



The Westminister Messenger

Westminster Presbyterian Church • 262 State Street • Albany • New York • www.wpcalbany.org

December 2011

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“Watch! Be alert! Prepare! Repent! Make room!

God is doing something new! God is coming into the world. God is entering your life.” Advent is a bugle playing reveille. “God is near. Wake up!”

In her novel, *The Amateur Marriage*, Anne Tyler turns her keen eye to the subtleties and contradictions of family life, as she traces the lives of Michael and Pauline as they fight through marriage and divorce. Near the end of the novel, Michael ponders his life, “He was the kind who stood aloof while others waded in ... He wished he had inhabited more of his life, used it better, filled it fuller.”

Advent is a bugle playing reveille

We are all prone to sleep-walking. We sleep through the alarm. We push the snooze button. Days turn into years and pass by us in a flicker, and we wonder where the time went. We can be so absorbed with our problems and pastimes, so preoccupied with ourselves, that we can miss the people and opportunities that are all about us, calling us to live more fully.

I welcome you to join Westminster in this Advent/Christmas season. The pages that follow invite you to the expectant vigil of Advent which finds its fulfillment and joy in the birth of Jesus.

Come and inhabit your life more. Use it better. Fill it fuller •

PEW CUSHION APPEAL

Some things happen only once in a lifetime: seeing Haley's comet, celebrating your high school graduation, changing the pew cushions at Westminster. Yes, it's true. After eighty+ years of faithful service, our old, faded, stained and allergen filled pew cushions are being replaced with new, true blue cushions.

This is a once in a lifetime chance to sponsor a pew cushion. We only have a hundred cushions; will your family and loved ones be included in that number?

For a limited time on a first come basis we have new pew cushions that you can sponsor -- not at \$500 dollars, but at a special pre-installation price of only \$250 per cushion.

You, your family, and friends will experience a lifetime of comfortable seating on our new pew cushions. Plus they are durable, more sanitary, dust mite-free, stain resistant, and very attractive.

Whether to commemorate your wedding, celebrate your confirmation, or just to show your commitment to Christ and His Mission through Westminster Church, by sponsoring one of the new pew cushions you are making a gift that really will be appreciated and remembered for years to come.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Pew Cushion Pledge Card

Name: _____

Address: _____

Pew Cushion Pledge (Total Amount):

_____ (cushions) @ \$250/cushion = _____ or

_____ (half cushion) @ \$125 = _____ or

_____ (feet of cushion) @ \$25/foot = _____



Christmas at Westminster

There's lots to do, hear and see at Westminster this Christmas season. Listed here are several ways our church family will be celebrating the season:

- **Sunday, December 4, 6 PM:** "Carols and Cocoa" concert by Westminster's resident opera company, Mosaic-Arts. (More info on Page 4.)
- **Friday, December 9, 6-8:30 PM:** Hanging of the Greens. Come "Deck the Halls" of Westminster, starting with a potluck supper at 6, with crafts for kids while the teens and adults decorate Westminster for the Christmas holiday.
- **Saturday, December 10, 6-9 PM:** Gospel concert by Nafro-Beats, in the Assembly Room. (More info on Page 7.)
- **Sunday, December 11, 10 AM:** During the worship service, the adult choir will sing Dietrich Buxtehude's Cantata "Jesus, Joy and Pleasure" accompanied by strings and keyboard. (More info on Page 4.)
- **Saturday, December 17, 1 PM (setup) 2 PM (start):** Christmas party for residents of Schuyler Inn, a shelter for homeless families. Volunteers needed and welcome! (See page 8 for more info and how to volunteer.)
- **Saturday, December 17, 7 PM:** MOSAIC-Arts will present a fully-staged "Amahl and the Night Visitors" in our Assembly Hall (see page 4 for more info.)
- **Sunday, December 18, 10 AM:** During the worship service, the children of the church will present a new Christmas pageant by Al Fedak, "A Carol Nativity." (See page 5 for more info.)
- **Sunday, December 18, 7-8:30 PM:** Youth Christmas Party, at Pastor Frances' apartment. (See page 5 for details.)
- **Saturday, December 24, 7:30 pre-service music; 8 PM, service:** Christmas Eve service with the Catskill Brass, organ, voices and handbells. (See page 10 for more info.)
- **Sunday, December 25, 10 AM:** Christmas worship service ●

Jesus, Joy and Pleasure December 11

by Al Fedak

Choral Cantata

At our Sunday morning worship service on December 11, the Westminster Church Choir will perform the cantata, *Jesus, Joy and Pleasure*, by the great north German baroque composer Dietrich Buxtehude. Though largely remembered today as an organ composer, Buxtehude also wrote a considerable number of works for instrumental ensembles and choirs; many of these were composed for the annual series of sacred concerts (Abendmusiken) which were presented each Sunday evening in Advent at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, where Buxtehude was organist. These famous concerts drew audiences from all over Germany: even J.S. Bach, as a young man, once made the 200-mile trek to Lübeck on foot to meet Buxtehude and hear the music.

Jesus, Joy and Pleasure is in seven brief movements, and is based on the well-known chorale *JESU, MEINE FREUDE*. It is scored for chorus, soloists, strings, and keyboard, and bears a strong resemblance to Bach's own later cantata of the same name, suggesting that Bach himself knew the work well.

At the December 11 service, our choir will be joined by violinists Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz and Kathryn Norman, and cellist Garfield Moore. Soloists will include Kelly Bird, Martha Reisner, and Allan Kirk. Al Fedak will be at the harpsichord, and Sue Fedak will conduct. The work will be sung in English. This is music of great faith and beauty; we look forward to sharing it with our entire church family •

MOSAIC-Arts Celebrates Christmas

Our resident opera company, MOSAIC-Arts, is planning two very special holiday events for the month of December.

First, a concert of holiday songs called *Carols and Cocoa* will be presented on **Sunday, December 4 at 6:00 PM.**

And then on **Saturday, December 17, at 7:00 PM**, the group will perform a fully-staged production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in our Assembly Hall.

The public is invited to both events; donations gratefully accepted.

After New Year, the group's next performance, *Chanson: a Concert of French Song*, will take place on **Sunday, January 8 at 5:00 PM.** Gifts of non-perishable food items will be received to benefit the local food pantry. Mark the date! •

Our Westminster Arthur Fullerton Family:

is a lifelong active Presbyterian who in various congregations has been a Sunday school teacher, usher, Stephen Minister, elder, or trustee. He comes from a Presbyterian family: his parents, Sam and Fufa Fullerton, are long serving elders, while his sister, the Rev. Dr. Fairfax Fair is Head of Staff at First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, MI and also serves on the Board of Union Seminary.

Arthur is a graduate of the Lawrenceville School, Tulane University (BA in Ancient History and Classics), Harvard Business School (MBA), and the University of Pennsylvania (MAPP - Master of Applied Positive Psychology). He has experience in for profit, non-profit, and political venues, and has at various times worn the mantle of CEO, CFO, Campaign Manager, Development Director, Professor, Consultant, and Executive Coach. A serial entrepreneur, he has founded a half dozen companies, served on numerous business, non-profit and professional boards and committees, managed or worked on over a dozen political campaigns, taught at various universities, is an associate member of the American Psychological Association, and a founding member of the International Positive Psychology Association.

Currently, Arthur lives in New Baltimore, NY, where he has a consulting and executive coaching practice focused on building strengths, providing group training and seminars, one-on-one executive coaching, increasing sales and marketing effectiveness, strategic positioning, non-profit fundraising, and board development. He enjoys writing, reading, public speaking, home remodeling, big shaggy dogs, the company of old and new friends, fishing when only the mosquitoes are biting, and travel ●

CELEBRATING PASTOR JAMES REISNER'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION



Live
Gospel
Concert
Saturday
Dec. 10th

December
Usher
Schedule

HAPPY
BIRTH
DAY
December

Nafro-Beats presents a live gospel concert featuring Getty & Friends on Saturday December 10th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. The concert will be held in the large assembly room downstairs. The admission is free with a free will offering/donation. Special guests include: Schenectady County Community College Gospel Choir and solo artist Patrick Kasongo. Be revived...Be Refreshed...Get Renewed! For more info contact Charles Norbi of NAFRObeats (646) 406.5979 or norbicharles@yahoo.com ●

The following have graciously given Westminster their gift of service. Please be sure to thank them!

- December 4: Alex & Andrew Scaptura, Arden Leach, David Hershey
Advent Wreath: Quaye Family
Church Bell Ringer: Thomas W.
- December 11: Patrick & Cheryl Foy, Sue Schell, Tony Mason
Church Bell Ringer: Charlie R.
- December 18: Allan & MJ Tedrow, Floyd & Sue Barwig
Church Bell Ringer: Andrew W.
- December 24: Louise Besch, Eileen Van Oort, Eve Ryan, Andrew K.
- December 25: Quaye Family, Zach Rosenau
Church Bell Ringers: Charlie & Joseph R.

Celebrating the following birthdays in December:

● Susannah Sebagala	Dec. 1	● Jayden H.	Dec. 15
● Annatacha T.	Dec. 1	● Alison McKee	Dec. 15
● Michael Levato	Dec. 4	● Eve Ryan	Dec. 15
● Charles Seagle	Dec. 7	● Pam Marvin	Dec. 16
● Sean G.	Dec. 8	● Chris Schell	Dec. 18
● Lauren McLaughlin	Dec. 8	● Iteke Prins	Dec. 20
● Sarah Williams Bojdak	Dec. 9	● Shernette Grant	Dec. 20
● Alison D.	Dec. 9	● Rev. Rick Otty	Dec. 22
● Esther Asamoah	Dec. 10	● William Kinum	Dec. 25
● Rhonda Hermance	Dec. 11	● Sion H.	Dec. 26
● Andrew K.	Dec. 12	● Leslie Shaffer	Dec. 27
● Jeremy Gordon	Dec. 13		

Sorry if we missed your birthday. Please send your birth date into the church office so we may have it on record ●



Volunteer Opportunities at Schuyler Inn

Holiday Gifts for Homeless Families at Schuyler Inn:

Once again, as we have every year since 2004, Westminster is working with other churches, the Zonta Club of Albany, and the NYS Dental Foundation to make sure that each family living in the Emergency Shelter program at Schuyler Inn receives gifts during the Christmas season and has an opportunity to participate in the holiday party. Each family will receive a shoe box with

basic supplies, a separate package with new toothbrushes, paste, and floss, a new fleece blanket a family fun bag, plus a shoe box for each infant living at Schuyler as of December 17.

Westminster members who want to help may select a shoebox or family fun bag to fill on Nov. 27 or Dec. 4. All gifts must be returned by Monday, December 12. Be sure to check your name when you return your filled gift bag or shoe box to avoid a follow-up phone call on Dec. 13 or 14. The gift committee, headed by Mary Jean Tedrow, will match each shoe box and fun bag with the appropriate family before the December 17 party •

Schuyler Inn Holiday Party, Saturday, December 17:

There will be the traditional holiday party, starting at 2 p.m. Santa Claus will make an early appearance, accompanied by holiday songs. There will be photos with Santa and holiday-related crafts. Gifts will be distributed at the end of the party. In addition, there will be "free" tables at which each party participant may select one or more gifts. Although several people have already volunteered to assist with the party, more volunteers are sought to have a rich ratio of volunteers to party participants. More volunteers are sought to provide interesting craft activities, to play with individual children, and to sit with guests at individual tables. Additional volunteer drivers to help drive gifts to Schuyler Inn on Saturday are needed. Contact Margaret Randall, Lois Wilson, or Westminster Presbyterian Church (436-8544) to volunteer to help at the party. Party set-up is at 1 p.m. Party runs from 2-4 p.m. •

Donations for Advent decorations,

including poinsettas, are now being taken. Names of those being memorialized will be printed in the bulletin on December 18. Suggested donation is \$35. Please call the church office for further information •

Photos from... African Family Night

On Saturday November 5
we celebrated
the 10th Annual African Family Night.

Dr. Maurice Thornton was the keynote speaker. There were plenty of arts and crafts for the children, lots of delicious food, a wonderful fashion show and many updates on current mission projects.

Thanks to all who made it such a wonderful success •



Christmas Eve Celebration

This year, as in years past, the Catskill Brass Quartet will be on hand to help make our Christmas Eve a musical one. Pre-service music will start at 7:30 PM, and will feature holiday musical selections for organ, brass, voices, and handbells.

This will be followed at 8:00 PM by the liturgy of Word and Sacrament, closing with the traditional singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight. We encourage you to spread the word and bring guests to this beautiful service! ●

Editors' Note: The next edition of "*the Messenger*" will be coming out mid-January 2012 so that we may enjoy Christmas with our families ●

Thank you to our photographers this month:
Ali McKee, Andrew Scaptura and Jeanne Bianchine ●

Sermons & Second Hours:

DECEMBER 4 Advent 2 **Those who Watch for the Morning**
Communion **Psalm 130**

Pastor Rosenau, preaching
2nd Hour: *Living Advent* led by Pastor Reisner

DECEMBER 11 Advent 3 **Half-Spent was the Night**
Isaiah 35:1-10

Choir: "Jesus, Joy and Pleasure" by Dietrich Buxtehude
2nd Hour: *Cultural Dialogue* led by Pastor Rosenau

DECEMBER 18 Advent 4 **The Light of All Humankind**
John 1:1-5

Christmas Pageant: *A Carol Nativity* by Alfred Fedak
2nd Hour: Christmas Pageant Party

DECEMBER 24 Christmas Eve **And on Earth Peace**
Communion **Luke 2:1-20**

Choral celebration with the Catskill Brass

DECEMBER 25 Christmas Day **O Morning Star**
John 1:1-14

Pastor Reisner, preaching
No 2nd Hour

DECEMBER 31 Watchnight **10:30 pm until Midnight**
Service of prayer, testimony, and reflection

JANUARY 1 Communion **All Things New**
Pastor Reisner, preaching **Revelation 21:1-6**

JANUARY 8 **It Has?**
Pastor Rosenau, preaching **Isaiah 60:1-6**
2nd Hour: *What are our values? Prt. 1.* led by Pastor Reisner and Session

Church Calendar

12 20 11

This Month's Events:

Note: The FOCUS Breakfast Program is held at Westminster every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7-9am

DECEMBER

1

6:30 pm-7:15 pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

4 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:15 am Second Hour
11:15 am Bell Choir
6 pm MOSAIC-Arts Concert
7- 8:30 pm Youth Group

5

2:30-9 pm Directory Photo Sessions

6

2:30-9 pm Directory Photo Sessions

7

2:30-9 pm Directory Photo Sessions
7 pm Christian Life and Learning

8

6:30 pm-7:15 pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

9

6-8:30 pm Deck the Halls

10

6-9 pm Nafro-Beats Concert

11 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:15 am Second Hour
11:15 am Bell Choir

13

7 pm Stated Session Meeting

15

6:30 pm-7:15pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

17

1 pm Schuyler Inn Party-set up
2-4 pm Schuyler Inn Party
7 pm MOSAIC Arts Concert
"Amahl and the Night Visitors"

18 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship-Pageant
11:15 am Second Hour
7- 8:30 pm Youth Christmas Party

20

7 pm Board of Deacons
7 pm Board of Trustees

22

7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

24

7:30-8 pm Catskill Brass
8 pm Christmas Eve
Candlelight Communion Service

25 CHRISTMAS SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship

31

10:30-12 pm Watch Night Service

Upcoming Events:

JANUARY

1 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship

8

10:00 am Worship-
Installation of Officers
5 pm MOSAIC-Arts
"Chanson: a Concert of
French Song"

28

9:30 am-4:30 pm
Presbytery Meeting
7:00 pm
Capitol Chamber Arts-Concert

29 Second Hour:

Annual Meeting



Westminster Presbyterian Church

85 Chestnut Street
Albany, New York 12210

Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Winter Hours

9 am-3 pm Monday-Friday

Phone: 518.436.8544

Pastor: James L. Reisner

Associate Pastor: Frances Wattman Rosenau

Parish Associate: Paul Randall

Parish Associate: James R. Thompson

Minister of Music and Arts: Alfred V. Fedak, FAGO, ChM

Associate Minister of Music and Arts: Susan Hermance Fedak

Director of Christian Education: Jeanne Bianchine

Administrative Secretary: Nancy J. Sokil

Sextons: Glenda Bennett, Joy Tallmadge

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• Send January newsletter submissions by December 30
to: westminsternewsletter@gmail.com