CHELSEA COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER
June-July-August 2017

Special Services and Events (All dates Sundays, 12:00 p.m., unless otherwise noted):

**June 20**
First National Bald Eagle Day Celebration in Chelsea

**August 6**
Summer hiatus begins (no services until September)

**August TBD**
Summer Group Outing: A Saturday or Sunday – date, time and place to be determined

**September 10**
Services resume, “Welcome Home Sunday,” special service with brunch after

Pastoral Reflections – Summer 2017

**The Book Group:** In May, Chelsea Community Church’s Reading Group completed *Jews in the Time of Jesus* and began *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, by Karen Armstrong.

This latest book combines her usual historical and comparative religion approach with a vital topic and a familiar bit of scripture to adherents of almost any religion: the Golden Rule!

Please join the reading group most Sunday mornings at 10:30 in the Rectory. And if you’d like to read the book along with the group but can’t always be at the church at that time, contact RevBethPerry@gmail.com to talk about ways to stay connected electronically.

**Pastoral Counselor activity:** I’m a big fan of confluence. I grew up on “The Island” - a strip of land between two rivers - so maybe that’s part of it! My grandfather owned “The Point” – the bottom of the strip of land where the two rivers met – and I spent many summer days, hanging onto a metal railing and staring down at the swirling water!
So when I see things coming together – water, ideas, people – it attracts my attention. It’s a “God thing” that draws me in and makes me wonder what is under the surface, where it might be heading off to, and what would happen if I went along!

I say all that because I’ve noticed a confluence lately at Chelsea Community Church. Different people, from different walks of life, are saying similar things to me. They are concerned about the way our country and our world are going; they want to take some action – be it physical, mental, or spiritual; and they want to find some community support for doing that!

The idea of a Faith in Action group has taken off – people are, in their own ways, getting involved. It might be educational (seeing a documentary), or spiritual (prayer and meditation), or it might be practical (volunteering to do advocacy work).

It might also be a bit whimsical: like dozens of little spider plants passing themselves off as palm branches to encourage people to go on the Climate March – or to clean the air in their new-found homes.

I also see that the confluence will include the Reading Group’s next book: Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, where Armstrong compares the Golden Rule as it is found in six major religions. She says that if you think compassion just means feeling sorry for someone else, you don’t understand it at all.

She also says that she feels

> an urgency about this. If we don’t manage to implement the Golden Rule globally, so that we treat all peoples, wherever and whoever they might be, as though they were as important as ourselves, I doubt that we’ll have a viable world to hand on to the next generation.

If you’re feeling the same and want to have some support for the next steps you’re going to take, come to the next Faith in Action meeting, during a coffee hour, join the Reading Group at 10:30am in the Whelan Room at the rectory, or talk to almost anyone else at church these days, involved in one or the other, including me.

Like the confluence of the rivers, it will be a God-thing, and who knows where it might take us!

Blessings, Beth

Easter 2017 @ Chelsea Community Church!

Paul Bodden put together a fine choir for our 2017 Easter Festival Service. The absence of the stained glass center window (out to be cleaned and kept safe during St. Peter’s building renovations) lent a mystical look to the scene.

The service, and thus the potluck brunch that followed, was very well attended this year!

Photos by Kathleen Reid © 2017
Sister Carol Perry’s Final Talk at CCC

On April 30, Chelsea Community Church was pleased to receive one more (and probably final) talk from biblical scholar and Roman Catholic nun of the Order of St. Ursula, Sister Carol Perry, on the topic of “Jesus’ Legacy to Us.” For 37 years she had been resident biblical scholar for Marble Collegiate Church and coming into Manhattan on Sundays in that capacity, but on retiring from that, she’ll no longer be able to come speak for us later. Sr. Carol also authored two books, read and enjoyed by our Book Group.

Virginia Pfeiffer originally attended one of Sr. Carol’s bible study classes at Marble Collegiate and recommended her as a speaker for us. Over some 28 years she became one of our most popular speakers, making biblical readings and characters come alive: clear, real and memorable – with a message pertinent to our own lives.

Chelsea’s first national bald eagle day celebration will be June 20, 2017

All are welcome to celebrate our nation’s symbol and its proud heritage of liberty, freedom and justice.

In 1982 President Ronald Reagan, in a joint resolution with Congress, proclaimed June 20, 1982 as “National BalEagle Day.”

On Tuesday, June 20, 2017, from 6:30-7:30 p.m., Chelsea Community Church at St. Peter’s Chelsea will present the first National Bald Eagle Day celebration in Chelsea, a lively “Musical Celebration of America and Prayer for the Future.” The event will include a singalong of cherished music from decades past; readings from historic documents; professional musicians and singers; a history of National Bald Eagle Day; and the opportunity to meet local nonprofits, such as friends of Clearwater, a representative from NYC Audubon, information from the Wild Bird Fund, and Coalition of the Homeless.

National Bald Eagle Day might never have happened without the late Frederick (“Rick”) Carrier. On June 20, 1976, Rick, a WWII veteran, Chelsea resident, author/filmmaker, and conservationist, organized the first Bald Eagle Day commemoration in our nation’s history. It was
appropriately held at St. Paul’s Chapel in NYC, where the original painting of the Great Seal of the U.S. hung over George Washington’s pew.

Rick’s efforts to bring awareness to the endangered bald eagle resulted in Governor Ella Grasso of Connecticut designating June 20, 1978 as Bald Eagle Day in Connecticut, the first official recognition in America. With lobbying by Rick’s organization, the U.S.A. Bald Eagle Command, other conservationists, and support from Governor Grasso, President Reagan declared June 20, 1982 as “National Bald Eagle Day.” (Sadly, the bald eagle is still on the endangered species list.)

Join Chelsea Community Church at St. Peters (346 West 20th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues) to celebrate our community’s first National Bald Eagle Day event. It takes place from 6:30-7:30; all are welcome including kids.

**News of Members and Friends**

Residents of the Chelsea Hotel hosted a party for Merle Lister to celebrate her 79th birthday on April 22, 2017. A number of her CCC friends joined in to toast her and share her birthday cake. It was great fun and much appreciated. Congratulations, Merle, and wishing you many more! The celebration continued as a group of CCC friends treated her to dinner at El Quijote.

Left, Merle and long-time friend and CCC congregant Betty Samuels. **Merle Lister party photos by Lynn Ramsey, except final photo added by Gloria Schofner.**

**CCC fans enjoy seeing Tony Perry in Raisin**

Several CCC regulars went to see Tony Perry in a performance of Raisin at the Astoria Performing Arts Center on Saturday, May 20.

L. to r.: Diane Mason, Lynn Ramsey, Tony Perry, Gloria Schofner, Hilda Regier, Betty Samuels, and Lorraine Brown.

*Tony Perry group photo includes a young cast member.*

**Michael Victor Ruggiero (MVR) has exciting plans for this summer!**

Rumor has it (or “the buzz is”) that MVR will be Project Arborist and Design Consultant for Liberty Island Mall Restoration in 2017!
MVR has been in negotiation with Deborah Bradley Construction, Prime Contractors, to start work on the project this summer. Work will consist of Arborist Reports for tree preservation, tree species selection, and horticultural recommendations to supplement project specifications. Shown here are the trees that were severely damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Replacement results will be seen for generations to come.

Neighborhood production gathers fascinating cast, including CCC’s Ginger Ray

*La Pazza Vita*, performed in April at the Hudson Guild, means the crazy life as opposed to Fellini’s *La Dolce Vita*. The production used the Bindleskiff Cirkus, Matthew Westerby dancers, neighborhood children, and adult community actors.

Fellini used a lot of nuns in his films so the producers wanted to have me as a token nun (shown here with long red gloves). The theme was everyday people entering into a circus world. The characters chosen made reference to characters in Fellini's films. The music was from Fellini's films. My caption could be "This is my chance to transcend the mundane." -- Ginger Ray

Rising Hope Inc., source of several of our speakers, holds annual reunion

**Rev. Dr. George W. (Bill) Webber**, now deceased, was a long-time friend of and speaker for CCC, dean of New York Theological Seminary, and co-founder, with Sr. Marian Bohen, of Rising Hope’s one-year program teaching Ministry and Social Services in a number of upstate men’s prison’s. It was he who inspired **Kathleen Reid** to volunteer-teach in that program for eight years at a prison near her summer home. She attended this year’s reunion of students and teachers (and board members, of which she is also one) in Katonah, NY April 23. Several of these have spoken at CCC over the years, including **Renny Smith** and **Rev. George McClain**.

Jeff Cubeta becomes a jazz man, with one of our soloists!

Here's some fun news: **Jeff Cubeta** has started doing some jazz sets with the amazing Nina Blue (she's a new addition to our special music roster) at Hotel Nylo on the Upper West Side. We are confirmed for:

- Friday, June 9
- Friday, June 16
- Friday, June 30

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM
It's just Nina and Jeff, and Jeff is playing -- a red baby grand piano.
Rick Carrier’s Prayer Circles Leading Him to God

In early 2016 Rick Carrier and I were in Naples, FL and attended St. John’s Episcopal Church. During Lent Father Joe gave us a copy of best-selling author Mark Batterson’s *Draw the Circle: the 40 Day Prayer Challenge*. We immediately dove in and began our circles. Rick would be up with the sun and we’d sit facing the light, taking turns reading chapters. It was a stimulating way to pray. When we came back to NYC we were distracted but the book and Father Joe had a huge impact.

On December 12, 2016, Rick passed away suddenly at age 91. When I was going through his things I found his little Journal that he loved to write in. He wrote that "Draw Circles keeps me circling into a direct path to God’s Kingdom.” He also wrote this poem that so beautifully expressed what was in his heart. It gave me such peace.

God bless you, Rick.  — Lynn Ramsey

90 years search  
Found God’s door  
That opened wide  
Sunlight warmed  
My soul over and over  
I came alive  
Cheering bells  
Rang in my ears  
Pictures of my life flew out  
My tears of love lit  
My spirit and soul  

Rick Carrier

Lynn Ramsey with Rick’s son Alan and his daughter at Rick’s grave.

Other Worlds

I am looking through a glass lens smudged cracked  
Thinking it clear cleansed and focused  
Unknowingly believing in its lies  
Naive and trustful blinded by innocence  
Creating worlds that exist

Castles high in the sky  
My kingdom come  
Knights in armor my protectors  
I wave my magic wand  abra cadabra  
As I float on the lush fluffy candy clouds  
Feathery satin soft pillows  
I rest my head and dream

In the peephole of my heart and mind  
I seek radiance and color  
Dreaming of other worlds in galaxies  
Sitting on the tail of a comet  
I fly off to a world of honesty and hopefulness

-- Betty Samuels
SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS and SPECIAL MUSIC
Worship Service, Sundays 12 p.m.

June 4 Rev. Elizabeth A. Perry (United Church of Christ) is Chelsea Community Church’s pastoral counselor. She is also an online church consultant and trainer, and lead faculty for the University of Phoenix. A pastor for more than 20 years, she was ordained in the United Methodist Church and currently has Privilege of Call in the United Church of Christ. She earned an M.Div. degree at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Special Music: Leah Jennings

June 11 Rev. Dr. Jonathan Linman (Lutheran) is assistant to the bishop for formation of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He is the author of Holy Conversation: Spirituality for Worship (Augsburg Fortress, 2010). He was pastor of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., from 1989-2001. From 2001-09, he was director of the Center for Christian Spirituality and professor of ascetical theology at General Theological Seminary in Chelsea. He earned an M.Div. degree at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, and an M.A. and Ph.D. at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.

June 18 Min. George Chochos (Baptist) is pursuing a Master of Sacred Theology degree at Yale Divinity School. In 2016 he earned an M.Div. degree at Yale and received the Wolcott Calkins Prize, a preaching award. He also works full-time at the Bridgeport Rescue Mission as a Genesis addiction counselor and case manager as well as overseeing a men’s supportive housing program. A licensed minister, he a candidate for the position of senior pastor at New Life Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon, NY.

June 25 Rev. Dr. Marjorie Williams-Cooper (Christian) was ordained in the Pentecostal Charismatic tradition but has moved on in her religious beliefs. She is on the faculty of the University of Phoenix in Jersey City, teaching courses in world religious traditions, cultural diversity, music appreciation and visual arts in popular culture. She was involved with various ministries in Denver where she founded Women in Ministry and Clergy Women United and was the first woman elected to the Executive Council of the Greater East Denver Ministerial Alliance. She earned an M.A. in liberal studies at Regis University and a certificate in church leadership at Iliff School of Theology, both in Denver. She was awarded an honorary doctor of letters degree by Aspen Christian College and Theological Seminary in Aurora, CO in 1992.

Special Music: Rev. Dr. Marjorie Williams-Cooper

July 2 Lay-Led Service

July 9 Min. Gloria-Jean Skeete (National Association of Congregational Christian Churches) is the pastor at the New York Congregational Nursing Center in Brooklyn. She graduated from New York Theological Seminary in 2012 with an M.Div. degree. Her seminary education included internships at Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Brooklyn and Jan Hus Presbyterian Church in Manhattan. Before going to seminary she worked in the fashion industry.

Special Music: Scot Albertson

July 16 Rev. F. Romall Smalls (Baptist) is associate minister for social justice at Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon. He is also a senior affiliate chaplain at New York University working with the Student Christian Movement and with Judson Memorial Church. He is co-chair of LGBT Faith Leaders of African
Descent. In addition he is a contributing writer for Religion News Service. He received his M.Div. degree from Union Theological Seminary.

**July 23 Dr. Mary Ann Cejka** (Roman Catholic) is a psychologist, writer, activist and longtime friend of Chelsea Community Church. She holds a B.A. in religious studies from Loyola Marymount University, a Master of Divinity degree from Yale and a Ph.D. in psychology from Purdue. Her articles have appeared in a number of periodicals including *National Catholic Reporter, America, The Christian Century, Sojourners, Maryknoll and The Catholic Worker*. She currently teaches graduate courses in psychology for Walden University as well as a variety of peace studies courses for Global Ministries University.

**Special Music: Maureen Taylor**

**July 30 Rev. Dr. James Campbell** (United Church of Christ) is pastor of Broadway United Church of Christ. He received a doctor of ministry degree from Drew University in 2014. He earned his M.Div. degree at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio and was ordained in the United Methodist Church in 1991. He served congregations in that denomination in Ohio and New Jersey for eight years before working in the private sector for several years and transferring to the United Church of Christ.

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The Newsletter is published quarterly in December, March, June and September. Special thanks are due, with each issue, to those who help put it together and get it to you – to all of you who submit news and material, to Lynne Robinson for maintaining and printing postal mailing lists, to Kathryn Buck for sharing on the website, and to her and Lynn Ramsey for proofreading. And for all those at coffee hour who “stuff, stamp, and seal,” thank you! **Please submit material for the fall newsletter** (September, October, November) to Kathy Reid by August 6, 2017: wkreid@aol.com or call (212) 685-0190.