



THE WESTMINSTER MESSENGER

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

Lent 2014

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“In Christ, God was reconciling the world to God’s Self”
--II Corinthians 5:20

The Gospels tell the drama of the reconciliation of humanity to God that is accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this Season of Lent, Westminster’s worship will center on the theme of ‘Stories of Reconciliation.’ As we trace Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem, we will retell stories of Jesus’ encounters with individuals and communities on his way to the cross. We will also reflect on our own stories, our own journeys, and how God is still active today in the work of reconciliation.

We welcome you to join us in the journey of Lent, as we seek as individuals, and as a community grounded in the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, to become the ambassadors of reconciliation that God has called us to be •

-- Pastor Jim Reisner

A God Who Suffers With Us

*"If way to the better there be, it exacts a full look at the worst."
-Thomas Hardy*

Lent is the season in the church year when Christians focus on the cross. We trace the path that Jesus travelled that led to his death at Calvary. We see in the person of Jesus --his words, his actions and his manner-- the love of God revealed in its purest form. "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13). Some Christians object to Lent's focus on human suffering and Jesus' death. Robert Schuller, for one, said he didn't believe in Lent. He redefined it to match his "possibility thinking" with the acronym, "Let's Eliminate Negative Thinking." Schuller's acronym invokes the philosophy of his mentor, Norman Vincent Peale. Peale had a vast influence on American Protestantism. His best known book was entitled, "The Power of Positive Thinking." Reinhold Niebuhr once wrote, "Christians in America would like to believe in a God without wrath that saves a world without sin through a Christ without the cross." Niebuhr likely had Peale in mind when he authored that phrase.

We begin Lent by acknowledging our mortality as the ashes are imposed upon our foreheads: "Remember you are dust, and to dust you will return." The Cross symbolizes that life is filled with struggles, defeats, and losses; the cross also tells us that as we go through our trials, we do not go alone. Lent professes a suffering God: one who knows all about our lowest moments and our despairs because our God has been through it. Our God, in Jesus Christ, has gone before us.

If God, in Jesus Christ, suffered the worst of life and died an ignominious death; then, we can affirm that there is no place we can go in this life, no place so low, far, or wide that is outside the realm of God's love and grace. Then, we can affirm with Paul, that nothing in all this world, "neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creator can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39) Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ ●

-- Pastor James Reisner

TWO MEALS TOGETHER

FEAST OR FAMINE

Maundy Thursday Hunger Banquet and Communion

April 17th 6:00 -7:30 pm

The Thursday of Holy Week is the night we remember Jesus' last meal with his closest friends. Coupled with this commemoration, we will also share a meal together: a Hunger Banquet.

A Hunger Banquet encourages a deeper understanding of world food distribution and poverty. The Hunger Banquet provides answers to questions such as:

- Who are the world's hungry?
- Why are people hungry?
- Is Christian action important?
- What does the Bible say about the poor and the hungry?

A meal is provided during which everyone eats in proportion to the way food is distributed throughout the world. By experiencing world conditions, participants gain a better understanding of the disparity of food and wealth distribution. When coupled with biblical teaching, participants also learn God's heart for the poor and the responsibility of Christians to the poor. Two meals: one of scarcity, the other of abundance. Join us ●

2014 AFRICAN SPRING DINNER

Saturday, March 22, 5 to 8:30 pm; Dinner at 6 pm

Co-chairs: Felicia Kollie-Gambles & Fatmata Hilton

Free Pot-Luck Dinner (Authentic African and American Food)

On this festive evening, we will celebrate completion of 4 quality classrooms and set a \$5,000 goal to meet educational needs at the Hope Mission School in Liberia. Assemblywoman Patricia A. Fahy we be one of our speakers and we will also witness an African Dance & Drum performance by the Capital District Student Theater Outreach Program.

The priorities for the next phase of our work include acquiring textbooks, training workshops for faculty and additional scholarships for girls to attend the school.

Checks are payable to: Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Memo: Liberian Project.

“People
will come from
east and west and
north and south, and
will take their places
at the feast in the
kingdom of God”

Luke 13:29

CHURCH SCHOOL UPDATE

BY: Pastor Frances Rosenau

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

Celebrate Fat Tuesday and support the youth on their mission trip this summer. Come to the Assembly Room on Tuesday, March 4 from 5:30 - 7 pm for a delicious \$8 meal of pancakes and bacon or sausage. Laissez les bon temps rouler! ●

CONGRATULATIONS, EMMANUEL TAY! The artwork of our very own confirmand, Emmanuel, was selected for the Black History Month Creative Expressions Contest. We at Westminster have long known of Emmanuel's artistic abilities. Now his gifts are being recognized throughout the Capital Region. His television/radio promotional spot appeared throughout the month of February.

You will get a chance to admire Emmanuel's artwork and hear about the award at the African Spring Dinner on March 22nd at Westminster!

Congratulations from all of us at Westminster! ●

YOUTH LOCK-IN - APRIL 4TH

Want to go rock climbing at the Albany Indoor Rock Gym? The youth will go rock climbing during the lock-in on April 4th. We will also have pizza, games, and a chance to sleep over at the church. Meet at church at 5 pm on Friday night for this amazing time together.

** CONFIRMATION RETREAT CHANGE **

April 25th - 26th

The Confirmation class will go on an overnight retreat to Holmes Camp and Conference Center in Holmes NY. Our leader will be Rev. Larissa Kwong-Abazia who many kids will know from our mission trip to New Jersey last year. The theme of the retreat is "Who Me?!" Confirmation is a time to ask tough questions, learn more about the Church, and explore the ways that you are called to be a part of a faith community.

The confirmation group is off to a great start! We have 8 enthusiastic confirmands and mentors for all our children. Keep them all in your prayers ●

YOUTH NEWS



“A Youth-full Winter!”



MUSIC AT WESTMINSTER

BY: Alfred Fedak

JOSEPH FALA

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG ARTIST: JOSEPH FALA

Joseph (Joey) Fala is a fourth year student at the Rensselaer School of Architecture (RPI) in Troy, NY. He is simultaneously pursuing his Master's degree in lighting and has worked as a designer with several prominent architectural lighting design firms. Originally from Hawaii, Joey began studying organ with Katherine Crosier of the Lutheran Church of Honolulu, and was appointed organ scholar at Honolulu's Central Union Church. The winner of organ scholarships from the Hawaii and Eastern New York Chapters of the American Guild of Organists, he also received the Robert T. Anderson Award, the Bishop's Award from the Episcopal Diocese of Hawaii, and last year was awarded First Prize in the AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists, held in New York City. Joey currently serves as organist and choir director at First United Presbyterian Church in Troy and continues his studies with Alfred Fedak and Christian Lane.

Joey will present a recital on Westminster Church's magnificent Skinner organ on Friday evening, March 14, at 7:30 PM.

Don't miss this exciting young performer in his Westminster debut! ●



A VERY MUSICAL LENT

A VERY MUSICAL LENT

Every year at Westminster Church, we observe the season of Lent with special musical offerings. This will be especially true in 2014, when our church family and surrounding community will have the opportunity to enjoy numerous concerts and special musical services held at our church. Below is a listing of the musical highlights:

Thursday, March 6, 6:30 PM: Minster Music Makers begin rehearsals, children's choir room.

Saturday, March 8: Capitol Chamber Artists (7:00 Recital, 8:00 Concert)
Personnel: Mary Lou Saetta, violin; André O'Neil, cello and gamba; Al Fedak, organ and harpsichord. Admission free for members and friends of Westminster. Refreshments at intermission.

Friday, March 14, 7:30 PM: Organ Recital by Joey Fala, RPI student, organ pupil of Al Fedak, and winner of the 2013 American Guild of Organists' New York City organ competition. Freewill offering with refreshments to follow.

Sunday, March 16, 10 AM Service: Carson Cooman, renowned composer-in-residence at Harvard's Memorial Church, will be our guest organist. (His sacred oratorio, *The Revelations of Divine Love* will be performed at 3:00 PM that afternoon at Skidmore College by the Burnt Hills Oratorio Society, Susan Fedak, Artistic Director.)

Sunday, March 16, 3:00 PM: The Monday Musical Club return to Westminster Church for their annual spring concert of vocal and instrumental music, including solos by MMC's 2014 scholarship winners. Freewill offering; refreshments afterward.

Saturday, March 29: All-day Children's Choir Festival at Westminster, featuring the Saratoga, Troy, and Glens Falls Children's Choruses. The day's final event is a 3:00 PM concert which is open to the public. Freewill offering.

Friday, April 4, 7:30 PM: The Siena College Choir, under the direction of Timothy Reno, will perform the *Requiem* by John Rutter with chamber orchestra in Westminster's sanctuary. Al Fedak will be the organist. Free admission.

Sunday, April 6, 6:00 PM: Potluck Supper and Hymn Sing featuring songs from GLORY TO GOD, the new Presbyterian Hymnal.

Good Friday, April 18, 7:30 PM: Service of passiontide music and art with the Musicians of Ma'alwyck, including Buxtehude's cycle of choral cantatas *Membra Jesu nostri* and excerpts from Marcel Dupré's major organ work, *The Way of the Cross* ●

IN OUR COMMUNITY



WHITE LINEN NAPKINS NEEDED! Please think of Westminster when you begin your 2014 spring cleaning and sorting. The Deacons need white dinner-size and tea-size napkins in excellent condition for use during Communion celebrations. If you have some that you would like to donate, you may contact Claudia Hartmark or Sue Barwig. Thank you. ●

For the past eleven years Westminster has been staffing and providing meals on Sunday nights at the Emergency Overflow Shelter housed at First Lutheran Church in Albany. This 19-bed shelter is intended as a last-resort option for people who cannot get into other facilities. Volunteers are needed to help welcome guests and provide hospitality on Sunday evenings. Please contact Valerie Shanley, 366-8747, or Martha Reisner, 439-3281, if you can help ●



THANK YOU, WESTMINSTER FRIENDS, for the many cards, e-mails, and phone calls following my recent surgery! Your support tells me that people who say “I’m spiritual but not religious” are depriving themselves of the healing power that comes through the church community. God bless you all for helping my recovery!

-Paul Randall, Parish Associate



MEET MIKE DE GRAFF

We have a new face in our front office. Mike De Graff is a 13th generation descendant of Dutch immigrants to Schenectady ‘s Stockade, in 1665. He has had careers with NYS, the Dept. of Defense in The Pentagon, and many Washington DC museums, including The Navy Memorial, Stephen Decatur House, and Old Salem in NC. He has also been a small business owner and consultant.

He was raised at Bellevue Reformed Church in Schenectady, where his father was a Deacon & Sunday School teacher. Mike is an avid gardener, cook, and Lily’s Dad (a Yorkie!). He hopes you will stop in to say ‘hello’, and chat.

ADULT EDUCATION

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS IN LENT THE UNCHOSEN PATH

Everyone is welcome to participate in a mid week gathering in Lent. Our theme is The Unchosen Path. Westminster members will share their own faith stories of how their lives have taken unexpected turns, and the lessons they have learned along the way. The stories will tell of challenges presented by ill health, family crisis, war, vocational change, and discrimination. Presenters will include the Rev. Rick Otty, Fatmata Hilton, Nell Stokes-Holmes, Peter McKee, Diane Bossung, and Cindy Falle. The program begins on March 12th, the first of five successive Wednesdays that will end on April 9th.

The Wednesday evening programs will begin with a meal of soup and bread at 6:15 p.m. The presentation will take place in the Welles Room at 7:00 p.m. The evening will close with worship in the style of Taize led by Al Fedak, and will conclude by 8:00 p.m.

SECOND HOURS IN LENT

Adult forums in Lent will focus on the scripture lessons for the following week's worship service. The texts are from the long stories told in the Gospel of John. Participants will take part of the preparation for the next week's sermon.

- March 2** Energy and Christian Ethics, Part 3 led by Floyd Barwig
- March 9** A Success Story: What We Have Accomplished in Liberia
- March 16** Lenten Study 1: The Woman at the Well
- March 23** Lenten Study 2: The Man Born Blind
- March 30** Lenten Study 3: Lazarus and His Sisters
- April 6** Lenten Study 4: The Passion Narrative
- April 13** Lenten Study 5: Jesus Enters Albany
- April 20** Easter (No 2nd Hour)
- April 27** Congregational Brunch

SUNDAY WORSHIP LENT 2014

STORIES OF RECONCILIATION

<i>March 5</i>	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>		
II Corinthians 5:19	“God’s Work of Reconciliation”		Pastor Reisner
<i>March 9</i>	<i>Lent 1</i>		
Genesis 3:1-24	“East of Eden”		Pastor Reisner
<i>March 16</i>	<i>Lent 2</i>		
John 3:1-17	“The Windswept Christian”		Pastor Rosenau
<i>March 23</i>	<i>Lent 3</i>		
John 4:5-32	“The Burning of the Noontide Heat”		Pastor Reisner
<i>March 30</i>	<i>Lent 4</i>		
John 9:1-41	“One True Thing”		Pastor Reisner
<i>April 6</i>	<i>Lent 5</i>	<i>Communion</i>	
John 11:1-45	“When Jesus Wept”		Pastor Reisner
<i>April 13</i>	<i>Palm Sunday</i>		
Matthew 27:11-54	“He Never Said a Mumblin’ Word”		Pastor Reisner
<i>April 17</i>	<i>Maundy Thursday</i>	<i>Communion</i>	
	“Hunger Banquet”		Pastor Rosenau
<i>April 18</i>	<i>Good Friday</i>		
	Service of Passiontide music and art with the Musicians of Ma’alwyck		
<i>April 20</i>	<i>Easter</i>	<i>Communion</i>	
John 20:1-18	“The Moment In and Out of Time”		Pastor Reisner

CONGREGATIONAL BRUNCH

“This year’s congregational brunch, a much-beloved Westminster tradition, will be held on Sunday, April 27, in the Assembly Room directly following the morning worship service ●

MARCH & APRIL 2014

CHURCH CALENDAR

MARCH

March 2 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
7:00 pm Youth Group

4

5:30 pm Pancake Supper

5

7:30 pm Ash Wed. Service

6

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

8

Capitol Chamber Artists
7:00 pm Recital
8:00 pm Concert

March 9 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
10:30 am Worship Plus
11:15 am Church School

11

6:00 pm Deacons
6:00 pm Session

12

6:00 pm The Unchosen Path
8:00 pm CL&L

13

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

14

Joey Fala
7:30 pm Organ Concert

March 16 SUNDAY

Carson Cooman guest organist
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
3:00 pm Monday Musical Club
Spring Concert

7:00 pm Youth Group

18

7:00 pm Trustees

19

6:00 pm The Unchosen Path

20

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

22

5:00 pm African Spring Dinner

March 23 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School

26

6:00 pm The Unchosen Path

27

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

29

All-Day Children's Choir Festival
3:00 pm Concert

March 30 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:30 am 20s and 30s Brunch
7:00 pm Youth Group

APRIL

2

6:00 pm The Unchosen Path
8:00 pm Christian Life and
Learning

3

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

4

5:00 pm Youth Lock In
Siena College Choir
7:30 pm Concert

5

5:00 pm Youth Lock In

April 6 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
6:00 pm Potluck Supper &
Hymn Sing

8

7:00 pm Session

9

6:00 pm The Unchosen Path

10

6:30 pm Music Makers
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

April 13 PALM SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
7:00 pm Youth Group

15

7:00 pm Deacons
7:00 pm Trustees

17 MAUNDY THURSDAY

6:00 pm Maundy Thursday
Service

18 GOOD FRIDAY

Office Closed
7:30 pm
Good Friday Service

April 20 EASTER SUNDAY

10:00 am Easter Worship
10:30 am Worship Plus

24

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

25

5:00 pm Confirmation Retreat

26

8:00 pm Confirmation Retreat

April 27 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Congregational Brunch
7:00 pm Youth Group



Westminster Presbyterian Church

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Albany, New York 12210

Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9 am- 4 pm Monday-Friday

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Associate Pastor: Frances Wattman Rosenau

Parish Associate: Paul Randall

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

Associate Minister of Music and Arts: Susan Hermance Fedak

Office Administrator: Mike De Graff

Church School Assistant Coordinator: Belinda Quaye

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Send submissions to: westminsternewsletter@gmail.com**