

# 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

N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 7

### Opportunities for Young and Old

#### Jarvie Program

James N. Jarvie was a faithful Presbyterian who, in 1925, began a charity for older adults in the New York Area. His mission continues under the aegis of the Presbyterian Foundation, with a Chaplain and a team of social workers, who serve persons of the Protestant faith, age 65 and older, within a fifty-mile radius of Columbus Circle. Rev. Marjory Roth, Jarvie Chaplain, will visit our congregation on Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, to tell us more about their services and application criteria. Seniors cannot self-refer to the program, but must be referred by their community, typically a pastor, deacon, or clerk of session. We hope this presentation will be of interest to seniors, adult children of aging parents, deacons, and all church members interested in ways to serve one another.

#### Chimes for Advent

Our Minister of Music Eunjung Ahn is ready to open us up to new adventures. She wants to bring chimes to Second Church! And she wants you to play them. Eunjung will teach you how to play and assures everyone no experience is necessary. You also do not need to know how to read music. It's about rhythm, sound and spirit.

Very importantly, children are encouraged to join in.

The plan is to form a group to play for Sunday worship starting during Advent. Rehearsal dates and times will be announced.

If you are interested, please email Eunjung at [ejahn@secondpresbyteriannyc.org](mailto:ejahn@secondpresbyteriannyc.org)

2 6 1 Y E A R S O F M I N I S T R Y

## 500 Years of Reformation

It was 500 years ago that Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses onto the door of the church at Wittenberg. The main issue was the sale of indulgences to finance the building of St. Peter's in Rome. "The revenues of all Christendom are being sucked into this insatiable basilica," he wrote. Luther felt that it was local churches that should be supported by Christian treasure, not an edifice that few Christians would ever visit. More fundamentally, though, he believed that Christians gained a false sense of security through the purchase of indulgences when all of life should be spent in repentance. And, of course, he disputed the power of popes to release souls from Purgatory, the consequence of sin, in the first place.

Luther was not the first reformer of the Roman church but he was the first to gain princely patronage and survive what had sent prior reformers to the stake. Instead, it was others who would die in the name of religion as Europe descended into a century of war between Protestants and Catholics. Last spring the Vatican and the



**Martin Luther nailing his 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg.**

Lutheran World Federation issued a joint statement saying: "We begged forgiveness for our failures and for the ways in which Christians have wounded the Body of the Lord and offended each other during the 500 years since the beginning of the Reformation until today."

Although the Sunday School version of the Reformation does not say so, women were among the big losers in the

early Reformation period. Gone were the opportunities to exercise abbatial authority in convents as heads of communities, to oversee charitable lay orders or to be recognized as theologians like Julian of Norwich. The Reformation woman was a wife and mother, period. Both Luther and Calvin supported the reality and therefore the burning of witches who were mostly identified as women. In 1545, a year in which Calvin was exercising political power in Geneva, 45 women were burnt or quartered for witchcraft there. No one knows how many women, men, and children were executed for witchcraft in Europe but the number was in the tens of thousands before the practice moved to America.

In reading about the celebrations of 500 years of Protestantism, it was comforting to see how the Reformation has moved beyond the prejudices of its founders, surely a sign of the Spirit. Angela Merkel, the daughter of a Lutheran pastor, is Chancellor of Germany and the Rev. Najla Kassab of Lebanon is the president of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

*by Elder Cecilia Blewer*

### Second Presbyterian Church

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

212-749-1700 / [www.secondpresbyteriannyc.org](http://www.secondpresbyteriannyc.org)

Stephen H. Phelps, Transitional Pastor

Worship at 10:15 am Sundays

## Update on Interim Pastor Search

The Interim Pastor Nominating Committee, on which I sit with Clayton Young and Neal Boswell, has been meeting weekly since September. So far, we have received 39 applications – 21 “matched” to our position by PC(USA)’s online job bank, and 18 self-referred. In our first round of review, we eliminated 20 applicants based on information on their resumes or Pastor Information Forms (PIFs). Pastors with no experience as an interim, little familiarity with small or urban congregations, and those not yet ordained were rejected quickly. One candidate withdrew when she received another job.

We next began a more in-depth look at the remaining applicants, listening to sermons, reading blog posts, searching Google for anything that would help us discern elements of style, skill, and faith, to help us determine whom we should interview. As of this writing in late October, we have narrowed the list down to 12 hopefuls, from whom we expect to select about half for interviews with the committee. We may be conducting those interviews by the time you read this.

The interim search process began last summer, while we were engaged in the search for a short-term, part-time pastor and moderator, to start immediately upon Rev. Leslie Merlin’s retirement at the end of August. That search resulted, most happily, in our call to the Rev. Stephen H. Phelps as Transitional Pastor. At that time, session also approved a job description for a full-time Interim Pastor. Like the Transitional Pastor, the Interim will be chosen by the session. In contrast, our installed pastor will be chosen by the congregation. A significant part of the Interim Pastor’s job is to guide the congregation through a process of reflection, or mission study, to prepare the way for the new installed pastor.

The diversity and life stories of applicants are fascinating – many heard the call to ministry in mid-life, and come from a wide assortment of careers and backgrounds. Many are converts to Presbyterianism from other denominations. An interesting side benefit to the screening process is getting to look at videos of different styles of worship.

Our Presbytery COM liaison, Sharon Davison, has been an invaluable resource and support. As she reminds us, the selection of a pastor involves the search committee, the Presbytery, the candidate, and God.

Interested candidates can self-refer online through the PC(USA) CLC website, or by contacting the search committee directly, Nancy Hughes, (212) 288-5765, [nhughescsw@aol.com](mailto:nhughescsw@aol.com).

*by Nancy Hughes, Clerk of Session*

## Note on Social Media

Help spread the word about Second Presbyterian Church by following us on Facebook at Second Presbyterian Church, NYC, writing a review, liking our posts, and posting to our page. There is always a current calendar of church activities pinned to the top of the page for easy reference. If you would like to be one of the people who can “post as the page” on behalf of our community, speak to Nancy Hughes.



You can also review us on Yelp, and even add photos, both of which help folks to find us. Next month, more on the website redesign!

## Pastoral Care During the Transition

During this period of transition, Nancy Hughes, Elaine Song, and Karen Amrhein will serve as contact people for members and regular attendees to call when there is an immediate need to be shared. Examples of needs are hospitalizations, surgeries, deaths, or crises for church members or their family members. When contacted, Nancy, Elaine, or Karen will then learn how we as a congregation may best help someone and learn what information may be shared with Steve Phelps and with our congregation. The idea of having contact numbers was thought of after a meeting we had on Ministering to Each Other in late September. During this meeting, we discussed the importance of supporting each other.

Nancy Hughes. 212-288-5765

Elaine Song 646-241-2259

Karen Amrhein 914-263-2418

## N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 7

### November Calendar

*Scott Amrhein is worship co-ordinator for November.*

*Jane Yoo is deacon co-ordinator for the month.*

**Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. will be regular time for choir practice.**

Sunday, November 12: Celebration of birthdays of children born August to December.

Thursday, November 16: Session meeting, 6:30 p.m. in Head of School’s office.

Sunday, November 19: presentation of Jarvie Program by Rev. Marjory Roth at Coffee Hour.

Tuesday, November 21: Trustees’ meeting.

Wednesday, November 22 - Friday, November 24: ARS closed for Thanksgiving.

**Top:** Former pastor (1980 to 1992) Thomas E. Wilson and his wife, longtime Second Church member Grace Wilson, became grandparents on October 15, 2017 (USA time), when son Alfred, oldest of the three Wilson offspring born and bred in the 15th floor manse, and his wife Chou Fang-Ju (“Candy”) became parents of 8 lbs 12 oz Gavin Wilson. Gavin and parents reside in Taiwan where Alfred teaches English.



**Bottom:** Kirking last month.

