

A Second Look

An Invitation to the Life and Work of Our Community of Faith and Fellowship

A S E C O N D L O O K

J U N E 2 0 1 7

Summer Preaching at Second Church

Arranging for your summer smorgasbord of worship experiences has always been exciting. Our congregation offers a remarkable amount of thoughtful preaching and musical resource.

This summer will be especially interesting. The plan is to fill your plates with the best of what there is, looking toward potential matches, in terms of the Temporary and then the Interim Pastor. We are well on our way to filling the roster for July and August.

The Music Search Committee is going all out to have our new Minister of Music in place ASAP, meaning MAYBE July...stay tuned for that announcement.

Search for a Temporary Pastor Begins

The process of calling a pastor to lead our flock after Leslie retires has begun, and it will occur in several stages. The Session plans for the temporary pastor to begin serving on Sept. 1, Leslie's last official day, until we find an interim pastor for an estimated 4-6 month period.

A few candidates have expressed interest in exploring the possibility. As part of the process of making a selection, the candidates may preach during the summer.

The same group of officers preparing materials for the Temporary and Interim Pastor job descriptions will start meeting informally with the candidates for the "temp" position over the next month. They are: Nancy Hughes, Elaine Song and Maxine Soares. Let's pray that a wonderful pastor hears God's call to join us in September!

2 6 0 Y E A R S O F M I N I S T R Y

Ready or Not ... Preparing for Farewell

Twenty years have passed since Leslie Merlin walked through our doors. To mark Leslie's last month preaching here, June will be a month of sharing and celebration.

Here are critical dates and moments to keep in mind:

Sunday, June 11th: Our worship service will be led by the congregation, to call to mind Leslie's legacy, in a format that combines the day's lectionary readings, brief reflections, and lots of hymns. Kathryn Schneider is our



**Celebrating two decades of
ministry and leadership**

musician. The service will be followed by a regular coffee hour.

Sunday, June 25th: This will be

Leslie's last Sunday preaching and leading worship. As an additional treat, Paul Sanner, longtime former Minister of Music, will be our musician that day. After the service, we will have a catered, buffet luncheon (not potluck) in the Carnegie Library.

After Labor Day, on a September date TBA, we'll have an evening event in the neighborhood for members of the larger community of church, school, and clergy friends, who have been touched by Leslie.

Please share these dates with those near and far. See you there and then!

Second Presbyterian Church

Sanctuary: 6 West 96th Street / Office: 3 West 95th Street

212-749-1700 / www.secondpresbyteriangny.org

Leslie Merlin, Pastor

Worship at 10:15 am Sundays

Seeking a better world together

Pastoral Care at SPC

Sunday, June 4, I met with a dozen members of the congregation who are concerned about ongoing pastoral care in our community, as we move forward through leadership transitions.

It was clear, through our discussion, that each person in the room has a sense of what goes into good pastoral care: sincerity, deep listening, focus on the other rather than the self, and courage.

A very important aspect of the church's pastoral care is that it comes from the church! A pastor is allowed into places and situations not as an individual, but as a trusted representative of a trusted community and institution - the church. It will be very important for congregation members reaching out in caring ways to make it clear that their work is being done on behalf of Second Presbyterian Church. Perhaps some physical item, a scarf or a pin, perhaps, could indicate that both to the care giver and the care receiver. It is somewhat akin to taking on another identity, while remaining oneself.

One of the very difficult issues is the deep theological questions that can arise in pastoral situations, for example, "why is this happening to me, did I do something to deserve to suffer?" or "I believe God will do the miracle I want." A pastoral relationship is not an opportunity to preach, but it is important to not only acknowledge the pain that prompts such questions, as well as the God who loves and cares for us in all situations, while the rain and the sun visit themselves on all of us.

Finally, there is a system of lay training for pastoral care called "The Stephen Ministry". A number of us have been interested in pursuing this for some time. This will be further explored.

AND, what was beautifully clear in this meeting is that you yourselves, by speaking openly with one another, and listening carefully, and allowing yourselves to be led by the Spirit, have all you need to love and care for one another. --- *Leslie*

What To Expect From Your Next Pastor

"The unrealistic expectation that pastors and their families walk on water can only lead to deep disappointment and disillusionment, which can be lethal. Please stop expecting your pastor to be anything more than a frail and fragile human being like you."

Kay Warren, cofounder of Saddleback Church and member of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, commenting on a cousin's spouse who took his own life after a church asked him to step down as pastor (*Washington Post*, April 21) as reported in *The Christian Century*.



J U N E 2 0 1 7

Calendar for June 2017

Neal Boswell, Worship Coordinator

- Thursday, June 1: 3 p.m.: Music Search Committee, Leslie's office
- Friday, June 2: 8 p.m.: Empire Viols Concert, sanctuary
- Sunday, June 4: 10:15 a.m.: morning worship, Pentecost, Leslie Merlin preaching; Alexei Tartakovski, musician; Holy Communion
- Noon: meeting re Ongoing Pastoral Care, classroom
- Friday, June 9: 8:45 a.m.: "Jonah", the Musical, sanctuary
- Sunday, June 11: 10:15 a.m.: worship, led by the congregation! Kathy Schneider, musician
- Monday, June 12: 6 p.m.: Session meeting, Head of School's office
- Tuesday, June 13: 11:30 a.m.: *Tuesdays at Prayer* (and lunch) sanctuary
- Wednesday, June 14: 11 a.m.: Alexander Robertson School Graduation and Closing Program, sanctuary
- 6 p.m.: Taizé service of quiet and song, sanctuary
- Sunday, June 18: 10:15 a.m.: morning worship, Leslie Merlin preaching
- Sunday, June 25: 10:15am, morning worship, Leslie Merlin preaching; catered luncheon in the Carnegie Library!!



l to r: Addison Thornton, C.J. Watch, and Aaron Chassen sing "Wade in the Water" in harmony as a presentation of ARS's new Afternoon Chorus program.



A Jellicoe Cat danced for the celebration of summer birthdays during our May 21 Coffee Hour!! We were astonished and thrilled! Alexander Boswell was our Jellicoe Cat, his mother, Angela, was his costume designer, and his dad, Neal, was the make-up artist!

Loud, sustained applause rang out! Thank you to the Boswell family!