



Let's Catch up with Bethlehem Neighbors

Winter 2020 Newsletter

Happy Holidays and a hopeful wish for 2021 as Bethlehem Neighbors finishes 2020. It wasn't what we had planned back in January as we all had to adjust to the pandemic and its limitations. However, we are pleased with how it has turned out. We continued our regular coffee chat events, although our last in-person group happened back in March. We quickly adapted to virtual events using Zoom or phone contacts and actually increased our meetings to twice a month. We were also able to provide a few socially distanced chats in person outside, which were a welcome change. We are now expanding virtual (and some in-person) conversations to other subjects which are of interest to our members and friends...

- Last month, we started a **Hygge Chat group** focusing on topics of wellness and "beating the winter blues". This group meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at 3 pm – Zoom or phone. Watch for our Hygge Chat email to sign up.
- Coming in **December** we start an "in person" event called "**Walk and Talk**". This group will meet December 23rd at 1 pm and the fourth Wednesday of each month after that. (December through March, it meets at Capital Hills Golf Course on just off New Scotland Avenue, with the venue being reviewed when spring arrives.) **This event requires registration**, so that participants can be notified in case of cancellation. To register, simply go to our events page on bethlehemneighbors.org. (Dogs are welcome on a leash. **Masks are required.**)
- New in **January**: A new program which will focus on topics of nutrition and exercise, led by a **Cornell Cooperative Extension nutritionist**. It will happen on the first Monday of each month at 3 pm starting January 4th, again via Zoom or phone. To access this event, just watch for our announcement email.
- New in **February**: "**Out in the Garden with Judith Fetterley and Friends**" – Judith is a Bethlehem Neighbor member and a master gardener. She will cover seasonal topics for gardeners and make you

want to get outside! This program will begin on Zoom or phone on the second Tuesday of the month – February 9th at 1 pm (maybe progress to in-person, depending on the health news later in the season). Be sure to watch for our email invitations to these special monthly events.

- And, of course, **we'll be continuing** with our virtual **coffee chats** - they will be on the second Wednesday of each month at 10 am. If you don't already participate in our chats, we'll be sending out an email in time for our next chat.

As always, be sure to check the calendar of events on our web site to keep track of upcoming dates and times, along with any additional offerings. Zoom codes and reminders of program dates will continue to come via e-mail to our broad mailing list.

Zoom Tutoring

You can call Bethlehem Neighbors for help if you find it difficult to use Zoom comfortably. Lots of people are "giving in" to the idea that this is the way around feeling lonely or isolated. We have knowledgeable volunteers available to walk you through setting up and using Zoom on your phone, smartphone, computer or IPAD, along with a practice session. Call us at 518-227-1115 or e-mail us at info@bethlehemneighbors.org if you need some help.

Medical Note Takers

We now have 4 volunteer members who have been trained in medical note taking for members who request it. If you have a planned tele-health visit with your doctor and you would like someone to assist you by providing clear notes from your visit afterward, let us know. (We can also provide basic information to a family member of other person you identify as well, but only with your permission in advance.) Call us at 518-227-1115 or e-mail us at info@bethlehemneighbors.org if you need our Medical Note Taker services.



It's Time to Renew

Our membership has continued to grow, although slowly. We now have 54 members. We're so pleased that we continue to find like-minded folks in Bethlehem who want to get involved. Thanks to all of you! Annual membership dues will remain the same for 2021 – individual \$25, couple \$45 – due in January. (If you joined BN anytime after October 1, we won't expect you to pay additional dues for 2021.)

Some members may have been flummoxed recently when they received their renewal emails and realized they had never logged into their Bethlehem Neighbors account and weren't able to use the online renewal option. If that's the case, just email Mike at webadmin@bethlehemneighbors.org and ask to have your password reset. You'll receive an email back with your current userid and password, which you can use to log into Bethlehem Neighbors and click on the renewal reminder that pops up.

Remember, renewing your membership is good for you — and good for your Village. Because we are a members helping members organization, the more members we have, the more help we can give. Please renew today.

Save the Date!

Friday, January 29th, 2021 at 3:00 PM

Bethlehem Neighbors Annual Meeting

This will be a virtual ZOOM meeting open to all.

Watch your email for more information.

Summer Survey Results

Last summer, we conducted a survey which went to our entire e-mail list – including members and people we've met previously at events who share our interests. Here are some highlights of what we learned:

- 21 (of 52) current members responded. (That's a very impressive response rate for surveys like this.)
- 2 other individuals from our e-mail list also responded (and one has since become a member).
- Lots more of the responses indicated a desire to help other folks than described a need for services for themselves.
- A large percentage of the responses indicated that folks wanted to make new friends and participate in social events.
- Many responses indicated they were interested in using Zoom as a way to participate in social activities safely, and even more said that they would like to engage in social activities in person as long as appropriate safety measures were taken.
- However, when responding to request for additional suggestions and feedback many responses noted that people are distracted by dealing with the pandemic and election "fatigue".
- Other responses focused primarily on technology assistance as well as providing transportation for members on weekends when other services are not available. (We'll definitely be focusing on those in the coming months.)

A big thank you to everyone who responded to the survey!