

May/June 2015

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PENTECOST APPROACHES

Sunday, May 24, is the fiftieth day after Easter - the Feast of Pentecost when a group of confused, uncertain and nervous women and men dared receive the Holy Spirit.

Forty-one years ago, in the time of apartheid, the South African author and Christian, Alan Paton, wrote of hope in the midst of his despair for his beloved country -

Is it not proof of the beauty and terror of life that the Spirit which dwells in the holy mountain where no one hurts or destroys is the same Spirit that can blow like a raging tempest through our churches and our parliaments and our traditional ways of life?

Paton then asked -

Is the Church of today the Church of the Holy Spirit? Or is it the Church of Christ crucified, resurrected and then departed? Is it perhaps true to say that the Church of today is afraid of the Holy Spirit?

Join in worship - dare to receive the Spirit - Pentecost Sunday - and every Sunday at Westminster Church!●



Pastoral Reflections

Pastor Jim Reisner

2015
Pride
Parade

WHEN GOD WANTS SOMETHING DONE

When God wants something done ... God sends a person.

This is the way God has always worked. God sent Abraham and Sarah to Canaan. God sent Joseph to Egypt. God sent Moses to the bulrushes and later from Midian to Pharaoh’s court. God sent Joshua across the River Jordan. God sent the prophets of old to the people of Judah and Israel to proclaim the Word.

In the fullness of time, God sent the Son, our Lord Jesus, into the world, that we might receive adoption as children of God. And because we are God’s children, God sends us the Spirit. (Galatians 4:4-5)

When God wants something done, God sends a person. This is how God works today. God sends prophets anew: Martin Luther King, Jr. to Birmingham, and Desmond Tutu to Johannesburg.

On the first Easter, Jesus appears to the disciples in the locked room where they had been hiding in fear. He comes to them and says to them, *“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”* When he has said this, he breathes on them and says to them, *“Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

God is in the sending business; and as the disciples of Jesus, we are the

“We are the ones whom God sends.”

ones
whom
God

sends. We are apostles; for that is what the word apostle means -apostles are ones who are sent.

The world is not changed by proclamations that declare whereas this and whereas that. Decrees do not change human hearts. When God wants something done, God sends a person, for the world is changed one person at a time.●



COME MARCH WITH WESTMINSTER IN THE 2015 PRIDE PARADE

This year the 45th Capital Region Pride Parade falls on Saturday, June 13 from Noon until 5:00 pm. We want to really show Westminster’s welcome to the LGBT community by gathering a large group to march. Never marched in parade before? Don’t worry we’ll have lots of sun tan lotion and water to share. Just wear your most comfortable shoes and a hat to shield the sun -- there is no shade in the middle of the street! But what if I’m not gay? Neither are many of the marchers. In fact, friends, relatives, and straight supporters of equality often outnumber the LGBT participants at Pride parades -- you don’t have to be Irish to enjoy St. Patrick’s Day, Gay to enjoy Pride, or a horse to enjoy Saratoga.

Marching in the Pride parade is great way for Westminster to evangelize to the whole capital region as a church that welcomes everyone.

Grace and Peace,
Arthur Fullerton



Sundays at Westminster

SUNDAYS AT WESTMINSTER

Sunday, May 10 *Mother's Day*

10:00 Worship
Jim Reisner Preaching
Second Hour:

Sunday, May 17

10:00 Worship
Jim Reisner Preaching
Second Hour

Sunday, May 24

10:00 Worship
Frances Rosenau Preaching

Note: If possible, please wear red. There will be no Second Hour

Sunday, May 31

10:00 Worship
Jim Reisner Preaching
Second Hour
1:00 African Prayers

Sunday, June 7

9:00 Open Choir Loft Choir Rehearsal
10:00 Worship (*Communion*)
Jim Reisner Preaching
After Worship

Sunday, June 14

9:00 Open Choir Loft Rehearsal
10:00 Worship
Church School Sunday & Young Musicians' Recital
Frances Rosenau Leading Worship

Sunday, June 21

9:00 Open Choir Loft Rehearsal
10:00 Worship
Jim Reisner Preaching
Second Hour

Sunday, June 28

9:00 - Open Choir Loft Rehearsal
10:00 Hymn Sing Worship

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC: June 7, 2015

June 7 is the date for the annual church picnic, to be held this year at the Menands city park. This is a great facility for serving a large group and for games and other recreation. Mark your calendars now and plan to be there - no one is too old or too young to come.

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

John 15:1-17
"The True Vine"
Parents' Reception

The Seventh Sunday of Easter

John 14:6
"The Way, the Truth and the Life"

The Festival of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21
"Prophecy to the Wind"

Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1; John 3:8
"Windswept"
Westminster Dreams #IV

Second Sunday After Pentecost

Isaiah 55: 1-13
"God's Ways and Ours"
All Church Picnic

Third Sunday After Pentecost

2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17

Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Joshua 1:1-9
"When We Face the Unknown"
Westminster Dreams V

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

Children & Youth

PARENTS' RECEPTION: for parents of current Church School children and youth

On Sunday, May 10th after Worship - in the Welles Room we will celebrate you and your role in your children's Christian education. There will be time for feedback on our new model and, of course, refreshments.



SAVE THE DATE: Church School Sunday June 14th

Do you have a special gift to share? Would you like to lead in worship or help with planning the service? See Pastor Frances to get involved.●

Serving **Albany**

Who: Youth from Westminster Presbyterian Church and others who want to serve Albany

Where: The South End of Albany

What: Three days of service projects primarily in the South End of Albany. There will be work on vacant lots in the neighborhood, clean up work and gardening, as well as painting indoors. After the work day ends, workers will gather for all work sites for games, worship and dinner together at a church in the neighborhood. Lunch and Dinner will be provided.

When: Monday **June 29th**, Tuesday **June 30th**, and Wednesday **July 1st**

Why: The free t-shirt!
...and because we love our neighbors as ourselves and want to be changed by the people we meet.

Any questions? Please contact Pastor Frances Rosenau @ 436- 8544 or fwrosenau@wpcalbany.org



Stewardship & Budget Goals

WHAT IS THE STEWARDSHIP AND BUDGET GOALS PROCESS?

Believe it or not, it's that time of year when the Stewardship and Budget Committee (S&B) kicks off the annual Goals Process for the following year. This is a significant time during the budget process as it sparks creativity, future planning and forward thinking.

Historically, we've rolled the prior year's budget forward, simply updating the year and a few key salary and invoice changes. The Goals process, which we have used for the past three years, allows the Deacons and Trustees, committees and church staff the opportunity to think outside the box, reflect on Westminster's values, collect the congregational voice and document their goals for the following year. It also makes the budget contents much more transparent.

How does it work? S&B shares the goals document with representatives of the Deacons, Trustees and Session, staff and key committee chairs (ECHO, Mission, Christian Life and Learning). We request goals be documented and submitted over a four week period. Once collected, they are combined and presented to the elders at their June meeting. Session collectively votes on the goals they want included in the following year's budget.

This may sound easy and straight forward, but there is a lot to consider! How much should be spent? How much money should be taken from the endowment? Should the church staff receive a salary increase? What major capital improvements are required? How to balance the new ideas with our existing programs? Should we stop doing something that no longer makes sense?

As a witness to this process, I can assure you Session members take this very seriously and have deep discussions on these matters. While it is often an agonizing decision for them, the outcome benefits us all. If you would like to see how the Goals Process fits into the overall Stewardship and Budget process, look for the S&B timeline on the bulletin board near the church office.

Kelly Crisfield - For the Stewardship and Budget Committee.

A THANK YOU NOTE FROM GLENDA

I want to thank everyone for all your prayers, cards, and phone calls from when I was out with my back injury. It kept my spirits up. I want to also thank everyone for keeping Tomahria on the prayer chain and all her cards also. She was happy to get them. God bless everyone. ●



... and Speaking of Music

NOONTIME CHAMBER MUSIC WITH M.O.M.

No, not Mother, but the Musicians of Ma'alwyck. At 12:00 noon on Thursday, May 28, the Musicians of Ma'alwyck will perform a free pre-view concert in our sanctuary, which will include music from their full concert in Schenectady the very next night. Titled "Just for the Fun of It," the program will feature some of the group's favorite selections. M.O.M. will be joined by our very own Starr Norman, so come and enjoy the music!

CALLING ALL YOUNG MUSICIANS!

On Sunday, June 14, Westminster Church will revive a tradition which has been in hiatus for several years: our Young Musicians' Recital. During that morning's Second Hour, we plan to present a concert in our downstairs Assembly Room, featuring our church's talented up-and-coming singers, instrumentalists, and dancers. All youngsters through college-age who have studied music at school or privately are welcome to participate in this event. If you are interested, please contact Mr. Fedak at the church or by email (avfedak@aol.com) to let him know (1) what music you'd like to perform, (2) whether you need an accompanist, and (3) whether or when you'd like to rehearse at the church beforehand. In the past, WPC's Young Musicians' Recitals have been very well-received, and a highlight of our church's life together. They are a wonderful way to celebrate and encourage the artistic talents of our church's young musicians.

THE CHOIR LOFT IS OPEN!

Have you ever thought about joining the choir? Or wondered what it would be like to sit in the chancel during a Sunday morning service, surrounded by all those talented singers and awash in the sounds of our mighty Skinner organ? Well, now's your chance to experience all of this, with no other obligation beyond participation on Sunday mornings. Because during the month of June, every Sunday will be an "open choir loft" Sunday--an opportunity for anyone who wishes to come sing with the choir for a day, a week, or the entire month. There will be no weeknight rehearsals: singers are invited to simply arrive in the chancel by 9:00 AM sharp each Sunday morning to practice that day's hymns and anthems. So why not join the choir this month? No robes, no worries: just come and sing!



... and the Little Free Library

AND SPEAKING OF MUSIC...

Our Sunday morning worship service on June 28 will take the form of a Hymn Sing, with songs chosen by you, the members of the congregation. In the weeks leading up to that date, we will be seeking your suggestions for hymns to include, and will also be interested in learning why you find these particular hymns to be especially meaningful. We can't guarantee that every suggested hymn will be included in the service, but we'd love to hear from you. As we approach the date, watch for instructions on how to submit your suggestions--we welcome your input.

CHORAL CONCERT: JUNE 7

For those of you who may not be planning to attend our Church Picnic that afternoon, Sunday, June 7 holds another opportunity for spiritual renewal at Westminster Church. The Festival Celebration Choir, a 60-voice ecumenical choral ensemble which has been in residence at Westminster for the past year, will perform its annual spring concert of sacred music at 3:00 PM in our church sanctuary. The theme of the concert will be the biblical Book of Psalms; the featured work will be Leonard Bernstein's choral masterpiece, the CHICHESTER PSALMS. Founded in 1985, the Festival Celebration Choir is comprised of singers drawn from over 40 area churches. Philip Spaeth is completing his first year as the group's new director, and Andrew Krystopolski serves as accompanist. It should be a great event!

THE LITTLE FREE LIBRARY: FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Having weathered summer thunderstorms and harsh winter snows, The Little Free Library has been "open for business" every day of the year since its installation on May 30, 2014.

Approximately 2,500 books have been hand-picked from Grassroots Givers storehouse, transported to State Street, and stocked twice weekly. Appreciated and enjoyed by a diversity of passersby, the library offers a spectrum of reading and literary experiences for every age, interest, and circumstance. Registered on the worldwide map of 25000 little free libraries, we are charter #15270 (Lat. 42.65..., Long. 73.76..., Steward: Marianne Rings). ●



Session &

Second Hour

“Conversations”

REPORT FROM SESSION

Session has joyfully accepted for membership during the month of March Janet Tetteh, Janet Gelzheiser, Michael Okoe, Rebecca Korley and Martha Henao. Also joining recently was Brandon Michael Haskell. Please welcome these newest members of the Westminster family.

At our last meeting we heard a report from Trustee Ruth Ann Brod on the wide array of insurance coverage held by Westminster. We also adopted the Stewardship Budget Process Timeline for this year which includes an additional Congregational Meeting to be held on September 27. We were also happy to approve Pastor Rosenau’s maternity leave for this summer and voted to take part once again in Presbyterian Rainbow Welcoming Activities. Elder Fullerton provided a synopsis of the second Congregational Conversation about our hopes for Westminster.

Westminster Church has been selected to receive the 2015 Stewardship Award from the Historic Albany Foundation on May 12. This award recognizes us for the stellar job we do as stewards of a difficult to care for building. Anne and Tom Older and Al Fedak are also awardees this year for their care of our organ. ●



WESTMINSTER DREAMS A NEW FUTURE - FURTHER CONVERSATIONS

Five Second Hour conversations, “Westminster Dreams a New Future” are being led by Elder Arthur Fullerton following a process known as “Appreciative Inquiry” through which we may find “images of the possible.” The second session in the process was devoted to building on the strengths listed in the first session in order to begin to imagine “what future God might imagine for our community of faith.”

He proposed five questions: The first questions asked those attending to remember a time “when your faith felt most alive...” .

The second question asked whether there is something you wished Westminster had or offered.

What can we do better, was the third question.

The fourth and fifth questions asked how the church can better help and what is your deepest spiritual hunger.

On Sunday, April 26, the third of the five Second Hour conversations, “Westminster Dreams a New Future” reviewed the long list of responses from the previous gathering combined with input from the youth of the Church and elders and deacons. Arthur Fullerton gave those attending an opportunity to add items to the list. The group then began to vote in favor of the issues they felt most important.

The voting will be continued in the next gathering, May 31. Everyone is encouraged to participate - Second Hour - Sunday, May 17 and 31.



Mission Notes

MISSION NOTES MAY 2015

With the close of our cold weather ministries, the mission committee would like to recognize the faithful volunteers of the Emergency Overflow Shelter: Valerie Shanley, John Bojnowski, Peter McKee, Fatmata Hilton, Felicia Kollie-Gambles, Allan and Mary Jean Tedrow, Shirley Diven, Gail Garrison, Kris Wilhelm, Wendy and Jesse Roberts, Cindy Dwyer, Elizabeth McMillian, Martha Reisner, Kelly Crisfield, Diane Bossung, Sheila Wrede, Sue Barwig, Ruthanne Brod, The WPC Youth Group, Eve Ryan, Lynne McKee, Sue Schell, Nancy Burton, and Diana Wight.

- Thank you for your service and gifts to this important ministry. A big thank you to Diane Wight and Valerie Shanley for organizing the volunteers!

- Thank you for your generosity and giving to the One Great Hour of Sharing! Together, we raised \$2300, all of which is used by PC(USA) for hunger, disaster and empowering programs.

- The March African Dinner raised \$7000 for our African Ministries.

- The Church World Service CROP Walk was May 3rd. If you would like to make a donation, money will be collected through the end of May. Checks can be made out to CWS/CROP and sent into the church office.

- The Schuyler Inn Ministry is looking for volunteers to help with BINGO parties over the summer. The dates are still to be determined, but will be announced in the weekly bulletins and website. ●

WESTMINSTER RECEIVES \$2,000 FOR CARE OF 11 EBOLA ORPHANS

In April the National Peace Corps Association Ebola Relief Fund awarded WPC \$2,000 to help meet the education and basic living needs of 11 Ebola orphans at Liberia's Hope Mission. John Kucij, Liberia Project Director for WPC wrote the grant. It supplements the \$13,650 budget adopted by the Mission Committee for 2015 Westminster Projects in Liberia and Sierra Leone, including \$10,800 raised at the January Zumba Party and March African Spring Dinner. ●

A NEW MODEL...

Inspired by Robert Lupton's "Toxic Charity", FOCUS is exploring an alternative model for food pantries built around collaborative groups of low income households who manage the distribution of food. This approach encourages community development and the dignity and ownership of the participants. This experiment will not replace the existing food pantry. The South End is the proposed site. ●

BREAKFAST EXPRESS

The FOCUS Winter Breakfast Program at Westminster (The Breakfast Club) is over for the season and Breakfast Express with a lighter menu has begun on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Belinda Quaye at FOCUS: 443-0460. ●

FOCUS Updates



WHY Westminster ?

WHY WESTMINSTER?

We hope you'll share your thoughts about why Westminster is important to you. Your ideas are vital to the church communications work that the ECHO (Evangelism, Communications, Hospitality and Outreach) team is undertaking. A key element of this effort is to create a new "tagline" that will help us clearly, succinctly and consistently convey the essence of Westminster to members, visitors and the community.

Many of you put your thoughts into writing during the recent Annual Brunch event. Here is just a sampling of what you said:

- "An open and loving atmosphere. The music and the spirituality. We are a family, but we're never exclusive."
- "Ethnic diversity! Truly caring people. Fun! Spectacular music. Thoughtful preaching. Engagement in mission to city and the world."
- "WPC helps move me."
- "Westminster family is my family. Growing up here taught me respect and the power of doing good. The congregation was FILLED with role models...
 - "We came 50 years ago because of the great Sunday School program for our kids - so here we are - and loving it."
 - "People, pastors, program"

What's your reason? Please send to Valerie Shanley and the church office at: vshanley@nycap.rr.com and office@wpcalbany.org or drop a note into the office mail slot in the Chestnut Street lobby area. ●



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - Do You Have Computer Skills?

We are looking for someone to help us to configure, order and/or update a computer system which will be used to display important messages. A flat screen display will be located in the Chestnut Street hallway area of the church. If you have a knack for working with computers, we would like your help. Please contact Valerie Shanley of our Evangelism, Communications, Hospitality and Outreach (ECHO) team. ●

MAY into JUNE CALENDAR

2015

SUNDAY May 10

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:30 am Second Hour:
Parent's Reception

12

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Session

13

7:30 am FOCUS Express

14

5:30 pm Kerygma Bible Class
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY May 17

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:30 am Second Hour
7:00 pm Youth Group

18

1:15 pm Mission Committee

19

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Trustees
7:00 pm Deacons

20

7:30 am FOCUS Express

21

5:30 pm Kerygma Bible Class
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY May 24

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:30 am Second Hour

25

Memorial Day- Office Closed

26

7:30 am FOCUS Express

27

7:30 am FOCUS Express

28

5:30 pm Kerygma Bible Class
Noon Musicians of Ma'alwyck
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY May 31

10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:30 am Second Hour
1:00 pm Prayer Meeting
7:00 pm Youth Group-
End of Year Banquet

2

7:30 am FOCUS Express

3

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Christian Life & Learning

4

7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

JUNE

SUNDAY June 7

9:00 am Choir Loft
10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Church Picnic
@ Menands Town Park

9

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Session

10

7:30 am FOCUS Express

SUNDAY June 14

9:00 am Choir Loft
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Youth Musicians Recital
11:15 am Young Adult Brunch

16

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Trustees
7:00 pm Deacons

17

7:30 am FOCUS Express

SUNDAY June 21

10:00 am Worship

23

7:30 am FOCUS Express

24

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Mission Committee

SUNDAY June 28

9:00 am Choir Loft
10:00 am Worship
1:00 pm Prayer Meeting

29

Serving Albany- Youth Mission

30

7:30 am FOCUS Express
Serving Albany- Youth Mission
3:00 pm Youth Mission Dinner

1

7:30 am FOCUS Express
Serving Albany- Youth Mission
3:00 pm Youth Mission Dinner
7:00 pm Christian Life & Learning



Westminster Presbyterian Church

85 Chestnut Street
Albany, New York 12210

Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9 am- 4 pm Monday-Friday

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Parish Associate: Paul Randall

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

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Send submissions to: westminsternewsletter@gmail.com