



‘Movies With Spirit’ 2006–2007 Calendar

Sept. 16, WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (1998), First Presbyterian Church of Kingston, 80 Elmendorf St., Kingston — A romantic drama about married soul mates who reunite after death. Chris Nielsen (Robin Williams) is a devoted husband who dies in a car crash and goes to heaven. Feeling responsible for his death, his wife, Annie (Annabella Sciorra), later commits suicide and must be rescued from “hell.” Cuba Gooding Jr. plays Williams’s angelic guide, Albert. *Rated PG-13 for mild violence, adult situations and slight profanity.* Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Ralph Merante, who is also a member of the Kingston Area Council of Churches.

Oct. 21, CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD: THE MOVIE (2006), Church of the Ascension, 1585 U.S. Route 9W, West Park — Based in part on the book series of the same name, which sold more than 7 million copies and was translated into 34 languages, the movie tells the true story of Neale Donald Walsch (Henry Czerny) — divorced, jobless, alone and tired of life’s letdowns — who writes an angry letter to God. Much to his surprise, it appears God writes back. Neale then asks God, and himself, some very hard questions. The film chronicles the dramatic journey of a down-and-out man who inadvertently becomes a spiritual messenger and best-selling author. The film has “sneak preview” advance screenings in houses of reverence nationwide this weekend in advance of its Oct. 27 theatrical release. This is the movie’s only advance showing between New York City and Rochester. *Rated PG for thematic elements, some language and a brief accident.* Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Jennifer Barrows, who is also the priest in charge of the related Holy Trinity Church in Highland.

Nov. 18, WHALE RIDER (2002), Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 104 Wurts St., Kingston — A contemporary story of love, rejection and triumph as a young Maori girl fights to fulfill a destiny her grandfather refuses to recognize. Pai (Keisha Castle-Hughes), an 11-year-old girl in a patriarchal New Zealand tribe, believes she is destined to be the new chief. But her grandfather, Koro (Rawiri Paratene), is bound by tradition to pick a male leader. Pai loves Koro more than anyone in the world, but she must fight him and a thousand years of tradition to fulfill her destiny. *Rated PG for adult language and drug reference.* Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Wynemah Hinlicky.

Dec. 16, WHAT THE #\$*! DO WE (K)NOW!?! (2004), St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 163 Main St., New Paltz — A hybrid film — part documentary, part drama — that also blends science and spirituality, the movie stars Marlee Matlin (the deaf woman in “Children of a Lesser God”) as Amanda, a grumpy, dispirited everywoman who gets a

lesson in quantum mechanics from a basketball-playing child and ends up accepting herself. The plot is interspersed with interviews with doctors, scientists and spiritualists who speak about the quantum nature of the universe. *Rated PG*. Discussion facilitated by MaryAnn Lis-Simmons, churchwarden.

Jan. 20, O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU? (2000), Community Church of High Falls, corner of Mohonk and Firehouse roads, one block from state Route 213, High Falls — Loosely based on Homer's "Odyssey," this comedy deals with the grotesque adventures of Everett "Ulysses" McGill (George Clooney) and companions Delmar (Tim Blake Nelson) and Pete (John Turturro) in 1930s Mississippi. Sprung from a chain gang, the three try to reach Everett's home to recover money he promised was there. In truth, Everett only wants to get back to his wife (Holly Hunter) before she marries someone else. On their journey, the men are confronted by a series of strange characters, including a cyclopic Bible salesman (John Goodman), bank robber George "Babyface" Nelson (Michael Badalucco), a campaigning governor and his opponent, a Ku Klux Klan mob and a blind prophet who warns them, "the treasure you seek shall not be the treasure you find." *Rated PG-13 for some violence and language*. Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Nancy McClure-Long.

Feb. 17, MIGHTY TIMES: THE LEGACY OF ROSA PARKS (2002), Pointe of Praise Family Life Center, 243 Hurley Ave., Kingston — An Academy Award-nominated documentary about the African-American seamstress and civil-rights activist who, on Dec. 1, 1955, refused to obey a Montgomery, Ala., bus driver's demand that she give up her seat to a white passenger — an act that spawned the modern-day civil rights movement. Also featuring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Coretta Scott King and Edgar Daniel (E.D.) Nixon, a union leader who played an important role in organizing the Montgomery Bus Boycott to oppose the city's policy of racial segregation on its public transit system. *This film is not rated*. Discussion facilitated by the Rev. James B. Childs.

March 17, PEACEFUL WARRIOR (2006), Olivebridge United Methodist Church, state Route 213, Olivebridge — Based on a memoir, this is a story of an arrogant, driven college gymnast named Dan Millman (Scott Mechlowicz) who suffers a serious injury, preventing him from continuing his heartless pursuit of gymnastic victory. He achieves new strength and understanding, however, through his meeting with a mysterious, elderly stranger named Socrates (Nick Nolte), an attendant at an all-night gas station. Dan learns to value strength in spirit more than strength in body and discovers he can create a new and profoundly more rewarding purpose for himself through the life and practice of the "peaceful warrior." Also starring Amy Smart as an elusive woman in Dan's life. *Rated PG-13 for sensuality, sex references and accident scenes*. Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Anne Rossini, who is also the pastor of the related Samsonville United Methodist Church.

April 21, THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN (2005), Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston — Based on a true story about Burt (Anthony Hopkins), a New Zealand man in retirement, who set the world's land-speed record in 1967 at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah — and wants to do it again. He takes a 1920 Indian motorcycle and, without resources other than his own obsession, rebuilds the bike and follows his dream to go to Speed Week at Salt Lake in Utah.

Underfunded, without the support of a team and against all odds, he not only makes it to Bonneville, but also sets a world land speed record, not once, but again and again. *Rated PG-13 for brief language, drug use and a sexual reference.* Discussion facilitated by Dave Belden and Debi Clifford of the congregation and co-founders of the Hudson Valley chapter of the Network of Spiritual Progressives.

May 19, EMMANUEL'S GIFT (2005), New Progressive Baptist Church, 8 Hone St., Kingston — In Ghana, West Africa, babies born with disabilities are routinely poisoned or left to die alone; those who survive face a lifetime of begging on the streets. Emmanuel Ofori Yeboah, however, has a different plan: Born with a malformed right leg, he shines shoes for \$2 a day and refuses to accept his country's superstitious shunning of the disabled. This inspiring documentary, narrated by Oprah Winfrey, tells the story of a charismatic and determined young man who almost single-handedly changes the way the roughly 2 million disabled Ghanaians are treated. *Rated G.* Discussion facilitated by the Rev. G. Modele Clarke, who is also president of the Ministers' Alliance of Ulster County.

June 16, GROUNDHOG DAY (1993), Vivekananda Retreat, Ridgely, 101 Leggett Road, Stone Ridge — Self-centered, bitter TV weatherman Phil Connors (Bill Murray) wakes up with the strangest sense of *déjà vu*: He seems to be living Groundhog Day, the day of the year he hates most, over again. This happens again and again. No matter what he does, he's stuck in Feb. 2, 1992. But the more Phil relives the same day, the more he looks at other people's lives, and something unusual happens: He begins to care about others. He starts to respect people, tries to save the life of a homeless man, and discovers that he's falling in love with Rita (Andie MacDowell) and therefore wants to be someone who she could love in return. *Rated PG for adult situations.* Discussion facilitated by Pravrajika Gitaprana, minister in residence.

July 21, ET: THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL (1982), Reformed Church of Port Ewen, 160 Salem St., Port Ewen — The Stephen Spielberg movie about an alien botanist who is accidentally left behind on Earth, finds a friend and emotional companion in 10-year-old Elliot, gets seriously ill and eventually fulfills his strong wish to go home. *Rated PG for language and mild thematic elements.* Discussion facilitated by the Rev. Jim Beukelman. Child care provided.

Aug. 18, EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED (2005), Temple Emanuel, 243 Albany Ave., Kingston — Adapted from the best-selling novel of the same title, this gentle comedy of understanding and forgiveness, played in the shadow of the Holocaust, depicts the story of young American writer Jonathan Safran Foer (Elijah Wood), who flies to Ukraine in search of the non-Jewish woman who helped his grandfather escape at the outset of World War II. His Ukrainian guide, a Gypsy musician named Alex (Eugene Hutz), takes Jonathan to meet his own grandfather (Boris Leskin), a crusty old codger who makes his living chauffeuring American Jews on "heritage tours" of their ancestral villages. The three of them (accompanied by a dog named Sammy Davis Jr., Jr.) search for Jonathan's grandfather's vanished hometown, and in the process reveal new sides of their rather static personalities. *Rated PG-13 for some violence and language.* Discussion facilitated by Rabbi Yael Romer of the synagogue and Bob Cohen, president of the Ulster County Religious Council.

Each screening begins at 7 p.m. and is followed by a facilitated discussion. Evenings end around 10 p.m. **Attendance is free of charge.** Attendees are invited to make voluntary contributions to help pay for series expenses. Each hosting place will offer refreshments.

The series is sponsored by the Ulster County Religious Council, the Kingston Area Council of Churches, the Ministers' Alliance of Ulster County and the Mid-Hudson Islamic Association. It is organized by Gerry Harrington of Humanity's Team.

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