

# First Notes

*The First  
Presbyterian Church  
in the City of New York*

Volume XVII Issue 7-8

July/August 2009

## Tehran to Albany, Are You Listening?

As I write this article, two contrasting events are unfolding in two unlikely places. In Iran, people are demonstrating in the streets of Tehran, calling for accountability from their government and accountability for the outcome of recent elections. Contrary to the reasoning of a large portion of the population, the supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has declared President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad victor in the elections against his popular opponent, Mir Hussein Mousavi. For days since the election, angry Iranians have taken to the streets to protest what they consider to be a fraudulent election, leaving the leadership of Iran in a state of contested power it has not faced in the thirty years of its existence. What is so striking is that a populist movement has risen to challenge the status quo of oligarchic/theocratic rule in Iran. While time will tell whether there will be a lasting change in Iran's political landscape, there is no question that voices have been heard in Iran that many Americans thought might not be heard at all in our lifetime, calling the government to be accountable to its people.

Contrast that cry for democratic accountability in Iran—where the slogan of those who have been protesting the elections has been the English question, “Where is my vote?”—with the atrocity of non-governance unfolding in Albany, where enough state senators have marshaled forces on both sides to effectively bring state government to a halt. The recent “cell-phone coup” funded by billionaire businessman Tom Golisano, irked that the state senate majority leader was playing with his cell phone during a recent meeting, has shown that one man's money can control government and undermine the people's will. It was that infamous cell-phone luncheon which caused Mr. Golisano to fund a reversal of control of the state senate by enticing two senators with questionable personal histories to defect from their party, thus

bringing state business to a halt. The result has been daily newspaper accounts of lockouts from the senate chamber, dueling senate leadership elections, ineffectual attempts at moving beyond the deadlock, and stalled and ineffective government. New York's state legislature has become the laughingstock of the nation, and rightly so.

This failure to fulfill the public's trust to govern is unconscionable. While our state senators play political games, there are not enough places for children in neighborhood schools in New York City, marriage laws are held in abeyance, and educational oversight in the city is left unassigned. We deserve better as a citizenry, as taxpayers, and as voters who have sent assembly members to Albany to fulfill a public trust: the betterment and improvement of life for all New Yorkers. They have failed outright. Frankly, I am disgusted with all of them. While I don't think an Iranian model of protest is necessarily the order of the day for New Yorkers, the failure of accountability by our state senators calls for some kind of rejection of this immaturity, power grabbing, and violation of public trust. At the least, we should all write or email our state senators and assemblymen and demand that they get back to work.

John Calvin believed that the highest calling a human being could answer in life was not a call to ministry but a call to public service. And while our public officials are only human, given to all the failures and temptations that all of the rest of us are, I nevertheless have to express my utter dismay at their blatant failure to do the state's business. Proverbs 29:18 warns us that “Where there is no vision the people perish.” Our leaders seem to have no vision for us as a people and as a result we are perishing.

Jon M. Walton

# For the Living of These Days

## SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

**Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in the Morrow Room**  
Great for curious bible readers of all experience levels.

Bible study this summer will address a variety of topics. Each session will be led by trained and energetic lay leaders. Since each session of summer Bible study is on a separate topic, you will not have to commit to a series—just come and join us anytime your summer schedule allows—we'd love for you to join us!

July 12	August 9
July 19	August 16
July 26	August 23
August 2	August 30

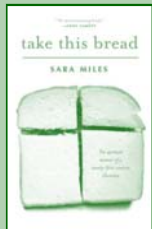
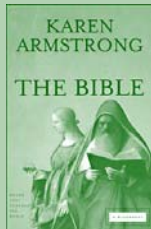
Please note the time change from our usual 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. This change is to coordinate with summer worship. We have two worship services each Sunday, at 9 a.m. in the Alexander Chapel and at 11 a.m. in the Great Hall. Bible study will take place between the two services, so we hope you will either stay after the 9 a.m. service or come early for the 11 a.m. service and enjoy this time of conversation, learning, and fellowship. There will be no Bible study on July 5 or September 6.



## SUMMER READING SUGGESTIONS

Looking for a book to throw in your beach bag?  
Try one of these titles:

- The Bible: A Biography* by Karen Armstrong
- Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia* by Elizabeth Gilbert
- Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion* by Sara Miles
- The Shack* by William P. Young



**EDUCATION ALERTS!** To receive updates and reminders about programs from Education at First, email [education@fpcnyc.org](mailto:education@fpcnyc.org) with "add me to the list" in the subject line.

# SUMMER MOVIE SERIES

**Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.**  
**July 8, 15, 22, and 29**



*Popcorn and refreshments \* Discussion following movie*

### JULY 8 – WALL-E (98 mins.)

The last robot left on earth, Wall-E, has outlasted all other "Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class" robots, assigned 700 years ago to clean up the environmental mess made of earth while humans vacationed aboard the luxury spaceship Axiom. Wall-E has dutifully gone about his job in solitude, but when the Axiom sends a robotic probe, EVE, to earth, Wall-E falls in love.

### JULY 15 – ROXROY (15 mins.)

The everyday life of a family is shaken by an ongoing deportation case. First Presbyterian's New Sanctuary partner, Roxroy Salmon, is the subject of this documentary, which premiered at the New School's Student Documentary Film Festival in May. Roxroy and the director, Zach Fox, will lead a discussion after the screening.

### JULY 22 – THE VISITOR (104 mins.)

On assignment in Manhattan, Walter Vale (Richard Jenkins), a professor adrift after the death of his wife, finds the apartment he normally stays in now occupied by two undocumented immigrants, Tarek and his Senegalese girlfriend, Zainab, who have fallen on hard times. When Walter allows them to stay, Tarek insists on teaching the professor to play the African drum. These lessons have an amazing effect on Walter as he helps his friend avoid deportation and along the way finds the passion and romance long missing in his life.

### JULY 29 – USHPIZIN (90 mins.)

The orthodox Jewish holiday of Succoth celebrates life's essentials for seven days in a temporary shack called a *succah*. A devout Jerusalem couple, Moshe and Mali, married nearly five years and childless, are too broke to afford a *succah*. Suddenly, miracles abound: a friend finds them an abandoned *succah*, an anonymous donation rescues them from debt, and two escaped convicts arrive on the couple's doorstep in time to be their *ushpizin*—their guests. As the miracles become trials, rabbinical advice and absolution lead the couple through this dark night of the soul.

## STAFF APPRECIATION

The congregation of First Presbyterian Church is proud of the men and women on the church staff and grateful for their work. We appreciate the way in which they go about their work and their presence in our community. Each month *First Notes* will recognize and honor two members of our staff. This month we focus on Keith Barr, Receptionist. Say hello to him when you see him!



### Keith Barr, Receptionist

You can find Keith Barr behind the desk in the Mellin-Macnab building every Sunday and most evenings as he directs traffic, answers all questions, and solves any problem he can with patience and good humor. He began working at First Church in 2005 at the receptionist desk, and is familiar with all of your faces, if not your names. He especially enjoys watching the youngest and smallest coming and going. Keith remains at his post until the late hours, giving assistance to the Homeless Shelter volunteers.

Keith was born and raised in Philadelphia. He attended Elmira College to major in theater. While at Elmira he trained vocally, singing with the chorus and becoming acquainted with several languages through music. He moved to New York City in 1991. For many years Keith sang as a tenor voice with the New York Chorale Society. Music and Theater are an integral part of his life now, as are his close friends.

## The Tartan Fair: What's That?

The Tartan Fair is the biggest single volunteer effort that First Presbyterian launches each year. It is always the first weekend in December, and work on it has already begun. It's only July, but the Tartan Fair Committee is meeting and planning for the 18th Annual Tartan Christmas—December 4, 5, and 6. Here is what we are planning:

- that our Café will serve close to 1,000 people during the Fair;
- that every home baked goodie we offer will be sold before noon on Saturday;
- that every visitor to the Fair will go home with Christmas greenery;
- that our White Elephant room and our Book Balconies will draw crowds;
- that our Silent Auction room of art, antiques, jewelry, and personal services will be the best yet;
- and that the most important result of our annual Fair will be the fellowship, friendships, and, yes, fun that develop as we work together.

Come be part of that special result as we begin this summer to create the 2009 Tartan Christmas! Watch the bulletins for Fair alerts, or contact Joan Ryan at joanryan@aol.com or (212) 765-2141 to find out more about how you can help!



## Summer Pledges

If you will be away during the summer, please keep your pledge up-to-date. The church's financial obligations continue throughout the summer. In fact, some bills—like electricity—are even higher than usual. Mailing your contributions before you leave on vacation helps your church keep current with ongoing expenses. Mid-year contribution statements will be mailed in early July. If you have questions, please contact the Business Office at (212) 675-6150.



# AUGUST 2009

## SUN

The First Presbyterian Church  
in the City of New York  
12 West 12th Street (at Fifth Avenue)  
New York, NY 10011  
Tel: (212) 675-6150 Fax: (212) 675-8674  
All data subject to change without notice.  
Check with Church Receptionist at  
(212) 675-6150 for confirmation and details.  
♥ indicates volunteer opportunities

### 2 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 Chapel Service ♥ Communion  
10:00 Summer Bible Study  
10:45 Child Care in Mezzanine, S.W.  
11:00 Worship in G.H. ♥ Communion  
*Dr. Walton preaching*  
12:15 Coffee Hour ♥

### 9 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 Chapel Service ♥  
10:00 Summer Bible Study  
10:45 Child Care in Mezzanine, S.W.  
11:00 Worship in G.H. ♥  
*Rev. McCaslin preaching*  
12:15 Coffee Hour ♥

### 16 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 Chapel Service ♥  
10:00 Summer Bible Study  
10:45 Child Care in Mezzanine, S.W.  
11:00 Worship in G.H. ♥  
*Rev. Davis preaching*  
12:15 Coffee Hour ♥  
12:30 Pre-baptism meeting

### 23 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 Chapel Service ♥  
10:00 Summer Bible Study  
10:45 Child Care in Mezzanine, S.W.  
11:00 Worship in G.H. ♥ Baptism  
*Dr. Walton preaching*  
12:15 Coffee Hour ♥

### 30 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 Chapel Service ♥  
10:00 Summer Bible Study  
10:45 Child Care in Mezzanine, S.W.  
11:00 Worship in G.H. ♥  
*Rev. McCaslin preaching*  
12:15 Coffee Hour ♥  
3:00 Bailey House

## MON

### DEACONS FOR THE MONTH:

Mark Fontaine  
(212) 807-7890  
Ryan Tirre  
(312) 218-0919

### 3

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 10

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
**First Notes and Calendar Due**  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 17

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 24

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 31

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

## TUE

### 4

9 to 5 Caring Community  
  
6:15 A.A. Groups

### 11

9 to 5 Caring Community  
  
6:15 A.A. Groups

### 18

9 to 5 Caring Community  
  
6:15 A.A. Groups

### 25

9 to 5 Caring Community  
  
6:15 A.A. Groups  
**First Notes Mailing Team**

## WED

### 5

9 to 5 Caring Community  
10:30 Staff Meeting  
12:00 Sanctuary Open  
for Meditation  
  
6:00 Fellowship Cookouts

### 12

9 to 5 Caring Community  
10:30 Staff Meeting  
12:00 Sanctuary Open  
for Meditation  
  
6:00 Fellowship Cookouts  
7:00 New Sanctuary Movement

### 19

9 to 5 Caring Community  
10:30 Staff Meeting  
12:00 Sanctuary Open  
for Meditation  
  
6:00 Fellowship Cookouts

### 26

9 to 5 Caring Community  
10:30 Staff Meeting  
12:00 Sanctuary Open  
for Meditation  
  
6:00 Fellowship Cookouts  
(last one)

## THU

### 6

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:15 AI Anon  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 13

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:15 AI Anon  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 20

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:15 AI Anon  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

### 27

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:15 AI Anon  
  
Close at 5:00 p.m.

## FRI

### 7

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
6:15 NA/DA Groups

### 14

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
6:15 NA/DA Groups

### 21

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
6:15 NA/DA Groups

### 28

9 to 5 Caring Community  
12:00 Chapel Open  
  
6:15 NA/DA Groups

## SAT

### 1

9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Mission Service Committee  
Volunteer Opportunity  
Habitat for Humanity  
  
6:00 Wedding  
Jones/Spruell  
*Rev. McCaslin, officiant*

### 8

closed

### 15

8:35 - 11:45 a.m.  
Mission Service Committee  
Volunteer Opportunity  
Soup Kitchen  
Cardinal Spellman Center

### 22

closed

### 29

Wedding *ibid*  
Kooi/Noyes  
*Rev. McCaslin, officiant*

### Note:

Sunday Worship  
will be in the  
**Great Hall**  
July 5th - September 6  
  
Coffee Hour  
will be in the  
**Morrow Room**

# 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 **CHARLOTTE WALLACE** at (973) 692-0541.
- **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 **SUZANNE FREEMAN** at (646) 827-4559.
- **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** at (212) 247-0355 to help. Next date: **Sunday, August 30, 2009**.
- **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 **Tuesday, August 25**. Call **PAULETTE GRIEFEN** at (212) 942-0620 to help.
- **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 contact **MEG HARPER** at (718) 624-1516 or [harpermeg@hotmail.com](mailto:harpermeg@hotmail.com).
- **IN THE KITCHEN** – If you can help with Fellowship Suppers after Wednesday Worship, please call **JAMES HOLLANDER** at (646) 335-2969 or e-mail [hollander\\_james@yahoo.com](mailto:hollander_james@yahoo.com). For all other events call **JACKIE FIKE** at (914) 793-4017 or e-mail [jackiecf@verizon.net](mailto:jackiecf@verizon.net).

## Wednesday, September 9—Fellowship Supper

Wednesday, Sept. 9—3:00 - 8:00 p.m. Pr, Sr, Clean-up

## Sunday, Sept. 27—Celebration Sunday Picnic

Thursday, Sept. 24—3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Set-up

Friday, Sept. 25—11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Prep.

Saturday, Sept. 26—11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Prep.

Sunday, Sept. 27—9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Prep.

## Summer Child Care

Child care for children under three years old is provided in the Mezzanine of the South Wing during the 11 a.m. worship services in July and August.

There is no childcare at the 9:00 a.m. service; however, children are always welcome in worship!



## Summer Qi Gong at First Church

The Membership/Fellowship Committee is again sponsoring Qi Gong classes, beginning Wednesday, July 1, and running until Wednesday, July 29, from 5:45 until 6:30 p.m. Qi Gong is a way of renewing the life force within you through simple repetitive movements, focus, and breathing. Open the heart and listen to the breath, clear the mind and listen to the silence.

For more information, contact Meg Harper at (718) 624-1516 or [harpermeg@hotmail.com](mailto:harpermeg@hotmail.com).

You are welcome to join the summer cookouts after class, beginning Wednesday, July 8!

## LOCAL WORK PROJECTS SPONSORED BY THE MISSION SERVICE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, July 8 (10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.):** Painting the church fence.  
Sign up in the Mellin-Macnab lobby or call Georgia Pease at (212) 477-1693.

**Friday, July 24 (10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.):** Painting the church fence.  
Sign up in the Mellin-Macnab lobby or call Georgia Pease at (212) 477-1693.

**Saturday, July 25 (8:35—11:45 a.m.):** Working in the soup kitchen at the Cardinal Spellman Center on East 2nd Street.  
6 people needed. Sign up by calling the FPC coordinator Betty Jones at (212) 677-3629.

**Saturday, August 1 (on-site 9:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.):** Working with Habitat for Humanity in the Bronx.  
7 people minimum, 10 people maximum. Sign up by calling the FPC coordinator, Kurt Regush, at (646) 428-5180.

**Saturday, August 15 (8:35—11:45 a.m.):** Working in the soup kitchen at the Cardinal Spellman Center on East 2nd Street.  
6 people needed. Sign up by calling the FPC coordinator, Suzanne Mecs, at (212) 677-3890.

The Membership-Fellowship Committee of the First Presbyterian Church cordially invites you to its kickoff

# Summer BBQ Cookout

Wednesday, July 8  
 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
 First Presbyterian Church  
 12 West 12th Street, North Lawn



**Guest Host: Young Adults Committee**  
**Film Series Feature: WALL-E, 7:00 p.m.**

Please join us for our weekly Wednesday cookouts from July 8 through August 26. All are welcome, so invite your friends and family! You provide the food; we've got the rest: a hot grill, soft drinks, ice, and condiments. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Weather related cancellations are made at 4:30 p.m. on the day of the cookout. For further information, call the church office at (212) 675-6150.*

### Families:

### Save These Dates for Fall

**Sunday, September 13**  
 Child Care Reception for Parents of children under 3  
 10:15 a.m. on the 3rd floor of the Mellin-Macnab building

**Sunday, September 20**  
 First Day of Church School  
 12:00 p.m.: Children's Music Program Reception with Parents & Children

**Sunday, Sept. 27**—Celebration Sunday Picnic & Potluck

### Church School: Early Registration Opportunity

You may register for Church School anytime during the summer! Please email Katya Motyl in the Communications Office at [kmotyl@fpcnyc.org](mailto:kmotyl@fpcnyc.org) to request a registration form.

Also watch for your Family Ministries calendar via email in late June!

The First  
**Presbyterian**  
 Church in the City of New York



First for the Future:  
 Building on a Faithful Heritage

# Celebration Sunday Picnic & Potluck

## Save the Date! Sunday, September 27

*Gardens and Walkways after the Service*



Reservations required.  
 Sign-up sheets available in the Mellin-Macnab Building lobby starting September 6; or call the church at (212) 675-6150.

*The North lawn will again be reserved for families with small children.*

A free-will donation will be collected.

## Summer Worship Schedule July 5—September 6 South Wing

9:00-9:45 a.m.	Chapel Worship Service <i>Alexander Chapel</i>
10:00-10:45 a.m.	Adult Education (EXCEPT July 5 & September 6) <i>Morrow Room</i>
10:45-12:15 p.m.	Child Care <i>SW Mezzanine</i>
11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Worship Service <i>Great Hall</i>
12:15 p.m.	Coffee Hour <i>Morrow Room/Garden</i>

# Two Months of Sundays

## *July and August Worship at First Presbyterian*

### SUNDAY, JULY 5

#### Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Sarah S. McCaslin preaching

Sacrament: Communion

### SUNDAY, JULY 12

#### Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Barbara E. Davis preaching

### SUNDAY, JULY 19

#### Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Sacrament: Baptism

### SUNDAY, JULY 26

#### Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

#### Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Sacrament: Communion

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 9

#### Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Sarah S. McCaslin preaching

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 16

#### Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Barbara E. Davis preaching

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

#### Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Dr. Jon M. Walton preaching

Sacrament: Baptism

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

#### Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sermon: The Rev. Sarah S. McCaslin preaching

**DEADLINE FOR  
SEPTEMBER *FIRST NOTES*:**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 10**

# *First Notes*

*The First  
Presbyterian Church  
in the City of New York*

## *Calendar of Events*

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

*Return Service Requested*

The First Presbyterian Church

in the City of New York

12 West 12th Street, New York, NY 10011

Tel: (212) 675-6150 Fax: (212) 675-8674

<http://www.fpcnyc.org>

Jon M. Walton, Pastor

Sarah Segal McCaslin, Associate Pastor

Barbara E. Davis, Minister of Christian Education

Mark D. Hostetter, Associate Pastor

William F. Entriken, Organist and Choirmaster

Mia Alvar, Communications Supervisor

