

# NEW DORP MORAVIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER

2024



## Season of Nostalgia

Some time back, I read an article, *Nostalgia and Faith*, by Mike Poteet on the Ministry Matters website<sup>1</sup>. Mike shared that we, as well as folks in other cultures, currently think of nostalgia as “warm memories with oneself at the center, usually among friends.” I find myself feeling nostalgic lately, but that is nothing new. When I lived in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, there was one area I drove through that always reminded me of the home of my maternal grandparents around Christmastime. It did not matter what time of year it was that I drove through there, the memory was of, and the nostalgia for, Christmas at the home of those grandparents. Their house would be warm. The smell of our traditional Christmas meal hung in the air. The carefully wrapped gifts under the tree would range from practical to playful. My grandfather once giftwrapped a pack of chewing gum by taping it to the lid of the box and covering it with tissue paper. It took a while for me to find this gift within the box, as it seemed it was only a box with tissue paper inside. And their tree - it was always, always, always an aluminum Christmas tree with a color wheel shining on it. Red, orange, green, blue, red, orange, green, blue, red... well, you get it. Some years the ornaments on the tree would all be red balls. Other years they might be all blue.



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Mike Poteet, in his article, noted that the word nostalgia was coined in 1688 by Swiss medical student Johannes Hofer from the Greek *nóstos*, “return,” and *àlgos*, “pain”— to describe how Swiss mercenaries fighting in other European countries behaved and exhibited symptoms. Nostalgia was return pain, or a painful desire to return to their homes, their homeland, and the times that they had enjoyed there. That’s not exactly how we think of nostalgia today, but I think many of us can relate to the desire, if not exactly the pain (but maybe the pain) to return to another time and place. What seems to call to us varies. It may be the persons to whom we would like to be returning (though they may now actually be located somewhere else, or even deceased). Maybe the environment is what we long for with its familiar fragrances, feelings, and sense of safety. Perhaps we just want a more simple life, or a more innocent perspective on life. At this time of year, we may even long for the Christmas worship celebrations of our youth. And, perhaps too, we long for the feeling we got from the exciting treat bag that would be given out at the end of the service. I think that the first tangerine that I ever ate came in one of those treat bags.

Another aspect of nostalgic memories is that they are selective. These warm, fond memories have often been whitewashed of those less than ideal feelings, things, and events that occurred alongside the good ones. In my own Christmas nostalgia, I rarely care to think about the year I hurt the feelings of my grandparents by rejecting their gift of Lincoln Logs because I was not immediately able to master them. And I don’t like to think about what it cost my parents to replace my new, first pair of eyeglasses which became lost on Christmas Day (later assumed to have been caught up in the trash with the used wrapping paper and put out for the trash pickup that occurred on the day after Christmas). I also don’t care to think too often about the worship service that was labelled by one person as “the worst Christmas Lovefeast, ever.” These less than positive events are part of my life and history, but are certainly not “warm memories with oneself at the center, usually among friends.”



# Trash to Treasure Sale



Join us every **second Saturday** of the month for our Trash to Treasure sale hosted and run by Bob Iadarola. The sale is in our church basement from **10 am until 2 pm** and benefits Outreach and Ministries of the church. If you have anything you would like to donate to Trash to Treasure feel free to call our office at 718-351-0090.

## This month: December 14th

*\*We do not accept clothing, bed linens, or large furniture items.*



### St. Cecelia Concert

The St. Cecelia Concert will be held on Wednesday, December 11th, at 1:00 pm in the church sanctuary.

Join us for some beautiful music and a time of refreshments following the performance.



### December



Thank you to  
Dorothy Ambrosino  
Debbie Bishop  
Harry Gerstenlauer  
for serving as our counters this month!

As we enter the seasons of Advent and Christmas, I hope that we will all enter them prepared to make new warm memories and share new loving moments with one another, and with those around us. Let's not try to hold this Christmas season to a high and unattainable standard that our whitewashed nostalgic memories might lead us to expect or anticipate. Let's recall that on the day when Jesus was born, it was a less than ideal situation for Mary and Joseph, for shepherds and innkeepers, for a baby laid in a feeding trough. In spite of the various challenges of the season, let us remember that there remains the central feature of the infant Jesus, that he came as Immanuel – God with us. Let us celebrate that in the midst of his and our circumstances, difficult or otherwise, Jesus enters into our world and our lives to bring us the gift that is beyond measure. Our lives, with their joys and sufferings, are not meant to be lived in isolation, but in relationship with our Savior and the Body of Christ on Earth, the Church. In these relationships are found the possibility and promise of miraculous love and hope, both immediate and eternal. May our deepest longings at Christmastime be not in our looking backward, but in looking forward to fullest participation in the divinely splendid Kingdom of God that Jesus ushered in as a child born in a makeshift lodging. Our warm memories may comfort and guide us, but our faith-centered hope for tomorrow inspires us to live out the teachings and grace brought to us by what seemed like a most unlikely figure. While we might take some hope in the birth of a single child, never before, or since, has such hope for all humanity been wrapped in such a package as this child, Jesus. This gift, this hope, is yours always, now and forever. Cherish it like no other. And remember that it is a gift meant to be shared, without restriction.

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas,

Pastor Walter

<sup>1</sup><http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/8492/nostalgia-and-faith?spMailingID=850443&spUserID=Mzk4NjkzMzI3S0&spJobID=420010632&spReportId=NDIwMDEwNjMyS0>

*This article has been previously published.*

## ***Our Benevolence for the Month is Heifer International***

Begun in 1944, Heifer International works throughout the world to end hunger and poverty. From honeybees to livestock, clean water resources, seeds, farm and business training Heifer International helps build sustainable communities. Help change the world with your donations.






### **Baked Goods “Sale”**

During December the Sunday School will be offering baked goods for “sale” during the Fellowship time. There’s actually no charge, but donations are being accepted for Heifer International. (This is in addition to the benevolence offering for the month.) Look for the table by itself and the ark to place your donations.





# 2024 DEC


SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<b>1 First Sunday of Advent</b> 10 am Worship/ Communion/SS 11 ish Fellowship	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00 pm Outreach Committee Meeting	<b>4</b>
<b>8 Second Sunday of Advent</b> 10 am Worship/SS 11 ish Fellowship	<b>9</b> 7:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Sonrisers St. Ceceli
<b>15 Third Sunday of Advent</b> 10 am Worship/ S.S. Christmas Program 11 ish Fellowship	<b>16</b> 7:00 pm Board of Trustees Mtg	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Sonrisers
<b>22 Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> 10 am Worship/SS 11 ish Fellowship	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Candle Service 4:00 pm 	<b>25</b> 
<b>29 First Sunday after Christmas</b> 10 am Worship/SS 11 ish Fellowship	<b>30</b> 7:00 pm Joint Board Meeting	<b>31</b> 	

# CEMBER



Glory to God  
in the highest,  
and on earth peace,  
good will toward men.

Luke 2:14, KJV

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	5	6	7
10:00 am a Concert 1:00 pm	12	13	14 Trash to Treasure Sale 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
s 10:00 am	19	20	21  Vanderbilt Community Dinner 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm
	26	27	28

The  WORLD  
CAN'T SAVE ITSELF.  
That's the message of  
Christmas.  
- Timothy Keller

# NEWS & Notes

**From the Board of Elders:** The pastor noted vacation days scheduled to use up the available days for 2024 and advised of a guest preacher. The Elders reviewed with appreciation and hope the Christmas Fair successes and opportunities. The organist position has yet to be filled, but it seems that progress is being made. Youth and children's ministries are being reviewed and possible future options are being considered. Parents of young children will be consulted as to our opportunities to help them thrive in our faith community. We are glad to be celebrating so many infant baptisms! The Elders are encouraging the work of the Nominating Committee as we approach our Annual Church Council meeting in January. We continue to review our membership records and to try to bring them up-to-date.

**From the Board of Trustees:** The new plans for the ADA bathroom have been approved by the building department and new bids are in process. \*Carpeting in the church building has been cleaned. \*The new air conditioner for the sanctuary has been installed. \*A new water cooler has been purchased for the conference center. \*Various repairs in the Parish House have been completed. \*The projector/cameras in the sanctuary may need repair/replacement and this is being addressed. \*The large tree in front of the church will remain, but will not be decorated for Christmas.





<b>5</b>	Daniel Meyer	<b>17</b>	Carol Bugge
<b>6</b>	Christine Ralph	<b>18</b>	Devorah Helfrich
<b>6</b>	Alexandra Romito	<b>20</b>	Emily Schuler
<b>6</b>	Melissa West	<b>20</b>	Ezra Khabut
<b>7</b>	Robin Fox	<b>21</b>	Jean DelBagno
<b>9</b>	Dawn Bartiromo	<b>21</b>	Isabel Ranieri
<b>10</b>	Jeremi Amagsila	<b>23</b>	Makayla Wilcken
<b>10</b>	Shaun Nuzzo	<b>26</b>	Anna Gaw
<b>11</b>	Duane Ullrich	<b>26</b>	Stephanie Gerstenlauer
<b>13</b>	Jennifer Burtner	<b>28</b>	John E. Ferren
<b>15</b>	Lois Zipf	<b>31</b>	Kristina Niesi



**30** Stanley & Ruth Carter **2001**



# Community Meal

## The Moravian Churches of Staten Island

invite you to come to our free community dinner.

**Vanderbilt Moravian Church, 285 Vanderbilt Ave**

**Every 3rd Saturday of the month**

**from 4:00pm to 6:30pm.**

**The next Dinner is December 21st.**

The Free Community Dinner at VAMC is distributed as a takeout. For more Information, contact the Church Office by phone or email.

## ***Sonrisers Group***

The Sonrisers are a prayer and card ministry group that meet two Wednesdays out of the month in the Conference Center.

All are welcome to participate and/or

submit prayer requests.

This month the group will be meeting

on

**December 11th and 18th**

**at 10:00 am.**




  
*Please be  
Praying for...*  


We are happy to partner with you in prayer. If you have a concern to add to our list, please complete a prayer request card if at worship and place it in the offering plate or call (718-351-0090), or email the church office. (office@newdorp moravian.org).

Please be advised, we continue to pray for the members who have been on our prayer list. If a previous request is no longer listed, but the concern is still present, we will certainly add it back on with a new request. We do need you to help us keep our list up to date.

**For Your Prayers at this time:**

**For Health Concerns:** John DiForte, Marie Moser, Dolores Cavallo, Lois Zipf, Richard Iadorola, Libby Neri, Nate Morse, Shyanna McKelvin (return of Long Covid), Alfred Yee-Litt (undergoing treatment for cancer), Erik Faraj (complications from serious stroke), Christinjoy Fernandez, Carmel McCarthy, Carolann Cherubini, Nadira Edwards (stage 4 cancer), Patrick Eng, Joyce Fernandez (treatments for breast cancer), Theresa and John Sahaj (Theresa has been moved to rehab prior to surgery), Ruth Madison (undergoing chemotherapy), Ida Perez, Phyllis Collins (undergoing cardiac rehab), Barbara Carolan, Luke Downs (infection from surgery), Linda Griggs, Connie Vadola, Tanya Smith, William Hill and family (Mr. Hill is under hospice care), Jean DelBagno, Michael Cericola (recovering from surgery), Wayne Chase (suffered a severe fall with expected long-term recovery, Christians around the world suffering persecution, all of those continuing to recover from the recent hurricanes, and ongoing concerns throughout the world.

**For continued healing:** Deborah Griggs, and Alison Griggs

Please remember to pray for our Pastor, Board Members, and Committee Chairs as they lead us in the work of the church, and for our church, that we may follow God's leading in all of our endeavors.

# New Dorp Moravian

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Newsletter is also available to read on our website.

**The Rev. Walter Bishop, Pastor**



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