

Tabernacle Evangelical Lutheran Church

In the city since 1906

5843 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA 19139, 215.748.5533, TabernaclePhilly@gmail.com

The Rev. Carlton Rodgers, Pastor, rodgers1103@comcast.net

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 5323, Yeadon, PA 19050



In Memoriam

This week we gathered to celebrate the life of one of the true saints of Tabernacle – Brenda Armstead, who made her final transition after a lengthy illness.

We know that life doesn't always go the way we planned. But today we are rejoicing that the Lord kept his hand on Brenda. In the words of the apostle Paul spoken in 2 Cor, 4, Brenda was "... afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed."

In the eyes of the world, Brenda was considered poor and destitute because she didn't have a house or a car, or a job, or a credit card. Because she had no savings, no checking account, no stocks or bonds, no bitcoins or crypto currency, to fall back on, but Brenda was rich, because she had the love of Jesus!

In this world of broken promises and shattered dreams, where "winners" are celebrated and "losers" are cast aside as rubbish, Brenda discovered that she had a friend in Jesus. A friend who would stick closer than a brother. A friend who would be her bridge over the troubled waters. A friend who would never neglect her or leave her alone.

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul said; "in this life three things abide: Faith, hope, and love, and that the greatest of these is love." Because she trusted in Jesus, **Brenda was blessed to have all three.**

Despite the fact that she had to deal with homelessness, and joblessness, depression, abject poverty, and everything that comes with it, I am happy to be able to say as her pastor and friend, that from what I could observe, Brenda "fought the good fight" and "all was well" with her soul. To God be the glory!

Pastor Rodgers

June-July
2025



Sunday Worship
@10:30 a.m. both in the sanctuary and on [Facebook: Tabernacle Lutheran Church](https://www.facebook.com/TabernacleLutheranChurch)

Saturday TLC Kids' Club @11am ID:867 9733 9075
Pass:483844

***Wednesday Bible Study @ 7 p.m.** ID: 827 6385 3651 Pass: 661701

Food Bank June 18 & 25; July 23 9:30-11:00am

Church Council 2nd Sundays (Facilities Committee meets 1st Sundays)

***You can participate without a computer. Call 267.831.0333. You will be prompted for Meeting ID: 827 6385 3651 & Passcode: 661701**

About Tabernacle...

Tabernacle is a member of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Since 1906, we have served in the heart of West Philadelphia – and with God's help, we will remain in the city for good! As Lutheran Christians, we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our mission is to love our neighbors through our words and actions. We work to be an inclusive congregation, welcoming peoples of all racial and gender identities. We are a community-oriented congregation providing a safe space for worship, community planning and local celebrations. Sunday morning worship at 10:30am (in-person and on Facebook), Wednesday evening Bible Study at 7pm (Zoom), Saturday morning children's ministry at 11am, and Tabernacle's Food Bank are the central parts of our life together.



Philadelphia's annual Juneteenth Parade and Festival Marketplace will take place **Sunday, June 22**. Tabernacle and other churches from the Central Philadelphia Conference (CPC) of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA will be a part of it.

The festival kicks off with a vendor's marketplace at 10 a.m. at Malcolm X Park, 52nd and Pine Streets. That is where the CPC's Community Interaction Team (CIT) will have a table set up to distribute information about the city's Lutheran churches and a few giveaways. About 250 vendors are expected to participate, offering food, merchandise and other goodies.

The colorful parade begins at 12:30 p.m. near the Mann Music Center. Marchers and several floats will go down 52nd Street for 1.5 miles and terminate at Malcolm X Park.

Juneteenth commemorates June 19th, 1865, the date when the last group of enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, finally got the news that the Emancipation Proclamation – which freed enslaved people in the Confederate States - had been signed nearly two years previous by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863.

Besides Tabernacle, the Central Philadelphia churches include Grace, New Life Ministries, University Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, Atonement, Christ (N. Phila.), Mediator, The Welcome Church, Nueva Creación, Holy Communion, St. Michael's (Kensington), St. Peter's (West Oak Lane) and Trinity (German-town).

The CIT hopes involvement with the Juneteenth Parade and Festival will raise public awareness about Lutherans within the city, increase evangelism efforts, and strengthen ties among the churches. If you'd like to participate, **please contact Al Hunter, Jr.** (alhjr24@yahoo.com).

Confirmation Class



Pastor Paul Hagedorn will be teaching Confirmation class to children of middle and high school age here at Tabernacle. Adults are welcomed! Class will be held on Sundays after worship. If you have or know of a child in middle to high school, please bring them! Spread the word! For more information, email pahag@verizon.net

Summer Camp in the Poconos

Bear Creek (Lutheran) Camp's youth program is centered on spiritual growth, outdoor living, and small group development. Each age group experiences a mix of small-group and all-camp activities throughout their week to meet their group's spiritual, social, and developmental needs. The regular cost for this week-long camp experience is over \$500. **Youth affiliated with a Lutheran congregation in Philadelphia will only need to pay \$75.00.** For more information, email Pastor Rodgers: rodgers1103@comcast.net

HOW BLANCHE AND I BECAME FRIENDS

by Mary Stewart

A Remembrance of Blanche Riggs
(February 16, 1949 – March 27, 2025)



When I first met Blanche (Bunchie) it was on an Easter Sunday in Fairmount Park. It was an annual gathering of her daughter Lolita's father's family and my daughter Teresa's father. We didn't know at the time that both of their fathers had grown up together. Bunchie and I first met that day and became life-long friends. We had daughters who were about a year apart in age.

They bonded like sisters at first sight so much, that people thought that they were twins; so it was only right that Bunchie and I became close.

As the years passed, we went on trips together, shopped together, and did things like sisters do so much so that my family "adopted" Bunchie and Lolita.

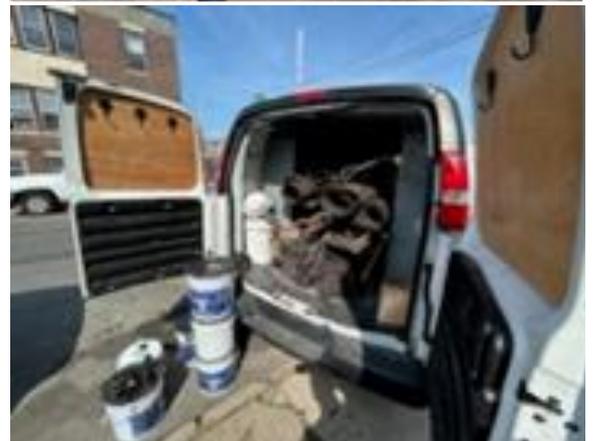
Blanche was a part of Tabernacle long before she became a fixture here as one of our beloved members. Her daughter attended Vacation Bible School every summer and Bunchie would come and volunteer to help us with the songs and activities. She came to Tabernacle quite a bit, until she finally admitted that she wanted to join because she really felt welcomed by the members here. She was very quiet in the beginning, but decided to become an usher and was a good and faithful worker until she wasn't able to do it anymore because of illness. She still stayed involved with Tabernacle by watching the Sunday services on Facebook and keeping up with other obligations when she could.

I know that we at Tabernacle will truly miss her as a member. As for me, I will sincerely miss her as a sister and friend. Love and miss you Bunchie, until we meet again, Mary Ann.



ROOF WORK IS COMPLETED

Thanks to Members and Friends, Tabernacle received sufficient donations to proceed with a new roof! The roof is now repaired, and it looks like the building survived the heavy and frequent rains in May. (We are reprinting some of the roof photos in case they were missing from your April-May edition. (Thanks to Carlo Arjona and RHI for these photos!)



Thanks be to God!



Please remember to pray for people who are in any need: sickness, loneliness, violence, grief; as well as prayers of thanks for new life, healing, family, and church. God hears our prayers!

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|------------------|-----------------------|
| Dennis Abraham | Joan Gamble |
| Tony Arjona | Grace Gerace |
| Helen Beypu | Tom & Gloria Huey |
| Ann Brown | Pastor Rosa Key |
| Anita Burrell | Diane Medley |
| Grisel Cartagena | Pastor Janet Peterman |
| Johnny Cochran | Lucille Rodgers |
| Corrie Ellis Sr. | Beatrice Scott |
| Paula Everett | Jose & Vanlee Tapia |

The Family & Friends of Blanche Ramsey-Riggs
The Family & Friends of Brenda Y. Armstead
The Family & Friends of Viola V. Mapp

Would someone you know like a home visit? TELC's team of Eucharistic Deacons is ready to visit and administer Holy Communion. Please contact Pastor Rodgers. Also, please send your prayer requests to Pastor Rodgers.



June 18 & 25
July 23
9:30am – 11:00am

The Food Bank is inviting your contributions of non-perishable food items which have not passed the expiration date. Your contributions, including monetary, are very important. Some of our area programs which were dependent on government sources are now not able to handle the needs of our communities. The Food Bank has experienced an increase of people coming to Tabernacle for food. Our Lord said "For I was hungry and you gave me food." (Matthew 25:35) Please give generously.



Saturday June 21st 9am – 12noon

If rained out, volunteers needed inside for workday. Bring gloves and masks!

TABERNACLE'S NEWEST MEMBER



On May 4, Jonathan Thorne became an "official" member of Tabernacle. Jonathan has been worshipping with us for many months, as well as helping with building upkeep. He said this is the first church he has joined!



Happy Birthday to all who were born in June & July!



A father is tender and kind to his children. In the same way, the Lord is tender and kind to those who have respect for him.

Psalm 103:12

A Life Remembered: Brenda Y. Armstead

Brenda Y. Armstead, a proud daughter of Philadelphia, lived a life rich in purpose and quiet passions. Born on January 28, 1952, to the late John and Virginia Armstead, Brenda's journey was marked by a deep commitment to education, a diverse nursing career, and a spirited connection to her community and the outdoors.

Brenda's roots were firmly planted in Philadelphia, where she navigated the city's school system and graduated from West Philadelphia High School in 1969. Her pursuit of knowledge then led her to Columbia University in Columbus, Ohio, where she earned both a Bachelor's Degree as a Registered Nurse and a Master's Degree as a Nurse Practitioner. Her dedication to healthcare extended beyond these roles; she also served as a midwife and a public health nurse, providing compassionate care to countless individuals. In November 1984, Brenda returned to her beloved Philadelphia, continuing her dedication to service as a teacher's aide.

Those who knew Brenda understood her as a free spirit, strong-willed yet private. She found solace and joy in life's simple beauties. She cultivated a deep love for the outdoors, expressed through her passion for gardening and her frequent, reflective walks, especially through the vibrant streets of Chinatown. Brenda also possessed a creative touch, finding great satisfaction in knitting, needlework, and crocheting. Her nurturing spirit and medical background earned her the affectionate moniker "The Nurse" among the people on the streets of Philadelphia, reflecting her impactful presence.

Brenda's faith was an integral part of her life. A devoted member of Tabernacle, she could be seen walking to church nearly every Sunday, a steady and familiar presence. She also lovingly tended to the plants in the Parish Hall, extending her nurturing spirit to her spiritual home.

Brenda was preceded in death by her younger brother, Keith. She leaves behind a legacy of cherished memories for her siblings: George Armstead (Mary), Patricia Armstead-Coleman (David), John Armstead (Jacqueline), Annie Armstrong, and Reginal Armstead (Denise). She will also be deeply missed by a host of nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends whose lives she enriched.

Brenda Y. Armstead lived a life of quiet strength, professional dedication, and personal joy. Her memory will continue to inspire all who were fortunate enough to know her.



IN OUR COMMUNITY...

► West Philadelphia's 3rd district City Council representative is **Jamie Gauthier**. Her regular newsletter is filled with helpful information. Read her complete newsletter by going to this website: <https://mailchi.mp/cebba483c8e8/3rd-district-newsletter-17442118?e=329943b7e5> Email 3rddistrict@phila.gov. Phone 215.472.2419. Office is at 606 S. 52nd St. Monday-Thursday 9AM-5PM.

► Our community's PA State representative is **Joanna McClinton** (191st District). Ms. McClinton is also the PA Assembly's Speaker of the House. Her office can help with a variety of services on the state level. Her website is <https://www.pahouse.com/McClinton/> Her office is located at 149 S. 60th St., Philadelphia, PA 19139-3039. Phone 215.748.6712.

► Since its establishment, the **Sayre Health Center** has remained a steadfast community partner to Tabernacle. Together, we have hosted numerous health fairs and screenings, benefiting the residents of West Philadelphia. This time, our collaboration focused specifically on supporting the students of Sayre High School. Mrs. Nancy Winder and the Sayre Health Center Advisory Board held its 3rd annual luncheon to celebrate and appreciate 10 outstanding Sayre High School students. This year's luncheon, held on May 22nd in our parish hall, was a lively gathering filled with food, music, and dancing. A standout moment was the energetic performance by *Project Positive*, a renowned Philadelphia-based dance group that uses hip-hop to inspire youth and strengthen community ties.



Tabernacle Church Council

President: Al Hunter Jr.

Vice President: Barbara Eddings

Recording Secretary: Mary Stewart

Members: Pastor Rodgers (ex-officio), Annie Armstrong, Valary Callender, Fern Lee Hagedorn, Veronica Smokes, Craig Taylor

Financial Secretary: Patricia Hunter-Moore

Treasurer: Beverly Gaines

TABERNACLE LUTHERAN CHURCH
PO Box 5323, Yeadon, PA 19050