



Brick by Brick

November 2018

Greetings from Lydia

Dear Families,

I am happy to share the latest issue of our newsletter, Brick by Brick. The 2018-19 school year is in full swing, and we are thrilled with our expanded facility and school with the addition of thirty-six precious two year olds!

Having attended many Buildings and Grounds meetings and seen the many iterations of construction plans, and then experienced the construction process for the Garden Room and garden all around me this summer, I was still blown away when I walked in on Monday morning, September 17th. The space is much safer, brighter and more inviting. The garden has so much more space, and it's great to watch the children on the new climber right outside my window. The poured surface makes the space safer, and the wooden slatted flooring under the sandboxes will keep sand from being tracked all over. We are still waiting for a hollow log tunnel for the children to crawl through as it is back-ordered until December. The children did the planting in the planters in front of the sandbox.



Our new classroom, 2 West, is beautiful and is happily accommodating a morning and afternoon threes class (replacing Room 6 which now houses the Church business offices and an office for our Spanish teacher, Madyuri Lopez). Having all the classrooms in close proximity allows for much more interaction, and two nearby staircases make exiting much safer for the children in case of an emergency. We have also added a second staircase coming down from the art studio so there are two means of egress. This addition caused reconfiguration of the art studio and relocation of the children's bathroom. The studio is still beautiful! Of course, we are thrilled with the skylight addition to the youth floor space which was renovated last summer, now a functioning classroom for three groups of twelve two year olds. It is a very joyful space when they are present.

The School is very grateful to Garrity Construction for working so well with us and for the many hours of overtime that resulted in timely completion, Fradkin-McAlpin Architects for the beautiful designs and thorough oversight of the project, Robin Key and RCLA Studio for the beautiful garden design that also meets the children's needs and for saving the flowering trees! We also recognize Kate Farewell and Matthew Dougherty, our Owner's

Reps from Zubatkin and of course, the B & G Committee headed by Tim Haskin, and Brick staff, Laila Al-Askari, Rob Dayboch and Chris Ramirez who spent many hours beyond their regular jobs to help bring the project to completion. I am also so grateful to all for allowing me to hold Summer Steps amidst the construction. What a team effort!

I am treasuring every moment of my last year here at Brick. There are so many people I will miss, especially the precious children who brighten every day.

Warm regards,
Lydia Spinelli

Day School Director Search Announcement!



Dear Members of The Brick Church School Community and Brick Friends:

The Director Nominating Committee is delighted to announce that Amy Warden has accepted the position of Director of The Brick Church School, effective August 1, 2019.

This announcement caps a six-month comprehensive search process that began in April when Lydia Spinelli announced her intention to retire at the end of the 2018-2019 academic calendar year. As part of this process, Amy submitted an in-depth application package, interviewed with the eight-person Nominating Committee and with educational consultants, Carney Sandoe. Informed by the shared values and voices of all Brick constituents, the Nominating Committee received numerous letters of recommendation from current and former parents, faculty and staff, and other educators in support of Amy's candidacy for the director position. The community highlighted Amy's expertise and consistent passion for early childhood education during her five-year tenure as Associate Director as well as in prior roles. Amy's knowledge, experience and vision align with the core values of the school and key areas for evolution; hence, she was the enthusiastic and unanimous choice for our next director.

As Associate Director, Amy has prioritized curriculum and professional development. She has skillfully led a revision of the pre-literacy program, the school's equity and inclusion initiatives, and focused on the social/emotional development of children. Amy has collaborated with faculty to integrate more inquiry-based learning in the classroom. In addition, Amy directed the June Program and was instrumental in developing the new Two's Program. Most importantly, Amy has remained steadfast in her dedication to knowing each child individually, partnering with parents on educational growth at Brick and beyond.

Prior to joining Brick, Amy was Head of Schools at Williamsburg Northside Schools in Brooklyn, New York. In her role, Amy was responsible for all facets of the school's operation, which included programming for over 300 children ages three months to seven years across 18 classrooms and 80 staff members. Under Amy's leadership, Northside implemented the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education from infancy through the elementary school years, resulting in a highly innovative, successful program.

Amy has a bachelor's degree from William Smith College with a major in dance therapy and a minor in education. She has two graduate degrees from Hunter College: a master's degree in dance and movement therapy and a MEd in special education. Amy and her

husband, Doug, have two children, son Henry (age 10) and daughter Audrey (age 4), and reside in Tarrytown, New York.

Thank you to every member of our school community for your investment in Brick and your engagement and participation in our Director search. A thoughtful transition process in partnership with Lydia Spinelli is underway, and we will soon schedule opportunities for members of the Brick community to get to know Amy even better. We look forward to Amy's leadership at The Brick Church School!

Sincerely,
The Brick Church School Director Nominating Committee

New Year, New Program: Welcome to the Twos

Our new Twos Program is off to a fantastic start. Thirty-six new children and their families have been welcomed to their beautiful new classroom on the Youth Floor. The classroom boasts a large open space with a skylight complete with areas for large motor play, block building, art, manipulatives, reading and dramatic play. The three classes (2.5-hour sessions) have a full schedule which includes classroom play time, outdoor play in the Garden, music with Amanda Smith, and projects in the classroom with Studio Teacher, Caren Shayne. Leading the teaching team is Lauren Ferguson, a Brick teacher of ten years. Assisting Lauren is Brick teacher Jyothi George, and new staff member Heidi Ong-Fong. Looking through the classroom windows is a great joy to all who pass through the youth floor.



Celebrating our Alumni

The 2018 – 2019 school year brings many familiar faces back to Brick. There are sixteen alumni parents this year! For all of these parents, Lydia was either Director or their classroom teacher. We thank you, Alumni parents, for sharing Brick's mission and passion for learning with your children.

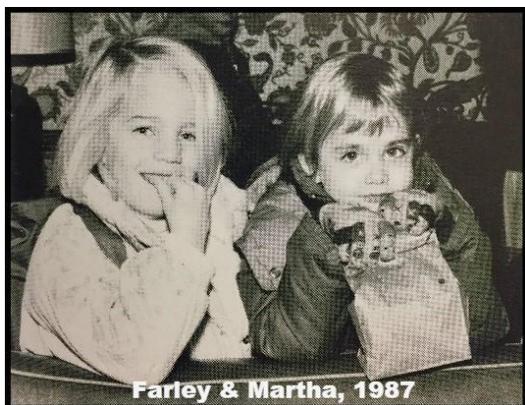


2018-19 Alumni Parents and children (from left to right):

Katie Harman (Annabelle), John MacMurray (Adele), Farley Bills (Colin), Bentley King (Dylan), Lydia Spinelli, Martha Tedesco (Abby), Nate Kempner (Tom), Tenley Chepiga (Greer & Renner), Scott Swanson (Quinn)

Not Pictured: Mike Barone (Tristian), Meg Epstein (Charlie), Anina Fraser (Charlie), Landon Nordeman (Jack & Townes), Robert Pennoyer (Victoria), Will Reardon (Jack & Lola), Sage Robinson (Chloe & Phoebe), Alexa Smith (Owen)

Special Connections: Farley Bills and Martha Tedesco



Farley & Martha, 1987

Upon sitting down with Farley Bills and Martha Tedesco, it quickly became clear that although many things have changed since their time together at Brick, there is much more that remains the same. Farley and Martha were in the same class in 1987. Farley's son, Colin, and Martha's daughter, Abby, are in the same class this year and have quickly become dear friends.

While the school may no longer serve apple juice at snack time or have a classroom on the first floor with Garden access (now Lydia's office!), the memories of the school's spaces, program, and focus on community remain unwavering. Farley has a clear memory of her mother sitting outside of her classroom during her first days of school. She shared how her feelings of Brick as a second home, and the focus on family, have endured. Martha shared fond memories of playing in the Garden and her blue folding rest mat. She confessed to often hiding the shoes of her resting classmates instead of resting herself (perhaps solving a longtime mystery for some Alumni). She feels as though Brick's community

fosters camaraderie and lifelong friendships.



Meet our New School Staff

We are thrilled to welcome six new staff members to the Brick team! Susan Johnson and Whitney Schwartz have joined our administrative team. Our new teachers are Liberty Kibombo, Heidi Ong-Fong, Inzata Toure, and Geraldine Walker. Welcome!



Susan Johnson
Business Manager



Liberty Kibombo
Assistant Teacher, 5N



Heidi Ong-Fong
Associate Teacher, Twos



Whitney Schwartz
*Dir. of Institutional
Advancement*



Inzata Toure
Assistant Teacher, 4S



Geraldine Walker
Assistant Teacher, 4N

SAVE THE DATE: Lydia's Retirement Celebration



SAVE THE DATE

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A
RETIREMENT CELEBRATION
IN HONOR OF

Lydia Spinelli

AND HER 41 YEARS OF SERVICE AT
THE BRICK CHURCH SCHOOL
MAY 16, 2019
AT 6:30 PM

Contact Us

To update your contact information, or to let us know about someone who would be interested in receiving *Brick by Brick*, please email Paula Rocca at procca@brickchurch.org. Thank you!

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