

Opportunities to Participate in the Life and Mission of Bedford Presbyterian Church

As members of Bedford Presbyterian Church, we strive to participate in activities and organizations which reflect our values, our faith and our mission to

**Love Our Neighbor
Teach Our Children
and
Never Stop Learning**

The following is a list of organizations and activities which Bedford Presbyterian Church supports both financially and with the volunteer efforts of its members.

Please consider joining these efforts by participating. The church is actively involved in organizing projects, and works with many of these groups. Contact information for the church's coordinating member is included.

Some of the organizations which we support can be contacted directly if you wish to get involved.

There are opportunities for all ages!



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Committees and Teams of Bedford Presbyterian Church 2019/2020

Session: Alison Cape, Jeanne Collins, Lara DiCorpo, Laurie Fancher, Brian Hiller-Dupont, Alan McDougall, Shirani Ponnambalam, Eric Eichhorn (President, Board of Trustees), Linda Burpee (Clerk of Session), Patrick Vaughn (Moderator)

Deacons: Wendy Branche (Moderator), Jessica Cunningham, Amy Drabek, Don Hiller-Dupont, Michele Eames, Elyssa Michaels, Suzanne Millette, Judy Newton, Rebecca Rivard, Sarah Ryan, Angela Sour, Blakely Brodbeck, Heather Brown-Huston (Staff)

Budget and Finance: Lara DiCorpo, Eric Eichhorn, Alan McDougall, Arthur Weise, Peter Williams (Chair)

Personnel: Linda Burpee, Lila Cummings, David Keeffe, Matt Valenti, Sharon Seidell (Chair)

Property and Maintenance: Ben Branch, Bing Carlson, Norman Michaels, Eric Eichhorn (Chair)

Stewardship: Eric Eichhorn, David Hardy, Alan McDougall (Chair)

Membership and Hospitality: Kate Branch, David Burpee, Don Hiller-Dupont, Kim Lapple, Rick Mast, Kathy Perry, Jason Welsch, J. Patrick Vaughn (Staff)

Nominating: Julie Williams, Natasha Mast, Michelle Gosh, Kathy Perry, Brian Hiller-Dupont, Dave Breidenbach (Chair)

Mission: Shirani Ponnambalam, Elizabeth Messinger, Linda Burpee, Kathy DiBiasi, Chris Perry (Chair)

Marketing: Ken Gordon, Samantha Politi (Chair)

Worship and Music: David Burpee (Chair), Alison Cape, James Fenimore, John Lettieri (Staff), Patrick Vaughn (Staff)

Christian Education: Laurie Fancher (Chair), Kathy DiBiasi, Matt Valenti, Sarah Ryan

Mission/Vision Study: Wendy Branche, Alison Cape, Marcy Carlson, Lara DiCorpo, Brian Hiller-Dupont, Rick Mast, Jeanne Collins (Chair)

Emergency Shelter Partnership

The Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) is a coalition of more than 20 congregations and groups working together to provide emergency shelter during the coldest months of the year. In early December 2004, a group of community leaders from Mt. Kisco approached area clergy with a concern about those in our communities who would not have a place to stay as the winter approached. Out of that conversation grew what has become the Emergency Shelter Partnership. From the first winter when 4 congregations took turns hosting about 10 individuals for 11 weeks, the ESP has grown. Each winter 15 congregations take turns providing shelter for between 10 and 30 individuals from the first week in November through the last week in March. Since we began there has not been a single death due to exposure in our communities. The program has worked so well that it has served as a model that other communities have copied. Bedford Presbyterian Church (BPC) was instrumental in beginning the ESP. After several years of the Bedford Presbyterian Church serving as the Fiscal Sponsor for ESP, the organization is now an independent 501(c)(3) corporation.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Each winter BPC hosts the shelter for two weeks. Often it is the third or fourth week of December and again around Easter. Volunteers from BPC can sign up to provide and serve a meal to those who stay with us, can volunteer to spend the night to support ESP's paid overnight supervisor and can also volunteer to provide breakfast bags for individuals to take with them when they leave in the morning. Preparing breakfast bags and preparing and serving a meal are great opportunities for entire families to participate. One of the evening meals during each week is prepared and served by high school youth that are interested in helping. **If you would like to help or would like more information about the ESP...**

We begin recruiting volunteers to help about 3 weeks before our scheduled week (late November or early December and early March) If you would like to help please call the church office (914) 234-3672 x1001 or contact **Shirani Ponnambalam** at shiranip@gmail.com For additional information about ESP please visit its website: emergencyshelterinfo.blogspot.com

Midnight Run

Bedford Presbyterian Church's (BPC) involvement with the Midnight Run started with three high school girls almost 30 years ago. They had heard about the Midnight Run and thought that our church should participate. After convincing the church leadership that it was the right thing to do, they helped to organize our first Midnight Run in the late winter of 1990. Since then, literally, hundreds of middle school students, high school students and adults have participated in a Midnight Run. The Midnight Run provides opportunities throughout the year for youth and

adults to interact with and deliver donated food, clothing, blankets and toiletries to homeless people in Manhattan. Because many people measure accomplishment by “the numbers,” here are some that seem particularly important:

We’ve taken more than 3,500 mostly young people (although Prudy Hodge went twice when she was 84!) on about 400 runs. Some runs have included two people; others have included as many as 29.

During this time, we have provided 9,000+ toiletry kits (the homeless want to be clean), 14,000 pairs of socks, underwear, thousands of sweaters, hats, gloves, trousers and blankets. We have served 23,000+ sack lunches, 900+ gallons of soup, and 900+ gallons (that’s 14,400 cups) of coffee/tea to about 8,000 of our society’s most vulnerable human beings.

But it's not about the numbers. What is accomplished on these runs cannot be measured. Come and join us.

Volunteer Opportunities: There are several ways to participate: you can make soup or sack lunches, sort and/or donate clothing/toiletries, and of course, go along on a Run. You’ll be surprised how good you feel and there are lots of folks who will be so glad to see you. About 2 times a year, the church organizes a Run into Manhattan. We leave about 7:00 pm and are back in Bedford by 1 am or so. This is a great opportunity for teenagers and their parents to participate together. We also always need individuals or families that are willing to make soup or bag lunches for us to distribute in the city. Clothing and toiletries are always needed. A clothing drive for the Midnight Run is a great opportunity for a scout group or just a group of families to organize. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact **Alison Cape** (alison.cape@gmail.com).

Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry

In operation since 1991, the Food Pantry is supported by thirteen local congregations. Bedford Presbyterian Church has been an integral part of this mission since the Pantry’s inception. Located in the United Methodist Church in Mount Kisco, the Food Pantry provides groceries to needy people in the community. They serve an average of 245 families each week and donations are always needed. Clients are those in need of having their food needs supplemented. The Food Pantry supplies enough balanced nutrition for 3 meals. The Food Pantry has an Executive Director and a Board of Directors consisting of representatives of 13 local faith organizations including Bedford Presbyterian.

Volunteer Opportunities:

This is a wonderful opportunity for families to volunteer together. Kids must be in high school to participate. The Pantry is open on Tuesday evenings from 5pm-7pm and Wednesday mornings from 9am-11am. Every two months it is our church's

responsibility to oversee the distribution of food. When volunteers are needed, we would be most appreciative of your willingness to help out. If you cannot help out, your financial contribution is most welcome and goes directly to buying food for the Westchester Food Bank.

If you can help, or would like more information about the Food Pantry, please contact **Sharon Seidell** (sps1256s@gmail.com).

The Community Center

The Community Center, located in nearby Katonah, is a nonprofit organization serving the needy in Northern Westchester County. Volunteers are invited to support the daily operations of the Center: receiving/sorting donations, or directly assisting our families in need. Volunteers can also participate in the Center's work by teaching classes and workshops, such as English or computer skills, maintaining the building and grounds, packing school supplies or assisting in fundraising efforts.

For volunteer opportunities go to <https://communitycenternw.org/volunteer> or contact **Susan Bretti** at 914-232-6572, ext. 105 or at sbretti@communitycenternw.org.

A-HOME

For over 30 years A-HOME has been a cost effective, local solution to the national crisis in affordable housing. A-HOME is a coalition of churches, temples and civic groups dedicated to providing affordable housing for low-income seniors, single-parent families, and disabled individuals, who cannot afford market rates. A-HOME rehabilitates, builds and manages affordable rental housing in northern Westchester County, NY for this population.

A-HOME promotes independent living in a network of community support. A coalition of 26 local civic and religious organizations supports A-HOME with funding and volunteers. A-HOME has renovated or built, and now operates more than 17 houses in Bedford Hills, Chappaqua, Croton Falls, Katonah, Mount Kisco, Pound Ridge, Thornwood and South Salem. It also manages one for the Blue Mountain Housing Development Corporation. Each year gifts are given and financial contributions are made at Christmas by members of Bedford Presbyterian. Our Westchester Youth Alliance (interfaith high school program) held their work days at A-HOME sites for several years.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteers can help in a variety of ways throughout the year:

Seasonal opportunities: holiday shopping and celebration; spring/fall cleanups

Gardeners who can provide advice and/or labor in garden maintenance

Painters to paint and freshen up rooms when new residents move in

Fundraising and Special Event committee members

Resident support that could include birthday celebrations, outings to local events, grocery or prescription pick-up, are-you-okay phone calls

Drivers who can take residents to doctor and other appointments

Adopt-a-Room providing paint, furnishings and decorations

Help residents with financial planning, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Health Proxies, Living Wills

If you can help or would like more information about ways you can help, please contact **Chris Perry** (perryrc@rcsny.org) or www.a-homehousing.org or 914-741-0740

Spirituality Group

Bedford Presbyterian has a group that meets with the Rev. Leslie Mott for Spirituality and Practice sessions once a month, from September through June. Leslie chooses a different practice each month, and brings handouts that include prayers and reflections. In the past, practices have included humility, forgiveness, serenity, and acceptance. They gather either on a Tuesday evening or a Wednesday morning and spend 90 minutes reflecting on the chosen practice. Each session always ends with meditation. The time spent together is a true gift and your attendance is welcomed, even if it is only sporadic. For more information please contact the church office or **Leslie Mott** at revleslie@optonline.net

Bible Study

The Bible Study group meets each Tuesday from 10:30 to 11:30 in the small conference room at BPC. The purpose is to develop a greater understanding of the Bible by the close reading and discussion of its individual books. The historical and cultural background from which these scriptures emerged is of particular interest. We read from a variety of translations of the Protestant, Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Bibles. Two of the Group members are conversant in Greek and one in Hebrew. They are particularly helpful in understanding difficult passages.

The group comes from a variety of religious backgrounds and includes both members of BPC as well as non-members. Leadership of the discussion rotates among the participants. The group is congenial, and the conversation is both informal and informative! Please join them in the small conference room adjacent to the church office, or contact **Alan McDougall** at alanmcd@verizon.net for more information.

Pub Theology

Pub Theology is an opportunity for group discussion on topics of mutual interest to pursue a deeper understanding of faith. The group meets monthly on the second Tuesday of the month from 8 to 9 PM. It currently gathers at Westchester Burger in Bedford Hills. The group includes Bedford Presbyterian Church members, members of other congregations and those not currently affiliated with any religious institution.

Each month one member of the group volunteers to suggest a topic and facilitate the discussion. Topics include current developments in the news, changes in our culture, nagging questions, or vexing issues that demand a response or challenge our faith. Pub Theology provides an opportunity to get perspectives from different people and faith traditions to shape how we think about these topics.

Anyone interested in attending can email **Sharon Seidell** sps1256s@gmail.com, to be added to the Pub Theology email distribution list.

Coffee Hour

On Sundays after worship, the congregation gathers in our Fellowship Hall for a casual reception. Usually two families from the congregation are responsible for providing pastries, fruit and/or snacks. Each week, different families volunteer to host the reception. It is a great opportunity for members to provide fellow members with food, coffee and hospitality. It is also a nice opportunity to work with and get to know a second family that signs up too. Please contact **Blakely Brodbeck** at blakelybrodbeck@gmail.com.

2nd Sunday Soup

The Church family convenes on the second Sunday of each month right after worship – and instead of the usual coffee and snacks, three families bring large pots of soup to share with the congregation. Enjoy the opportunity to sit down with friends and acquaintances for a simple meal of soup and fellowship before heading home. There is always a vegetarian option Please contact **Blakely Brodbeck** at blakelybrodbeck@gmail.com.

New Friends / Old Friends Dinners

Periodically the congregation gathers for a dinner at a member's home where we can meet to enjoy a meal and a glass of wine together. Volunteer to prepare an entrée, a salad, a dessert, OR volunteer your home to host the event.

Flowers

Every Sunday the sanctuary is graced with the presence of beautiful flower arrangements. Mary Lou Pappas volunteers her services to create the arrangements for members who would like to honor a loved one or dedicate the flowers in honor of an event. The cost of this is \$50.00, and, after worship, the member can take their flowers home with them. Please contact **Michele Eames** at mdeames@optimum.net for more information.

Parenting Blog and Meetings

BPC Parents is a monthly blog written by a team of professionals from our community. Their goal is to provide an ongoing resource to parents as they do the challenging, yet rewarding, work of raising children. The blog can be accessed through the church website or through our BPC Parents Facebook page. If you would like to receive a monthly reminder that the blog has been published, please email **Kathy DiBiasi**, at dibiiasi@optonline.net and she will add you to our email list.

BPC Parents began as parenting support group in the fall of 2012. This support group meets the second Thursday of every month **from 12:00 to 1:30 pm**. The parenting group is open to the community and all are welcome. For more information and meeting location please email **Kathy DiBiasi** at the above email.

Sunday Spirit

The Sunday Spirit program provides Christian education for children in Kindergarten through Eighth grade during worship. Sunday Spirit is a warm, fun and welcoming environment. Our goal is to have children want to come to Sunday Spirit. Lessons focus on learning about God and the teachings of Jesus through examples of faithful living. We do our best to provide active, hands on and interactive activities. Discussing and “talking to the children” is limited. Creating continuity between our lessons, the Time with the Children, and special church events, the goal is to build a “faith foundation” for our children that will sustain them in good times as well as in bad times.

- Our nursery/toddler program is held in classroom 11 and led by Lydia Savitt. The continuity of having a regular presence in the classroom is a source of comfort for the children. Having their own space to access toys, and hang up artwork also makes for a cozy, warm and welcoming environment adding to that feeling of familiarity and comfort.
- Classroom breakdown in our older grades is as follows: K-5

Program Developments

We have continued with the premise that simpler is better. The Sunday Spirit calendar year has been broken up into themes and class format simplified. Class format is as follows: Prayer, Opening Activity/Warm up, Book/Discussion, Hands on or Interactive Activity. Bible scripture is always included to give children the practice and opportunity to look up passages in the bible. Themes we often focus on are: Community, Kindness, Gratitude, Tolerance, Love, Renewal, Giving, Faith, Friendship, and Seeds for Growth. Our simplified class format makes it easier for our teachers, who teach on a volunteer basis. Middle School teens who attend on Sunday mornings are offered the opportunity to join the younger classes or remain in worship.

Program Favorites

Even though we have simplified our class format and categorized the year into themes, we have not forgotten about our favorites. In the Fall, children participate in the annual World Communion Bread Making day and World Communion Sunday. Children learn about the Christmas Story through individual story illustrations, which are shown at the 5:00pm Christmas Eve Service. Our annual Christmas Pageant is a favorite with an average of 20 to 35 children participating.

The Children's Offering continues to be a favorite and gives children an opportunity to participate in worship in a meaningful way. We raise anywhere between \$4,000 and \$7,000 for an organization dear to our hearts.

We cannot meet the goals of the Sunday Spirit program without the support of volunteers. The congregation's education program functions as a cooperative. Families who have children in the program are expected to assist in some way, and everyone is encouraged to play a part in the education of our children.

Third Grade Introduction to the Bible

For some 50 years, 3rd graders have met on Sunday mornings to learn about the Bible. We utilize multi-media teaching tools to engage the children, and the class is tailored to about 8 sessions. This class culminates every May when the children receive their own Bibles. Congregation members have the opportunity to write messages in them on the day of the presentation. Contact **Matt Valenti** at matt_valenti@yahoo.com for more information.

Middle School / High School Youth Groups

Middle School Youth Group

Middle School Youth Group continues to be strong! Kids look forward to our gatherings every other Friday. This excitement and energy have spread into the Bedford Community by word of mouth. On any given Friday we can have anywhere between 20 and 30 kids. Middle school youth group is an opportunity for our 6th, 7th and 8th graders to gather together on a regular basis to socialize, learn, serve others, and learn what it means to live as people of faith. We consistently meet every other Friday evening from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. One gathering a month is more service focused. Middle School Youth Group is an inclusive group – kids from all faith and non-faith backgrounds are welcome to participate. Words that embody what youth group is - Service, Inclusion, Friendship, Respect, Fun and Safe. Elyssa Michaels leads each youth group event. Laurie Fancher supports our youth groups and is on hand to fill in when needed.

Program Highlights

In terms of programming, middle school youth gravitate towards service-related programs and programs which are social in nature. We begin the Program Year in late September with group building games, free time and cooking. Other gatherings include group building nights, assembling breakfast bags for the Emergency Shelter Partnership, a kindness night, pizza party, Halloween fun, shopping for the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility Children's Center and projects with the organization Friends of Karen.

High School Youth: Be the change

In the winter of 2015 we began a High School Youth Group. Feedback has been positive. We now have 20-30 high school students participating in our youth group on a regular basis. HSYG continues to remain strong. The goal is to keep these teens engaged and participating throughout their high school career. The high school group meets twice a month on Sunday evenings from 5 to 7 pm. Gatherings include group building nights, fun and games, discussions, a haunted house, annual Holiday Party at Neighbors Link, shopping for the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility Children's Center, preparing and serving dinner for ESP and participating in a Midnight Run.

Program Highlights

Every year one of our most successful programs is the church-wide fundraiser Mistletoe Mart. Mistletoe Mart brings together people from all generations. The teens sell and serve chili to help with the cost of our annual work trips. Our Confirmation Mentorship Program usually begins in February with members of our congregation serving as Mentors for the members of our confirmation class. Speakers from a variety of faith traditions are usually invited to come and talk with our Confirmation students in March and Confirmation Sunday is in early May. In February each year we participate in a work trip with Bridges to Community where we usually have some 25 students and adults participating from Bedford Presbyterian and a similar number from Temple Shaaray Tefila. In June we hold an annual car wash to raise funds for our June work trip to West Virginia, and there is a service in recognition of our graduating high school seniors. Elyssa Michaels is our Youth Group leader. With the help of volunteers, Elyssa brings energy, fun and new ideas to the programs.

Work/Service Learning Trips

Bedford Presbyterian Church sponsors two mission/service learning work trips for high school students and adults each year. These trips provide an opportunity to help and serve others, but also for participants to reflect about life, faith, values and the world in which we live. We have been taking work trips to Appalachia since

1990. In 2016 we began traveling to Colcord West Virginia for our summer work trip and plan to continue traveling there. We have also been taking work trips to Nicaragua since 1996 through the not-for-profit organization, Bridges to Community. We have recently begun traveling with them to the Dominican Republic. A grant from our local Mission Fund as well as contributions from the Women's Association help support both of these trips. Our staff liaisons are Patrick Vaughn and Kathy DiBiasi. Here is one comment from a young man who is an alumnus of the trips about his experiences here at Bedford Presbyterian (BPC) when he was in high school: "Without BPC, I would have missed out on a number of incredibly rewarding, instructive, and valuable experiences. I still believe that my trips to Nicaragua have shaped me more than any other event in my life. I came back a changed person. Saturdays doing Habitat were so enjoyable as well, and I have continued to do Habitat builds at Middlebury College. Midnight runs taught me so much about other people, such as not to judge others who may seem different, and to love my neighbors."

Dominican Republic Trips – during school winter breaks in late February each year. Adults and High School Teens. In a week's time we help build homes for four families in two communities. But more than that we will learn more about the world we live in and how we can continue to make a difference.

Colcord, West Virginia Trips – usually during the last week of June each year. Adults and High School Teens. We repair and rebuild homes in partnership with a local not-for-profit organization. We have repaired floors, replaced roofs, built porches and made countless homes more livable for families. Parents are encouraged to participate on both trips.

Bridges to Community

The cycle of extreme poverty is not inescapable, but those in its clutches need our help to overcome their insufferable circumstances. Since 1992, Bridges to Community has succeeded in helping families and communities in impoverished areas of the Dominican Republic (DR) and Nicaragua build a better life for themselves and a brighter future for their children.

In partnership with residents and local leaders, we develop a comprehensive five-year plan in each community, focusing on housing, health, education and overall economic development. More than 700 volunteers travel with us each year, and programming is managed by in-country professional local staff. Learn more about each of our program areas below.

Bridges to Community engages in sustainable community development that has lasting impact for some of the most impoverished people in the Western Hemisphere. They accomplish this by forming long-term relationships with communities and bringing volunteers to help work on meaningful projects in housing, health, education and economic development alongside community members.

Bridges to Community is committed to providing a meaningful cross-cultural service learning experience for our volunteers, and at the same time engaging in sustainable

long-term community development projects that have lasting impact for some of the most impoverished people in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic.

In addition to organizing service learning trips through Bridges to Community in the Dominican Republic, our church has been supporting this organization through the special children's offering and other financial gifts from our mission budget for over 20 years.

Westchester Youth Alliance

In his essay *We Are Each Other's Business*, Eboo Patel, a Muslim, and founder and President of the Interfaith Youth Core, writes: "We live in a world where the forces that seek to divide us are strong. To overcome them, we must do more than simply stand next to one another in silence."

The Westchester Youth Alliance grew out of a dream of our church that our communities would be stronger and our world safer if we broke that silence and worked to build a better understanding between people of different faith traditions. And that the place to start was with our youth. We believed that if we could pull together a group of high school students from different faith traditions and give them an opportunity to learn with and from each other and to work side by side on community service projects we could model an understanding of community that would act as a counter balance to the fear and ignorance and misinformation which often divide us from each other. After more than a year of dreaming and planning and with funding we received from a grant, the Westchester Youth Alliance was launched in September 2012.

Our Mission is to build a bridge between our faith communities that will foster deep and lasting relationships among our high school students. Our interfaith youth program provides a vehicle for teens to engage in dialogue and action based on common values. Our activities include service projects and regular gatherings to connect, reflect and plan. For more information contact **Kathy DiBiasi** at dibiasi@optonline.net or go to <http://www.westchesteryouthalliance.org/>.

Participating youth come from these congregations and communities:

Antioch Baptist Church
Bedford Presbyterian Church
Bethel Baptist Church
Bet Torah
Briarcliff Congregational Church
Congregation B'nai Yisrael
First Unitarian Society Hastings
Fourth Unitarian Society of Westchester
First Congregational Church of Chappaqua
First Presbyterian Church of Katonah
Hudson Valley Islamic Community Center
Katonah United Methodist Church

Lutheran Church of Mt. Kisco
Pleasantville Presbyterian Church
Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester
Temple Beth Am of Northern Westchester
Temple Shaaray Tefila
St. Francis AME Zion Church
St. Augustine's Episcopal Church
St. Mathew's Episcopal Church
St. Patrick's Catholic Church
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Upper Westchester Muslim Society
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of No. West.

CROP Walk

The CROP walk is a national fundraising event for Church World Service, an organization whose primary mission is to fight hunger and provide emergency relief both on a local and global scale. In 2019 the walk celebrates its 50th anniversary! Funds raised by our local CROP walk contribute to global hunger relief with 25% contributed to the Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry and the food pantry run out of the Community Center of Northern Westchester in Katonah. The Northern Westchester walk started in 1994 and has raised as much as \$43,000 in one year and almost half a million dollars since its inception. It has traditionally been held in the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation but this year it will be moved closer to the communities served by bringing it into Katonah. If this is a well-received change, it may alternate with Mount Kisco in the future.

There is a lot of opportunity to get involved in helping to organize and run the walk, with a relatively small time commitment. Any help is welcome including: driving envelopes to participating congregations, stuffing envelopes, making signs, and helping with event planning and fundraising. On the walk day (usually the Sunday after Columbus Day) help will be needed running the walk. This is a great family opportunity. Please contact the church or **Alison Cape**, 617-501-1713 or alison.cape@gmail.com for more information.

Quilting Group

The Bedford Presbyterian Church assembles and hand quilts a quilt each year for the purpose of raffling it off at the annual Mistletoe Mart, held in early December. There have consistently been 10-12 committed hand quilters each year. The group meets weekly, except in the summers, in the chapel room at BPC, on Tuesdays from 1:00-4:00. The proceeds from the quilt and the Mistletoe Mart go to benevolent organizations, reviewed yearly for distribution. Contact **Jean Morrison** for information: rjmorr145@verizon.net

Dove Tree / Christmas Gift Giving Stars

The Dove Tree is an annual tradition that begins at Mistletoe Mart. The Dove Tree is a means of alternative giving that provides gifts for mission projects that are signified by paper doves on a Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall and doves that the donor can take home or give to a person in whose honor a monetary gift is made. Through both the Dove Tree and our Christmas Stars we give gifts to A-HOME residents, the Midnight Run and Neighbors Link.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Each Sunday during Advent and during the Mistletoe Mart, we need people to sell doves by taking people's donations. We also always need people to fold origami doves for us. Paper and directions can be provided.

Chris Perry of the Mission Committee may be contacted with inquiries - perryrc@rcsny.org

Bedford Presbyterian Women

The Bedford Presbyterian Women was formed in the 1950's by the women of the church in order to foster relations amongst the women of the congregation and to handle moneys generated by their various fund-raising activities. They organize and run the Mistletoe Mart and the activities of the Quilters and help to run the Millie Kane Luncheon every December.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteer opportunities include creating craft items, quilting, and making wreaths for sale at the annual Mistletoe Mart fundraising event. Baked goods and assistance the day of the event are also needed. Volunteers also help with the cooking and serving of the Millie Kane Senior's Luncheon, which takes place the week following the fundraiser. Women interested may contact **Julia (Judy) Newton** julianewton@yahoo.com with any questions.

Mistletoe Mart

The Mission Statement for the Mistletoe Mart is "all men and women in the church working together in loving concern for our church and each other while serving to help meet the needs of our church and community." The Mistletoe Mart is made possible by the dedication of many volunteers.

There are many volunteer opportunities available at various levels of commitment. There are typically about 4-5 meetings to organize the Mart and to discuss how the funds will be disbursed. The meeting in late September/early October sets up the Chairs of the various areas, such as Treasurer, Bake Sale, Vendors, etc. The Chairs then benefit from the support of other volunteers to assist in their particular areas. The day of the Mart provides opportunities to volunteer for a few hours or the whole day helping with cashier duties, selling baked goods, etc. In addition to these opportunities, the quilters work pretty much year round, as do the crafters, so there are always opportunities in those areas.

If anyone would like to volunteer or ask questions, the current contact person is **Julia (Judy) Newton**: julianewton@yahoo.com, (h) 914-234-6420, (c) 914-523-1324. Meetings are announced in the Sunday bulletin and in the e-bulletin 2 weeks ahead.

Every member in the church is invited and encouraged to participate in these events and new ideas are always welcome.

Open Door Family Medical Center

Open Door is a local walk in medical facility that provides free medical services to adults and children who live at or below the federal poverty level. Over the years, Open Door has risen to meet the growing demand for health care in Westchester and Putnam counties, and the Bedford Presbyterian Women's Association provides financial assistance. Additionally, there are numerous ways you can volunteer your time, including reading, helping with baby showers, health fairs, holiday gift drives, etc. For more information go to <https://www.opendoormedical.org/join-us/volunteer/> or contact **Jane Levy**, Manager of Volunteer Programs at 914-502-1468 or jlevy@odfmc.org. You may also contact Kate Branch from the church at katebranch@gmail.com.

Neighbor's Link

Neighbors Link was founded to meet the needs of 4,000 Latino immigrants who represent 26% of Mount Kisco's total population. When problems at many levels became apparent, concerned members of the community raised private funds to convert a masonry warehouse into a community center for low-income working people. That was in the year 2000, and it signaled the remarkable transformation of a whole community.

Today, Neighbors Link offers a fully staffed center with comprehensive programs for

- Adult Education

- Training for Effective Parenting
- Employment and Economic Development
- Computer Skill Training
- Leadership Training
- Entrepreneurial Development
- Recreation and Community-Building
- Personal and vocational enhancement
- After-school tutoring program at Mt. Kisco Elementary School
- On-site help and referrals for personal and family issues such as housing and homelessness, medical and mental health, family budgeting, tax payer identification, non-payment of wages, alcoholism, domestic violence, immigration issues and other critical concerns.

Neighbors Link is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization.

Volunteer Opportunities:

You can contact Lila Cummings through the church with questions, or contact Martha Palomino, Volunteer Coordinator, 914-666-3410 ext. 116, to schedule an appointment to discuss your interests and availability.

Neighbors Link offers a variety of volunteer opportunities for adults, teens, families and groups. Volunteering may be done on an occasional, short-term or long-term basis. Day and evening schedules are available. To learn more about our organization and the programs we offer, visit our website at www.neighborslink.org. We welcome your involvement.

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

Program Name	Description	Schedule
ESL Tutoring	Tutor adult learners in English language skills. Training and guidance provided by staff	Tuesday 7 to 8:30 (school year only)
Children's Evening Program	Assist staff providing childcare to the children of parents participating in evening educational programs	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 6:30 to 9:30 (based on program schedule)
Learning Links	Assist teachers at after-school program at Mt. Kisco Elementary School. Provide homework help and activities for students in grades K to 5	Monday through Friday 3:15 to 5 (school year only)
Summer Links	Academic enrichment for pre-K to 6th grade at Mt. Kisco Elementary School	Monday through Friday 8:45 to 12:15 (5 weeks in the summer)
Family Night Childcare	Assist teacher and care for children of families participating in an evening workshop	Every other Friday 6:30 to 8:30

FOR ADULTS:

Evening ESL Tutoring	Tutor students in ESL (English as a second language). Training and guidance provided by staff	Thursdays 7 to 8:30
Daytime ESL / Conversation	Tutor students in ESL (English as a second language). Training and guidance provided by staff	Tuesday and Thursday 10 to noon (varies by season)
Parent Child Together	Assist teachers in parenting and child development classes by interacting with young children	Monday and Thursday 10 to noon Wednesday 1 to 3 Friday 12:30 to 2:30
Children's Evening Program	Assist staff providing childcare to the children of parents participating in evening education and family programs	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 6:30 to 9:30 (based on program schedule)
Children's Morning Program	Assist staff providing childcare to the children of parents participating in morning education programs	Tuesday 10 to 11:30 (September to June)
Family Night	Prepare and deliver a buffet meal to an evening workshop for families. Or plan an activity or craft for the children	Every other Friday 6:30 to 8:30
Administrative Help	Provide office support	Flexible

Holmes Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center

HOLMES Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center is the outdoor Christian education and retreat facility of the Presbyteries of Hudson River, Long Island and New York City. Bedford Presbyterian Church along with the other 255 congregations in the New York metropolitan area own Holmes.

The property is located less than 30 minutes from Bedford off of I-84 and consists of two year-round conference centers, three year-round retreat cabins, two seasonal youth facilities, a rustic camping program, several tent/trailer and day group areas, and an environmental science and arts program. The Center's three lakes and 550

wooded acres provide for swimming and boating, as well as fishing and ice-skating. Holmes provides programmed events, as well as rental facilities for conferences and retreats.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteers are needed to repair buildings, maintain the grounds, and serve in leadership roles on the Board of Directors or on a variety of committees including Program, Finance, Development, Buildings and Grounds. For those who can participate for several weeks in the summer there are opportunities to serve on the Staff. Each May our church participates in a workday at the Center. This is a fun day filled with rewarding work and fellowship in the out of doors. Lunch is provided, and all are welcome.

Opportunities for Giving

Holmes is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) religious organization. Contributions may be made directly to Holmes or to the Church and designated for Holmes. Holmes is always looking for scholarship funds to help send kids to camp, and for used vehicles (cars, SUV's & trucks) that are in useable condition. Donations may also be made for capital improvements.

Opportunities for summer employment

Every summer, college age staff are employed as counselors, lifeguards, and service staff. This is a great summer job that can change lives.

To find out more about Holmes, go to Holmescamp.org or speak to **David or Linda Burpee** (914) 248-6055.

Woman to Woman Prison Ministry

In the Fall of 2013, Bedford Presbyterian Church officially launched Woman 2 Woman, a prison ministry program which connects women in our congregation and community with women incarcerated at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (BHCF), the only maximum-security women's prison in New York State. We have since expanded our work to Taconic Correctional Facility, a medium-security women's prison directly across the street from BHCF, as well.

Woman 2 Woman is designed to provide inmates, who often have little to no contact with the outside world, with much-needed emotional support, encouragement and friendship. Our goal is to also stretch our own capacity for empathy and understanding by developing a relationship of mutual respect and caring with someone whose history and circumstances are typically very different from our own. Nancy Gernert, Woman 2 Woman's first visitor, coordinates the program, in which more than 60 visitors are now enrolled. Each is assigned an inmate whom she

visits at least once a month. Training sessions and support groups are held several times a year. For more information about Woman 2 Woman and the work that we do, please contact **Nancy Gernert** at nancygernert@gmail.com or 914-763-0750.

My Sister's Place and Hope's Door

These organizations strive to end domestic violence and human trafficking through comprehensive services, advocacy and community education. They provide safety, self-determination and justice. The Mission Committee and the BPC Women's Association provide financial assistance. For more information, contact **Kim McNair** at kmcnair@mspny.org

Christa Kuusisto Honorary Scholarship

Each year this scholarship is awarded to a graduating Fox Lane High School student whose commitment to community service was exemplary. Call the church office for more information.

Laundry Love

Laundry Love lends a neighborly hand to those who could use a little help meeting the cost of clean laundry once per month. We meet in the rear room of Manara Laundromat in Mount Kisco from 5-8pm on the middle Wednesday of each month. Between 50 - 100 people arrive to a friendly greeting, then clothing loads are weighed (limit 60 pounds per family; 25 pounds per individual), detergent offered, and pay cards swiped through to run the washers and dryers free of charge. Pizza and water are provided, along with coloring books and crayons for the children, and lollipops for the "kid" in everyone. The current schedule is attached here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ozC0NJP9IUU9HCxL3sONVBKVYOIZBvrNzDd_VxU1quA/edit

The Laundry Love idea originated in California 16 years ago, when volunteers working with homeless people asked a man what would be of greatest help to him. He replied, "If I had clean clothes, people would treat me like a human being." From that simple conversation sprang the simple idea of literally "lightening the load" of those in need by helping them get their laundry done. It is an idea that has grown into more than 700 laundromats participating nationwide, each organized by local community members. Some Christian leaders regard this practice as "the new foot-washing," and hail the "laundry as liturgy" approach. Congregations of all faiths are on board to lend their support, however, and this is not strictly a religious outreach. Local businesses donate food for the monthly events (Basilico pizzeria), community service organizations help get the word out (Neighbors Link, Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry, Emergency Shelter Partnership), and social media posts have drawn in participants from every walk of life. For further background, please see the national website: <http://laundrylove.org/>

Please contact **Elizabeth Messinger** at LaundryLoveMtKiscoNY@gmail.com with your interest. Volunteer shifts are split into two, from 5-6:30pm and from 6:30-8pm. Contributions of detergent can be brought directly to the office at Bedford Presbyterian Church, and donations made to the Bedford Presbyterian Church by specifying “Laundry Love” in the subject line. Contributions of time, talent, and treasure are always enthusiastically welcomed. Thank you and wash on!

Rewarding Potential Scholars

The Rewarding Potential Scholarship is a community-funded effort that helps Fox Lane High School students overcome financial barriers and realize their hopes and dreams of attending college. RPS puts college within reach by providing financial and mentoring support that expands the educational horizons of eligible students—rewarding their academic potential and changing the trajectory of their lives. Over six years ago, Bedford Presbyterian Church (BPC) launched this scholarship, helping our community's most valuable resource - our children - continue their education. Since its inception, RPS has worked with nineteen students both providing the gap money between their college costs and their financial aid packages as well as mentoring them as they navigate higher education. Most students are first generation college students. Please consider if you would like to be a part of Rewarding Potential Scholarship, as a benefactor or as a mentor. It takes a village!

Contact person: **Kim Lapple** kjlapple@gmail.com

Rehabilitation Through the Arts

Rehabilitation Through The Arts (RTA) uses the transformative power of the arts to help people in prison develop skills to unlock their potential and succeed in the larger community. For over 20 years, RTA has gone into NYS prisons, including Bedford Hills and Sing Sing Correctional Facilities, using the process of creating theater, dance, visual arts and writing to transform the lives of the men and women inside.

In 2018, RTA moved from its 20 year location in Bedford to bigger offices on the campus of Purchase College. While RTA facilitators in prison are professional teaching artists, RTA welcomes volunteers to help with props and costumes, assist at events, and to help spread the word about this work. For more information or to get involved, please email: info@rta-arts.org or go to the website: www/rta-arts.org.

Karin Shiel is the contact here at BPC.

Rehabilitation Through The Arts

914-251-7540

info@rta-arts.org

735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, NY 10577

Choir

Here is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a group of people who share fellowship, fun, support each other, learn new skills and experience the thrill of singing great music together. This group is our **Bedford Presbyterian Church Choir** and we consist of people who give of their time and talents to enhance our worship services and more, including performing special presentations of major sacred works during the year.

The choir is a flexible performing group who sing music ranging in style from the early Renaissance to gospel, ethnic music such as African and Asian, as well as 21st century composers. Not just a solid performing group, the choir remains a tight-knit social and support group for many of its members. The choir sings practically every Sunday from September through June, Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday, two services on Easter Sunday, and sometimes during other events outside of church.

The choir is open to anyone who would like to sing at any time during the year, offering a chance to directly participate in our worship services. We rehearse Thursday evenings (7:45pm) for approximately 75 to 90 minutes and meet for warm-up and rehearsal on Sunday mornings before the worship service. The choir is always open to anyone who would like to sing at any time during the year; you do not have to make the commitment to be here every week for the entire year. We only ask that you make the effort to learn the music and support your fellow singers through rehearsals and participating together in our worship services. I hope you consider joining us, it's a great way to add some rewarding and celestial sounds to your life.

John Lettieri, Music Director

John@bedfordpreschurch.org 914-234-3672 x1005

Children's Choirs: Choristers/Cherubs

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing! Psalm 94:8

Join our Joyful Noise program each Tuesday 4:30-5:30

Music allows us to tap into our inner joy! Joyful Noise is a program designed to introduce children to choral singing in a fun, low key fashion. We gather each Tuesday afternoon at 4:30 for a quick snack and a game. Children in Kindergarten through Second Grade head upstairs with their director, Kathy Perry. Drums, claves, maracas and other rhythm instruments allow kids to learn to count out and play basic rhythmic patterns. The group works together to learn and perform several songs through modeling and repetition.

Through musical games, students learn to match pitch, blend, and sing as a unified group. The group has the opportunity to sing in the service about once a month.

John Lettieri builds on this musical foundation with the older kids in the Choristers. They learn to sing longer more complex pieces. They learn to sing in harmony, reading music with multiple parts. In addition to providing music during the service each month, a couple of times a year the two groups lead the congregation in an evensong worship, reading all the lessons as well as providing the music. Singing in the choir programs allows children to play

a leadership role in the church as well as building strong musical skills. The entire congregation benefits from their joyful and spirited example. For more information call the church office, or email

John Letierri John@bedfordpreschurch.org or **Kathy Perry** perryk@rcsny.org

Bells

The Bedford Bell Ringers have been a longstanding tradition at the Bedford Presbyterian Church for almost 60 years. Currently, we play twice a year, usually a Sunday in December and again in April or May. We rehearse on Monday evenings at 7:15pm for six weeks before each performance. We have a full five octave set of English White Chapel bells.

The group of bell ringers currently consists of about 8-9 people. Although we have five octaves of bells, we currently play 3-4 octaves because we are a smaller group. We are always looking for new members and could expand our size to 12-13. Anyone interested in playing bells must know how to read music. Prior bell ringing experience is a plus but not required. We are happy to teach interested ringers! A commitment to being at each rehearsal and the Sunday performance is a must. Contact **Heidi Michaels**, Director, at hmichaels425@gmail.com or **Hope Black** hopebob1@verizon.net

Connections

The Connections Team is currently seeking new volunteers. Connections volunteers are provided training and then work in conjunction with the pastors to provide care for congregation members in need. Volunteers are assigned a “care receiver” and commit to being in touch with that care receiver weekly, keeping track of their needs, offering support, serving as a liaison to the pastors, and helping the care receiver stay connected with the congregation. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact: **Heather Brown-Huston** at heather@bedfordpreschurch.org.

Care Team

The Care Team is an email distribution list of volunteers who are willing to receive emails outlining specific requests such as a ride to a doctor's appointment, sitting with an ill person so a family member can get out of the house for an hour or two, or providing meals.

If they are available, the Care Team member then replies to the email and our Care Team coordinator, Judy Newton, connects the care provider and the person who needs help. This is a simple way to be involved (as much or as little as your schedule allows) in caring for other congregation members in need.

If you're willing to be added to the Care Team email list, please email **Judy Newton** at Julianewton@yahoo.com

Senior Group Exercise Classes

Bedford Presbyterian Church cares about your health, and we offer two great ways to help keep you fit.

SGE is offered 2 times per week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 9:45 am and 10:45 am in Fellowship Hall. Join Susan Czechel, a certified instructor with 30+ years of group exercise experience, for this great class.

This is a cardiovascular workout followed by muscle conditioning and functional training. Gain balance, get in better shape, become stronger, feel good, look good, have more energy and socialize with a wonderful group of people.

\$12 per class, no commitment – pay as you go.

Contact **Susan Czechal** at 914-500-5162 or **come in for a Free Trial Class!**

Yoga

Join Bobbe Stultz, a Kripalu trained Yoga Instructor every Friday morning for Yoga between 9:00 am and 10:00 am.

Relaxing, Healing and Empowering
Body, Mind and Spirit

\$20 per class, no commitment – pay as you go.

Contact Bobbe at bobbestultz@gmail.com or **come in for a Free Trial Class.**