr, Mario Torres, Anna Atilas, Laura Woltman, Rose Barron, Marietta Blanchette, Helge Henricksen, Herb Steike, Edna Weber, Ken Weber, Mia Frangoulis, Hope Cevalis, Cynthia Gilibert, Joseph Musco, Chloe Elizabeth Sletholt, 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 Lande, Gina Sletholt

Church Council Highlights — June 20, 2017 Meeting

Bay Ridge Center (presented by Pastor Paul)

- The Nite @ the Races fundraiser raised over \$10,000 for the center.
- Negotiations are under way with the owner of the property next to the parsonage. Potentially a new senior center would be constructed with the initial agreement being a rental with the option to buy. Since the Bay Ridge Center is a separate not-for-profit entity, this is not a church negotiation.

Worship & Music (presented by Dennis Monsen)

- We have hired Maria Rayzvasser as our new Music Director and we are very pleased.

Lutheran Elementary School (presented by Al Koehler)

- On May 25th, LES had their Spring Musicale. It was wonderful.
- June 11th was the Baccalaureate. June 13th was the Graduation Banquet. June 15th was Graduation. There were 18 graduates this year.
- The School Board will meet on June 26th.

Property (presented by Steve Solby)

- Recently completed work:
 - Built a cinderblock curb in the back of the LES schoolyard to keep water from cascading onto the properties behind the school.
- Planned work:
 - Repair and waterproof the retaining wall between the schoolyard and the parsonage driveway.
 - Repair and waterproof the front of the 411 Ovington Avenue office building.
 - Repair the ceiling in the church balcony storage room under the bell tower.

Sunday School (presented by Kathy Finkelstein)

- Sunday School is over until September.
- Four Sunday School families went to Koinonia on Memorial Day Weekend to participate in the 5k run/walk fundraiser. Over \$25k was raised for our camp.
- 5 children are enrolled in our cradle roll program.
- September 17th is Rally Sunday.
- September 24th is Bible Sunday.

Healing Center (presented by Pastor Paul)

- The Healing Center Board of Directors met on June 7th.
- The board is anxious to see whether our discretionary funding is at the same level as this past year. The city's fiscal year begins July 1st.

Evangelism

- Deacon Tony will supply for Pastor Paul on Sunday, June 25th.

Fellowship

- Bethlehem Women's Group met on the parsonage patio on Friday, June 16th. Their inspirational prayer cards project will continue. Some of our women will be attending the Koinonia Women's weekend on September 8th thru 10th. A Circle Line trip to Bear Mountain is planned for September 30th.

Finance Report (presented by Pastor Paul)

- The May 2017 financial report was reviewed and accepted as presented.

(more)

Church Council Highlights — June 20, 2017 Meeting
(continued)

Pastor's Report (presented by Pastor Paul)

- Visitations (10), Funerals (1), Baptisms (0), Weddings (1)
- Youth activities will begin again in September.
- Property sale:
 - Litigation against us by the buyer stating a delay in the selling process.
 - We have retained a lawyer to defend us who is familiar with representing churches.
- 456 Ovington Avenue: Possible new site for the Bay Ridge Center.
- 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation (Ray Palermo)
 - New banners will be designed and purchased for the front of the church, including a Reformation banner.
 - A Lutheran Rose flag will be purchased for our flag pole in front of the church
 - Special Reformation anniversary messages will be added to our website and Facebook
 - A series of \$500 Reformation benevolence grants will be discussed at our next meeting.
 - We will have a Reformation luncheon on October 29th.
- Pastor Paul has agreed to serve on the Norwegian Christian Home Board of Directors.
- A motion was made and passed to enable the executive committee of the church council to make non-critical time-sensitive decisions on behalf of the church council during the summer months.



Dear Members and Friends,

September is National Senior Center Month.

As a resident of Bay Ridge, and an employee of Bay Ridge Center, I know what a difference the Center makes in my community. I see it every day. And for me, that is a tremendously rewarding feeling.

Since 1976 Bay Ridge Center has served our senior community by providing a wonderful alternative to isolation, loneliness and hunger. Our membership of over 1,000 know that Bay Ridge Center is a safe place to go to visit with their friends; enjoy a hot meal, exercise their minds and bodies and enjoy their senior years in dignity. In addition to the members that Bay Ridge Center serves on site daily the Center's reach goes far into the community with home delivered meal services that feed almost 600 of our homebound neighbors; 7 days a week.

Senior Centers are more than a place where people go simply to while away time. Senior Centers are a wonderful example of a space where people collectively gather to share their life stories. And everyone has a unique story to tell. Senior Centers celebrate the diversity of the neighborhoods they serve and Bay Ridge is especially rich in its diversity.

The entire staff of Bay Ridge Center is dedicated to improving the quality of life for its members and we are always looking at new and innovative ways to make your daily experience here as positive and fulfilling as it can possibly be.

In addition, we are extremely fortunate to have a Senior Advisory Council that is dedicated to providing the extra niceties of the senior center experience including exciting weekly excursions, fanciful monthly parties and many other unique and special events. Please support their efforts on your behalf and consider becoming a member of the Senior Advisory Council.

Bay Ridge Center is a vital resource to our community. Thanks to the support of our enthusiastic interns and volunteers, partnering community organizations, local businesses, schools and service groups, Bay Ridge Center makes a difference in the lives of the senior population we serve.

Here's to a long and fruitful future for Bay Ridge Center!

Todd W. Fliedner

Outreach and Development

Prevent Cyberbullying: Internet Safety for Children, Ages 7 to 11

By: Mrs. Elizabeth Geiling, MSED, LMHC, LCC Psychotherapist

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. Children's and teen's suicide statistics have almost doubled in the last decade. There are many reasons for this increase but one predominant theory is cyberbullying and other predatory internet actions, considered especially dangerous because of the potential for anonymity. Be a savvy parent by using these guidelines:

If you are technologically limited, make an effort to learn and continue learning. Most communities offer adult education courses. The Apple Store offers free training when you purchase a computer. If these options are not possible, ask someone to teach you.

Place the computer in a central location where you are able to observe your child. The computer should not be in the child's bedroom. It is important to communicate the amount of screen time allowed each day. Set a timer and establish consequences for time violations. An excellent consequence is to take away screen time for the next day. If your child has a cell phone, set similar restrictions on phone calls and texting; do not allow them to use it at will.

After your child is finished online, check the browser and view the recently visited websites. If the viewing history is cleared, they might be visiting sites that are inappropriate. If your child shuts down the web page or the computer when you walk by, chances are they are hiding something. Be clear that you will be checking in order to assure their safety.

Establish the rules for the internet. What websites are they allowed to visit? What social media are they allowed to use? Check all the websites that they visit. Post the rules, including time limits near the computer. This way there will be no confusion. The internet browser can be set to block certain sites and help with parental monitoring.

Educate your child regarding predators who are online. They should not engage in conversation with people they do not know. They should never give out their name, address, school, phone number or anything that would enable an online person to find them. Even pictures of landmarks can identify their location. It is prudent to disable your webcam, so that children cannot engage in video chat with strangers. If you suspect a problem involving predatory behavior, bring it to the attention of the police.

Cyberbullying is dangerous for everyone involved and has been a factor in many tragedies. Everyone is at risk, bullies as well as the bullied. For the children who are being bullied, there is no refuge; it continues even after school when they return home to their families. The child acting as bully needs as much help as the victim. Be vigilant regarding this issue, impose no tolerance and report it immediately.

Social media is constantly changing. Even if you are behind the times, it is important to join and follow your child's activity. Most social media sites have age restrictions and it is important to follow their guidelines. Parental monitoring is necessary for safety. The landscape of technology will continue to grow and change. The safety precautions in place today will soon be outdated, and are never a substitute for you. It is critical for parents to stay informed, be vigilant, set parameters and encourage ongoing discussions with your children regarding online behavior.

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



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