

First Notes

The First
Presbyterian Church
in the City of New York

Volume XIV Issue 1

January 2006

In Everything, Turn, Turn, Turn

The world keeps spinning around, and every January as we begin another year I am reminded of that wonderful litany from Ecclesiastes 3, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." The Byrds recorded a musical version of this Biblical meditation adapted by Pete Seeger in 1966, adding to the words of Ecclesiastes the refrain, "Turn, turn, turn." In 1966 the world seemed to be turning out of control at times as the nation was trapped in a war in Viet Nam from which it could not extricate itself, and as the old values and morés of an earlier era gave way to new ones.

The preacher of Ecclesiastes reminds us that of the many seasons in life, there is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to love and a time to hate, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time for war and a time for peace. In the year just past there has been an abundance of dying,

hate, weeping, and war. It is sobering to remember the Pacific Tsunami which consumed Christmas and New Year's Day a year ago; this summer's extended and destructive season of hurricanes including the devastation which befell New Orleans, Biloxi, and the Gulf coast; the earthquake in Pakistan and India which took the lives of 150,000 people and displaced 3.3 million souls; and the ongoing war in Iraq along with the terrorist attacks and disruption there. 2005 is a year that will be good to see in the rear-view mirror.

We might rightly hope and pray for a year ahead in which the pendulum swings back toward normalcy. That for all of the weeping, sadness, and suffering of the earth that we have known in this past year, perhaps there might now be

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Annual Congregational Meeting on January 29

The annual meeting of the congregation and corporation of The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York will be held following the morning worship service and an all-member brunch on Sunday, January 29, 2006, in the Great Hall, on the second floor of the South Wing.

The business meeting will begin at approximately 1:15 p.m. in the church sanctuary and will last about an hour. The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers, to receive reports of the joint boards on financial results for 2005, and to review the 2006 budget. A printed Annual Report, including reports from the ministers, boards, and committees, will be available Sunday, January 22, for review before the meeting.

The Nominating Committee, elected by the congregation last January, has been working diligently to prepare a slate of officers to serve on the Session, the Board of Deacons, and the Board of Trustees to replace elders, deacons, and trustees who are retiring this year. This slate of officers will appear in the Annual Report.

There will be no coffee hour that Sunday. Visitors are welcome to attend the brunch and meeting, although only Active Members are eligible to vote. To reserve your place for brunch, please sign up in the lobby of the Mellin-Macnab Building and pick up your ticket. A free-will donation will be taken at the brunch.

Not on Bread Alone

The new year brings with it new opportunities to learn and to strengthen our faith. Each month of the spring of 2006, I hope you will look for this new column, "Not on Bread Alone" in *First Notes*; this monthly column will highlight more about the wide variety of educational programs that are offered for children, families, and adults here at First Presbyterian Church.

For a little over a year and half, our Adult Education Committee has been offering a program called "Third Tuesdays at First." This program, normally held on the third Tuesday of the month, begins at 7 p.m. with a light supper and then transitions into an hour-long presentation that starts at 7:30 p.m. It is a wonderful example of how we truly cannot live on bread alone, but need also the nourishment of those things that feed our faith.

It is Deuteronomy 8:3 that first reminds us that we "cannot live on bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Feeding our bodies is something we think about on a daily basis; the better we nourish ourselves the better our concentration, our self-image, our energy to do the work of the day. Spiritual nourishment is not so different; in fact, it is just as intricate a balance to learn what combination sustains us, challenges us, and prepares us for daily life.

The Adult Education Committee and I work hard to plan programs that we believe add variety and excitement to the spiritual diet of adults. We hope if you have never been to one, you will try something this spring—Bible study at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, or a First Press Conference after worship the first Sunday of the month, or perhaps you'll want to try feeding your

body and spirit together at a Third Tuesdays at First. Whatever you choose, we hope to see you tasting the wide variety of programs and leaders that make up our adult education program.

The Rev. Barbara E. Davis

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS



SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

9:30 a.m.— *For Everything a Season: Epiphany*, Elder Elizabeth Theofan

12:30 p.m.— *First Press Conference*
The Rev. Barbara E. Davis

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

9:30 a.m. *What the Bible Teaches about Anger and Forgiveness*—three-part series led by the Rev. Barbara E. Davis

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

7 p.m. *Third Tuesdays at First*—
Dr. William Entriken (2-part program)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

9:30 a.m. *What the Bible Teaches about Anger and Forgiveness*

12:30 p.m. *Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/ Transgender Group*—The Rev. Charles Mitchell

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

7 p.m. Part 2, Dr. Entriken

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

9:30 a.m. *What the Bible Teaches about Anger and Forgiveness*

FAMILY MINISTRIES PROGRAMS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

Childcare, Church School, and Children's Choir Rehearsal Resume

10 a.m. Youth Discussion

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

12:30 p.m. Pre-Baptism Meeting

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

6 p.m. Youth Fellowship: Music Night (grades 9-12)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

9:30 a.m. First Kids: Saturday Morning Movie & Service Project

Children in Kindergarten through 6th Grade and their families are invited to join us for this winter event. We'll pop some popcorn while we watch the animated movie about Jesus' life, 'The Miracle Maker'. Then we'll organize a project that will help the men who sleep in the winter shelter based out of our church. Don't miss this great way to stay warm in body, mind, and spirit on a winter morning. Sign up by emailing families@fpcnyc.org or watch for a sign-up sheet in the lobby. Hope to see you there!



There are many on-going education programs for children, youth, and adults here at First Presbyterian Church. Please watch for the 2006 Winter Adult Education Brochure and the 2005-2006 Family Ministries Calendar (revised edition) for additional information.

Church & Society Committee 2005 Overview

As we prepare for our committee's work for 2006, we would like to provide you with an overview of the organizations within the church community that received benevolence grants from FPC in 2005. We encourage you to take a look at these worthwhile institutions and organizations via their respective websites listed below:

Auburn Theological Seminary—www.auburnsem.org
 Bailey House—www.baileyhouse.org
 Caring Community—www.thecaringcommunity.org
 Church of Gethsemane—www.pcusa.org/pcnews/oldnews/2001/01133.htm (article)
 Covenant Network—www.covenantnetwork.org
 Homeless Men's Shelter at First Church—www.fpcnyc.org/volunteer
 Holmes Camp and Conference Center—www.presbyteriancenter.org
 New York Theological Seminary—www.nyts.edu
 Partnership for the Homeless—www.partnershipforthehomeless.org
 Presbyterians for Restoring Creation—www.prcweb.org
 Presbyterian Senior Services—www.fpcnyc.org/volunteer-community.html#senior
 Presbyterian Welcome—www.presbyterianwelcome.org
 PCUSA Shared Mission—www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm
 Union Theological Seminary—www.uts.columbia.edu

In addition to the committee's benevolence grant responsibilities, we also helped to organize various volunteer opportunities and initiatives. A few of the available opportunities include: Homeless Men's Shelter (contact Diana Pardue, 212-645-4387), the Church of Gethsemane (contact Janet Martin, 914-329-6330), and the Knitting Circle (contact, Nadine Stewart, 212-206-7725). The committee is also helping to plan a second mission trip to Nicaragua in March 2006. For more information on additional volunteer opportunities within the community, please refer to our "Ways to Help" booklet which is available in the kiosks in the lobby of the church house. For additional information on "Ways to Help" or the Nicaragua Mission trip, please contact Rita Rochford at 212-254-2696.

Israel Trip in February

Our pastor, the Rev. Dr. Jon Walton, will join with Rabbi Peter Rubenstein, head rabbi at the Central Synagogue, and the Rev. Dr. Byron Shafer, pastor of the Rutgers Presbyterian Church, in leading an Auburn Seminary trip to Israel next month, leaving the evening of Sunday, February 19, and returning on Monday morning, February 27. This trip will be co-sponsored by the New York Chapter of the American Jewish Committee and will provide a unique opportunity to experience the region through the eyes of both Jewish and Presbyterian participants. The trip will feature meetings with key Israeli and Palestinian religious, political, and community leaders, who will help participants gain insight into the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. A more detailed itinerary will be available shortly. The estimated cost is \$2,500 per participant. Some scholarship funds may be available. Spaces are limited and interested participants are encouraged to contact Hilary Cohen Singer of the American Jewish Committee at cohenh@ajc.org or 212-891-6757. A \$250 deposit is needed

APNC Committee

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the Associate Pastoral Nominating Committee elected by the congregation on November 20, 2005. Members of this important committee are:

Stuart Buice, Sally Collins, Marge Henning,
 Donna Hurley, Su Pak, Al Picallo,
 Reade Ryan, *Chair*, Ryan Sudol, Larry Tallamy

This slate for the APNC is a true reflection of our congregation with its broad range of ages, involvements in the church, artistic perspectives, and professional expertise, all of which are needed to fulfill the mission of the APNC.

DEADLINE FOR JANUARY
***First Notes* IS JANUARY 19.**

Volunteer Opportunities

Welcome to the VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CALENDAR, published monthly to let you know of events where you can help.

- **COFFEE HOUR HOSTING** – Hosts, coffee pourers, and greeters are needed for Coffee Hour after church. To volunteer, call **JOHN COX** at (212) 260-3094.
- **USHERS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES** – Volunteers are needed to usher for **Sunday morning services and special services**. To volunteer, call **JOAN RYAN** at (212) 765-2141, or **ELLIE GARLOW** at (718) 237-5128.
- **FIRST NOTES** – Volunteers are needed to help assemble and label **FIRST NOTES** mailings. For the next mailing, volunteers will meet at the Church at 10:00 a.m. and work until about 1:00 p.m., on **THURSDAY, January 26**. Call **PAULETTE GRIEFEN** (212) 226-2531 to help.
- **BAILEY HOUSE** – Volunteers are needed to prepare and serve the evening meal to residents of Bailey House on the 5th Sunday of the month . Call **LIZ HUBBELL-RIGGS** to help (212) 247-0355. Next date is **Sunday, January 29**.
- **LAY READERS** – Those interested in participating as lay readers are asked to call **DENISE JACKSON** at (212) 675-4366.

➤ **CROSS BEARER** – To explore the possibility of carrying the processional cross at worship, please call **PAT PENICK** at (212) 242-6916.

➤ **HOMELESS SHELTER**—Volunteers are needed. Call **BUFFY BARTON-DAVIS** (212)254-4222 .

➤ **IN THE KITCHEN** – If you can help with these events, please call **JACKIE FIKE** at (914) 793-4017.

Wednesday, January 4—Vespers Fellowship Supper

Tuesday, January 3—12:30-3:30 p.m. Preparation
Wednesday, January 4—3:00-8:00 p.m. Prep. Serve, Cleanup

Saturday, January 21—Inquirers' Class

Friday, January 20—11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Prep.
Saturday, January 21—9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Prep, Serve, Cleanup

Sunday, January 29—Annual Meeting

Friday, January 27—11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Prep.
Saturday, January 28—11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Prep.
Sunday, January 29—9:00-11:00 a.m. Prep.
12:30-3:00 Serve & Cleanup

Wednesday, February 1—Vespers Fellowship Supper

Saturday, January 28—11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Prep.
Wednesday, February 1—3:00-8:00 p.m. Prep. Serve, Cleanup

Nursery School Puppet Show January 28



The Nursery School will host its annual puppet show on Saturday, January 28, with two performances, at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., in the Assembly Hall. This year's program is "Jack and the Beanstalk," an award-winning production by Michael Graham and the Spring Valley Puppet Theater.

Michael Graham's production of this popular classic holds many surprises. The show features beautifully crafted hand and rod puppets, colorful scenic design, special effects and an original script in which Jack, with the help of a clever Chicken, saves the day.

Michael Graham comes to the Nursery School from New Haven, Connecticut. He rarely performs in New York City, but has agreed to come on a special request. He is highly regarded in the world of puppetry and has won a number of awards for his imaginative performances. Don't miss this unique chance to see a gentle master at work. Performances

are approximately 35-40 minutes, and are followed by a short snack "reception." The program is most appropriate for children who have experienced, and been attentive at a show of this length (e.g., ages 3 and up). Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25. Proceeds from this event benefit the Nursery School's Scholarship Fund. For more information, visit www.fpcns.org. For reservations, please call the Nursery School office at (212) 691-3432.

CONCERT

Sacred and Secular Works

Sunday, January 22, 2006

3:00 p.m.

in the First Church Sanctuary

The Macalester College Choir

from St. Paul, Minnesota

Are all welcome.

In Everythingfrom Page 1

some time for laughter, joy, and healing. But in truth every year has some of both; great sadness and deep joy, overwhelming sorrow and an abundance of laughter, times of war and times of peace. And we sometimes have little control over either.

As Christians, the challenge to our faith is to not be discouraged by the afflictions of our lives, but to take heart and lean into life, trusting that God, who has compassion for all the Creation and for every creature, means for us well, and will not abandon us even in the difficult and trying seasons of life. More than one sage has noted that it is not that Christians have an insurance policy against life's adversities, but rather that we have a policy of assurance in the midst of life's adversities. And that assurance is that God has not abandoned us, but abides with us in Christ.

In every season of the coming year, whatever twists and turns may be, God's promise is sure and steadfast, a covenant made long ago to our forebears Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is a policy of assurance, the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow that, "I will be your God, and you shall be my people." In that promise we live our lives trusting that we are not alone but sustained in every way by a loving and faithful God whose Word can be trusted. May God bless us abundantly, beyond all that we may ask or even imagine possible, in this coming year and always.

Jon M. Walton

BRUNCH

Before Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 29, 2006

In the South Wing
 Immediately after the Service
 and before the Meeting

Tickets Required

Tickets and sign-up sheets will
 be available at the table in the
 Mellin-Macnab Building.

A free-will donation will be collected

Shelter Update

The homeless shelter will continue to operate this year through April 28, 2006. We have had a great response from new and old volunteers, but need to continue, particularly through the bitter cold months ahead. The ten homeless men are very appreciative of our efforts to provide them with a safe, warm place to sleep.

The shelter is open Sunday night through Friday night each week. Two volunteers stay overnight with the men, and one evening coordinator assists with setting up the beds and food each evening. More details on the operation of the homeless shelter is on the church's website at <http://www.fpcnyc.org/volunteer.html>, including descriptions of the overnight volunteer and evening coordinator duties.

You can sign up for specific dates by sending an email to homeless_shelter@yahoo.com or by calling Buffy Barton at (212) 254-4222. You can also join our email list that sends out the vacant dates on a regular basis by sending us an email. If you have questions or would like more information, please call either Buffy Barton or Diana Pardue at (212) 645-4387.

Volunteers are needed for:

Overnight Volunteer

You have the opportunity to greet, meet, set up a snack, and stay the night with our guests, who are appreciative of your participation in their well being. Their smiles are worth a thousand words.

Evening Coordinator

You will call the volunteers scheduled for your night and assist with the evening set-up. On rare occasions, you may need to stay overnight in an emergency (absence of volunteer). The hours are usually 8:45 p.m. until 10 p.m. two or three nights of a designated week.

Next Homeless Shelter Forum Sunday, February 12

Location: First Presbyterian Church
 12 West 12th St. and 5th Ave.

Time: 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be available.

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for existing volunteers to get together and meet each other and talk with those people interested in getting involved with the homeless shelter. Representatives of Partnership for the Homeless and the John Heuss House are invited to share information on their programs.

Who Should Come: Please come if you are a shelter volunteer interested in meeting other volunteers or if you are interested in finding out more about the homeless shelter. Bring friends and family that might be interested as well.

A Month of Sundays

Worship This Month at First Presbyterian

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

First Sunday after Christmas

Scripture: Psalm 148 Luke 2:22-40

Sermon: Rev. Barbara E. Davis preaching on
"Return to Nazareth"

Music: "Carillon," Louis Vierne
"Ding, Dong, Merrily on High,"
16th c. French carol

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

Baptism of the Lord

Sermon: Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Sacrament: Communion

Music: "There Shall a Star," Felix Mendelssohn
"The Shepherd's Farewell," Hector Berlioz

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Sally Brown, Assistant Professor of
Preaching and Worship at Princeton
Theological Seminary, *guest preacher*

Music: "Set Me As a Seal," Wm. Walton
"Tuba Tune in D," C. S. Lang

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Sacrament: Baptism

Music: "Festival Te Deum," Benjamin Britten
"God Be in My Head," John Rutter

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Pastoral Rite: Reception of New Members

Music: "Sing Joyfully," William Byrd
"Psalm 23," Fromm

1:15 p.m. Annual Meeting

DEACONS FOR THE MONTH

Anne Eudaly (212)982-0426

Mariya Lazarev (212)358-0869

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Calendar of Events

CHURCH HOUSE
12 WEST 12TH STREET NEW YORK, NY 10011

Return Service Requested

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