



Movies With Spirit

Supported by the Ulster County Religious Council, Dutchess County Interfaith Council, Kingston Area Council of Churches, Ministers' Alliance of Ulster County and Mid-Hudson Islamic Association
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2011–2012 Calendar

Sept. 17, THE COLOR PURPLE (1985), New Progressive Baptist Church, 8 Hone St., Kingston — This period drama based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker relates the life of Celie (Whoopi Goldberg), a Southern black woman in the early 1900s virtually sold into a life of servitude to her brutal husband, sharecropper Albert (Danny Glover). Celie pours out her innermost thoughts in letters to her sister Nettie (Akousa Busia), but Albert hides the letters Nettie writes back, letting Celie assume Nettie is dead. Celie finds a champion in the don't-take-no-guff stepdaughter-in-law Sofia (Oprah Winfrey) and later forges a strong friendship with Albert's mistress Shug (Margaret Avery). Emboldened, she rifles through Albert's belongings, finds Nettie's letters and is at last able to stand up to him. *"A great, warm, hard, unforgiving, triumphant movie, and there is not a scene that does not shine with the love of the people who made it."* — Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times. *Rated PG-13.*

Oct. 15, THE INFIDEL (2010), St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 2578 Route 212, Woodstock — In this comedy drama, non-religious Muslim business owner Mahmud Nasir (Omid Djalili), who lives with his wife Saamiya (Archie Panjabi) in a London suburb, uncovers the two biggest surprises of his life after going over his recently deceased mother's documents: He learns he was adopted as a baby and his birth parents weren't Muslim — they were Jewish. Mahmud conceals this news from his family as he seeks to get a handle on his sudden identity crisis (his original name was Solly Shimshillewitz). With help from Jewish neighbor Leonard Goldberg (Richard Schiff), Mahmud tries to understand Jews and their religion and even locates his birth father on his deathbed in a nursing home. *"Astutely combining sharp comedy with complex political and theological issues, this film is packed with strong themes and vivid characters that keep us interested."* — Rich Cline, Shadows on the Wall. *Not rated.*

Nov. 19, MY DOG TULIP (2009), Flowing Spirit Healing/Woodstock Sufi Center, 33 Mill Hill Road, Woodstock — Based on British author J.R. Ackerley's 1956 autobiographical novel, this award-winning animated tale of a man and his dog, made expressly for grown-ups, features Christopher Plummer as the voice of Ackerley, a middle-aged gay man whose life is changed forever when he adopts an 18-month-old German shepherd. Despite not being a dog lover, Ackerley finds his truest companionship with his skittish pup, Tulip. And so begins a 14-year friendship filled with mischief, wonder and unconditional love. Featuring the voices of Lynn Redgrave and Isabella Rossellini. *"A marvelous animated feature, full of quiet joy, honest sorrow [and] wisdom . . . all rendered in a charming style."* — Michael Phillips, Chicago Tribune. *Not rated.*

Dec. 17, NATIVITY! (2009), Reformed Church of Port Ewen, 160 Salem St., Port Ewen — In this family comedy, frustrated British elementary school teacher Paul Maddens (Martin Freeman) has the job this year of producing his school's Nativity play, which the school hopes will finally be judged better than that of a posh archrival private school. The stakes are raised when Paul idly boasts his Hollywood-producer ex-girlfriend Jennifer Lore (Ashley Jensen) is coming to see the show intent on turning it into a major motion picture starring his pupils. The only trouble is, his boast isn't true and he

and Jennifer haven't spoken in years. Classroom assistant Mr. Poppy (Marc Wootton) makes matters worse when he spreads Paul's "little white lie" and parents and children try to elbow their way to fame and fortune. Paul's only hope is to reconnect with Jennifer and lure Hollywood to town so everyone's Christmas wishes come true — except he finds out she's not a producer but a receptionist. *"A warm, funny and irreverent Christmas movie."* — James Plath, DVDTown.com. *Rated PG.*

Jan. 21, THE TREE OF LIFE (2011), Woodstock Jewish Congregation, 1682 Glasco Turnpike, Woodstock — Terrence Malick's acclaimed 1950s impressionistic adventure about a confused man from Waco, Texas, named Jack (Sean Penn), who seeks to reconcile a complicated relationship with his father (Brad Pitt). In doing so, he sets off on a journey to understand the world's true nature and to explore life's origins and meaning, while questioning faith's existence. Through Malick's signature imagery, we see how both brute nature and spiritual grace shape not only our lives as individuals and families, but all life as well. Winner of the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or, the highest prize awarded. *"At times trying and perplexing, but it also contains some of the most psychologically insightful and ecstatic filmmaking imaginable."* — Mick LaSalle, San Francisco Chronicle. *Rated PG-13.*

Feb. 18, SAMSON & DELILAH (2009), St. John's Episcopal Church, 207 Albany Ave., Kingston — Two indigenous Australian 14-year-olds (Rowan McNamara and Marissa Gibson) live in a remote Aboriginal community. When faced with a crippling tragedy, they steal a car and embark on a journey of survival, where they discover life isn't always fair but love never judges. Filled with images of startling beauty, as well as humor, hope and compassion, this tender, unusual story by director Warwick Thornton, himself an indigenous Australian, is virtually without dialogue. *In English and Warlpiri with English subtitles.* Winner of the Cannes Film Festival's Caméra d'Or for best feature film. *"This lovely, aching film opts for romance in the face of modern ruin."* — Tom Long, Detroit News. *Not rated.*

March 17, WHATEVER LOLA WANTS (2007), St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 163 Main St., New Paltz — Lola (Laura Ramsey), a Midwestern girl working for the U.S. Postal Service in New York, feels a calling to be a belly dancer. Initially questioning the urge and believing she must keep her stable job, she eventually follows her heart, quitting her job and traveling to Egypt to learn from a legendary instructor. But once there, she wrestles with personal fears and cultural stigma — to the point that she wonders if she will actually obtain what she went to get. The drama with a bit of romance suggests our heart-inspired dreams call to us for very definite reasons, even if we may not initially know what the reason is, where the dream will take us or how our dream-inspired journey influences others. *"Dramatically engaging."* — Lee Marshall, Screen International. *Not rated*

April 21, THE BLIND SIDE (2009), Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 22 Livingston St., Kingston — John Lee Hancock's inspiring true story of Michael Oher (Quinton Aaron), a homeless and traumatized 16-year-old who becomes an all-American football player and first-round NFL draft pick with the help of caring Memphis woman Leigh Anne Tuohy (Sandra Bullock), and her family. The film follows Oher from his impoverished upbringing, through his years at a suburban Memphis Christian school, to his adoption by the Tuohys and on to his position as one of the most highly coveted prospects in college football. (He is now an offensive tackle for the Baltimore Ravens.) Bullock won a Best Actress Oscar and Golden Globe Award and an Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor Screen Actors Guild Award. *"A terrifically touching, thoroughly entertaining film . . . the rare family-oriented audience-lifter."* — Clint O'Connor, Cleveland Plain Dealer. *Rated PG-13.*

May 19, CINEMA PARADISO (1988), Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston — Famous film director Salvatore Di Vita (Jacques Perrin) returns to his Sicilian hometown after almost 30 years to attend the funeral of the town's former film projectionist, Alfredo (Philippe Noiret). In so doing, Salvatore embarks on a journey into his childhood just after World War II. He reminisces about when he was sweet-faced boy nicknamed Totò spending hours at the Cinema Paradiso movie theater, where philosophical Alfredo first inspired his love of films. Salvatore is also reminded of his lost teenage love, Elena (Agnese Nano), who he had to leave before moving to

Rome. The comedy drama, based on the life and times of screenwriter-director Giuseppe Tornatore, won a Best Foreign Language Film Oscar and the Cannes Film Festival's Special Jury Prize. *Italian with English subtitles. "It is, in a word, exquisite."* — Rita Kempley, Washington Post. *Rated R.*

June 16, BEING IN HEAVEN (2009), Vivekananda Retreat, Ridgely, 101 Leggett Road, Stone Ridge — In this spiritual *My Dinner With Andre*, Jason Masterman (Daniel Whyte) is a young, successful New York stockbroker whose career comes to a bitter and humiliating end with the onset of the global financial crisis. Waking one morning to receivers knocking on his door, Jason is ordered out of his home immediately, taking only what he can carry with him. Losing everything, he retreats to the other side of the globe, to his Australian hometown of Sydney, where a chance meeting at a restaurant with a mysterious man named Michael (Michael Domeyko Rowland) changes the way he will live the rest of his life — not through philosophy or beliefs or fantasy, but through applying easy and natural steps and developing a new understanding of the innate yet rarely used powers of being human. Jason returns to New York with a fresh vision for the future and a renewed sense of purpose and direction. But did his fall from grace ever really happen? *"A unique, very poignant, very powerful, very thought-provoking film."* — Stephen Simon, Spiritual Cinema Circle. *Rated G.*

July 21, CITY ISLAND (2009), Woodstock Reformed Church, 16 Tinker St., Woodstock — This charming, down-to-earth comedy shares the consequences of the deceptions families often use when they're afraid to tell the truth. As the film plays out and the deceptions become harder and harder to conceal, each family member learns "truth is stranger than family." The cast — led by Andy Garcia as Vince, a stolid corrections officer and clandestine acting student, and Julianna Margulies, his wife Joyce who wonders where the passion has gone — shows us how absurd we can be when we tie our lives into emotional pretzels. *"An expertly written joyride through the confines of narrow-minded provincialism to cleansing self-awareness."* — Ronnie Scheib, Variety. *Rated PG-13.*

Aug. 18, TO PLAY AND TO FIGHT (TOCAR Y LUCAR) (2006), Temple Emanuel, 243 Albany Ave., Kingston — As U.S. youth music programs decline in quality and quantity, director Alberto Arvelo Mendoza offers a fascinating look at the incredibly positive impact the Venezuelan Youth Orchestra System has on Venezuelan society. Once a modest program designed to expose rural children to the wonders of classical music, the system — a network of hundreds of orchestras formed within most of Venezuela's towns and villages — has become an extraordinarily important and beautiful music phenomenon, inspiring numerous other South American countries to implement similar programs. The documentary includes moments of tribute from many of the world's most renowned musicians, including tenor Plácido Domingo and Berlin Philharmonic conductor Sir Simon Rattle. But the real magic lies in the expressions and interviews with the orchestra members. *English and Spanish with English subtitles.* Winner of four top U.S. international film festival awards. *"Truly beautiful."* — Darren Hinton, American Film Institute. *Not rated.*

Each screening begins at 7 p.m. and is followed by refreshments and a facilitated discussion. Evenings end around 10 p.m. A \$5 contribution is suggested for moviegoers over age 12.

The series is organized by Gerry Harrington and has no religious affiliation.

For more information, contact Gerry Harrington at (845) 389-9201 or gerryharrington@mindspring.com. Details are also available on the Movies With Spirit Facebook page.

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