

September 2018

Second Presbyterian Church in New York City

262 Years of Ministry

A SECOND LOOK

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

IN SESSION: News from the Summer 2018 Session Meetings by Nancy Hughes, Clerk of Session, and Rev. Lindsay Borden

June 21:

- * Clerk Nancy Hughes has completed the new Membership Directory.
- * Ruling Elder Neal Bosworth is working with Rev. B to find a Sunday School teacher.
- * Ruling Elder Elaine Steele reported on the Stewardship's committee's plans to encourage 2018 donations and 2018 per capita in July, when sending out mid-year donor reports.
- * RE Elaine Song said Personnel will focus on developing an employee handbook.
- * RE Bruce Ewing reported on the building electrical upgrade project, estimated to take 6 weeks. Three architects have expressed interest in working on the accessible bathroom project.
- * RE Bram Lewis reported that the recent ARS graduation was a great success! The school will upgrade its security systems.

July 19:

- * After reflecting on The Great Ends of The Church, Session discussed that next Mission Study gathering in October.
- * We received a Trustees report from guest Trustee Tracey Ewing.
- * Session approved the start of work on the electrical upgrade, as well as on organ repair work.
- * We discussed our upcoming meeting with Head of School Irwin Shlachter – the first of his quarterly reports to the session.

August 2:

- * A special called meeting of session was duly held on for the purpose of receiving and discussing Mr. Shlachter's report on ARS.

From the Pastor:

Mission Study Kicks Off!

Way back on June 24, a wonderful group of Second Pres-ers gathered after worship to share some good food while we dipped our metaphoric toes into the Mission Review process. I was delighted to see such wide representation – from our longest-term member to a not-yet-confirmed. We put together a Second Presbyterian Timeline, from the 1700s up to the present, then broke into small groups to respond to questions like:

- **What difference would it make if Second Presbyterian Church did not exist?**
- **What Changes or Trends have you noticed about Church over the years?**
- **What has happened that you like – and that you wish had happened differently?**
- **If you were talking to a potential minister, how would you describe Second Presbyterian Church? And, what kind of qualities would you tell him or her are needed in a pastor?**

The responses will be used as we put together our Mission Study. We'll have our second congregation-wide gathering in October (**Sunday, October 21, after worship – save the date!**) so don't worry if you couldn't attend the first. And you'll have a chance to answer a survey questionnaire which we'll send out after that. Meanwhile, I invite you to ponder these questions, as we work together to discern where and to what God is calling this beautiful church.

*Grace and peace,
Rev. Lindsay*



The initial gathering for the Mission Study took place on June 24th.

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sanctuary: 6 West 96th Street./Business Office: 3 West 95th Street
212-663-6441 www.secondpresbyteriannyc.org

Rev. Lindsay Borden, Interim Pastor: lborden@secondpresbyteriannyc.org
Eunjung Ahn, Minister of Music: ejahn@secondpresbyteriannyc.org

Worship at 10:15 a.m. Sundays
Seeking a Better World Together

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT

by GA Overture Advocate Cecilia Blewer



The PC(USA)'s 223rd General Assembly met in St. Louis, MO this June, and got quite a bit of business done. Among the Overtures passed was one that our church had forwarded to the Presbytery of New York City for concurrence, entitled "On Responding to the Current Syrian Crisis". The Overture called for immediate cessation of hostilities in Syria, alleviation of the suffering and strengthening our denominational connection with Syrian Christians.

In addition to electing Co-Moderators of the General Assembly, other business included: calling on the State of Israel to fully comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United States to rejoin the United Nations Human Rights Council; calling for an end to family separations at the US-Mexican border and an immediate reunification of parents with their children; calling for an immediate moratorium on the death penalty; and beginning a process by which Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from a Birmingham Jail would be considered for inclusion in the Book of Confessions. All Overtures brought before the GA can be read in their entirety at pc-biz.org.

But, of course the General Assembly isn't just about policies but about witness to the world and worship. The most dramatic witness was a thousand strong march to deliver bail money for people languishing in jail who can't afford bail. The GA raised \$47,000 for this purpose during its worship services. The inability to make bail is one of the drivers of mass incarceration in this country.

During one of the final worship services we heard a sermon by the Rev. Najla Kassab, the elected president of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Najla was the second woman to become ordained in Lebanon. I have gotten to know both Najla and her husband, Joseph, a bit through my participation in the Syria Lebanon Partnership Network. The Kassabs lived through the 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and from this lived experience Najla's message of reconciliation was especially heartfelt and powerful.

Exhausting as the General Assembly is, it is a wonderful opportunity to experience the "cloud of witnesses" and see what faith in action can look like.

September 2018 Calendar

*Scott Amrhein is Worship Coordinator; Karen Amrhein & Meg Fox are Fellowship Hour Coordinators
Choir rehearses Wednesdays at 7 pm, Carnegie Library.*

Thursday, September 6: ARS school year starts! **4 pm:** Stewardship Committee meets, sanctuary.

Sunday, September 9, 10:15 am: The new church year begins! We'll celebrate the Sacrament of Communion, and welcome the choir back from their summer hiatus.

Tuesday, September 11, 11 am: Second Tuesdays Prayer meeting resumes, sanctuary.

Wednesday, September 12, 5 pm: Worship and Music Committee meets, sanctuary.

Thursday, September 13: Primary Election Day! **4 pm:** Stewardship Committee meets, sanctuary.

Sunday September 16, 10:15 am: Join us for worship, as we Shine a Light on Stewardship.

Thursday, September 20, 6:15 pm: Session meets, location TBA.

Sunday, September 23, 10:15 am: The Kirking of the School! Come and worship, as we ask God's blessings upon the students, teachers and staff of ARS. Yes, there will be bagpipes!

Saturday, September 29: Presbytery of New York City Stated Meeting, Riverdale Pres Church.

Sunday, September 30, 10:15 am: Worship; Children's Sunday School will (God willing!) start today.

Save the Date: Sunday, October 7, 11 am: World Communion Sunday, guest preacher International Peacemaker Rev. Alex Award.