



The Westminster Messenger

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

November 2011

In this Issue:

Pastoral Reflections
Page 2

Church Activities
Page 3

Music News
Page 4

Children &
Youth News
Page 5

Member News
Page 6-7

Mission
Page 8-9

Lectionary &
Second Hours
Page 10

Church Calendar
Page 11

Westminster is "Going for It!!"

You heard him - our own Pastor Reisner's stewardship sermon September 25th,

"We are a congregation cooking on all four burners. There is a ton of stuff going on. And isn't that the way it is supposed to be? Over the past few years, the Session of Westminster, the 12 elected elders who make up our ruling body, have made a decision to go for it. At a time when so many American institutions are in retreat and retrenchment because of the Great Recession, we at Westminster are going against the grain.

We are seizing the moment, (Carpe diem!), and giving it our all."

There is energy, enthusiasm and life at Westminster this fall!! As we continue on our stewardship journey we are learning how to Live Generously and becoming better Christian Stewards.

Our church staff is expanding to keep pace with our growing ministry, our Christian Life and Learning program is vibrant, our church building is being repaired and readied for expanded use, and our mission opportunities are abundant!

Please help our congregation members grow spiritually and bring joy and hope to those in need by contributing wholeheartedly to Westminster in 2012 •

by: Kelly Crisfield



Pastoral Reflections:

Pastor Jim Reisner

In the movie *Network*, a deranged television anchorman encourages his audience to go to their windows, stick their heads out, and yell, "I'm as mad as hell, and I am not going to

take this anymore." The grassroots movements of the Tea Party, and now Occupy Wall Street (OWS), although coming from opposite ends of the political spectrum, share the belief that the American system of government is broken. One commentator has likened OWS to a primal scream. Many in the media are calling for the protestors to define their cause. But it's too early yet to know exactly how the movement will coalesce, or whether it will be able to clarify itself at all.

At this point the Occupy movement is a protest AGAINST. It is against the widening gap between rich and poor. It is against the rapacious greed of a few at the cost of the quality of life of the many. And in that message, the movement finds a common voice with many of the prophets of Scripture.

The prophet Ezekiel declares that the guilt of Sodom was not what we suppose: "Behold, this was the sin of Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy" (Ezekiel. 16:49). The prophet Amos proclaims: "You trample upon the poor ... afflict the righteous, take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate. " In those days the gate of the city was where judgment was made, and justice practiced. "Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate."

The protestors are asking, in effect, "Is there a gate along Wall Street where justice can be practiced? Or is that wall one that allows in only the few and favored, while everyone else is sent empty away?"

Who knows where the Occupy movement will go? The church needs to be careful about aligning herself with political movements. But Christians should have no reservations about aligning themselves with the needs of the poor; and that means not only caring for those who come to our door seeking aid, but also advocating for those systemic changes that will establish justice in the gate, and address the root causes of poverty.

*"Seek good and not evil, that you may live
and establish justice in the gate
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph"*

Amos 5:15

African Family Night November 5

The Tenth Annual African Family Night

African Family Night, chaired by Elder Gabriel Ofori-Okai, will have something for everyone! This great event is sponsored by Westminster's Committee on Ghana, the East African Association of the Capital District, the Ghana Association of the Capital District, and Liberian Association of the Capital District.

The dinner is a buffet featuring both African and American cuisines, African music and drumming, an African fashion show, a 50/50 raffle and "Dancing for Dollars" to support African mission projects, and Westminster's own Dr. Maurice Thornton as the dinner speaker.

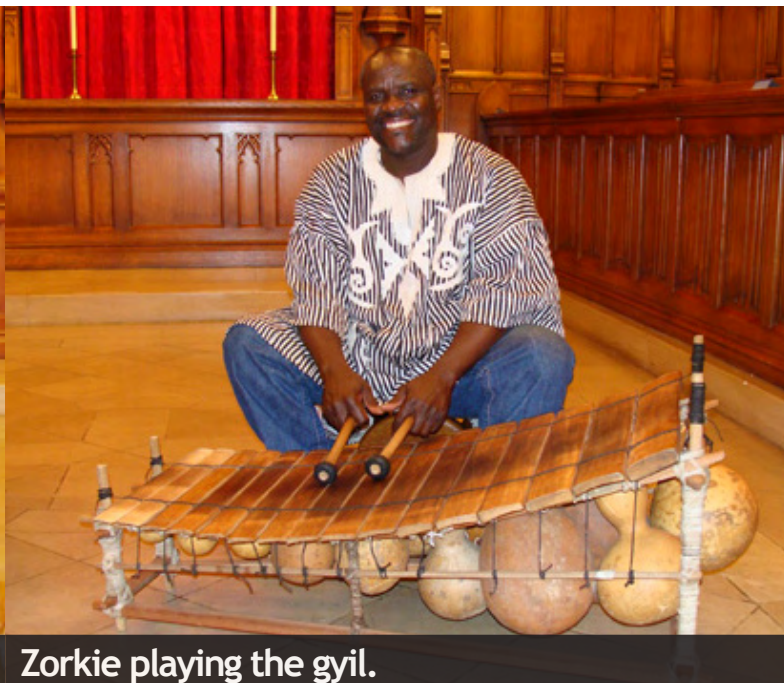
**10th Annual African Family Night
Saturday, November 5th
5-8:30 pm**

Many other Westminster members are contributing their talents to this event, including Mary Sabina Ofori-Okai, Michael Scaptura, Chanelle Ndagire, Felicia Kollie-Gambles, Fatmata Hilton, Pastor Rosenau, Nannano Zirimu, Lois Wilson, and Adriene Gambles.

Dinner is served at 6 pm, and the program starts at 7 pm. Sign up by Thursday, Nov. 3 by calling the Church office at 436-8544, or by using the sign-up sheet on the Chestnut Street bulletin board. Child care is available for children 5 and under •



Gabriel playing the djembe.



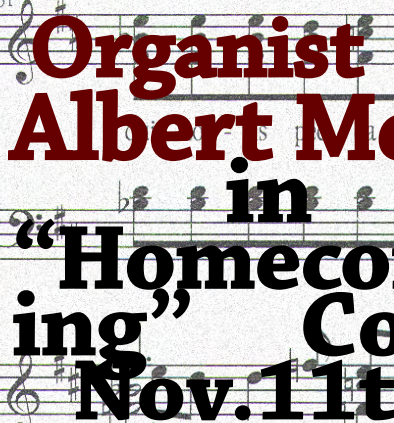
Zorkie playing the gyl.



First Friday Nov. 4th Capitol Opera Albany Launches

by Al Fedak

At 6:00 PM on Friday, November 4, a new performing arts group will present its debut performance at Westminster Church! Capitol Opera Albany will perform a concert of favorites from the operatic repertoire. Artists will include sopranos Renee Heitmann and Stephanie Lowd, and baritone Frederick Rice, directed by Wayne Wyman of Tennessee, and accompanied by Kirstie Chen. COA is the newest member of a network of opera companies with other branches in Sacramento, Harrisburg, and Raleigh. Their November 4 program is arranged in four parts, a design which permits audience members to “come when they can and leave when they must.” COA is a non-profit, community-benefit organization, so admission is free, but donations will be gladly accepted at the door •



Organist Albert Melton in “Homecoming” Concert Nov. 11th

Members and friends of Westminster Church may fondly remember Albert Melton, who spent many years serving as a church musician, choral director, and teacher in the Capital District. For eleven years he served as Director of Music at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Albany. He was also Director of Music at Albany Academy for Girls, and was on the Creative Arts faculty of Siena College. Earlier still, Mr. Melton was active in the FOCUS community, leading the combined music programs of Trinity Methodist and First Presbyterian Churches.

For the past 15 years, Mr. Melton has served as Cathedral Musician at the Cathedral Church of St. Luke (Episcopal) in Portland, Maine, where he serves as principal organist, directs the cathedral choir, and coordinates the cathedral’s annual concert series. He also maintains an active performing schedule: his concert work has taken him to all the major east coast cities, as well as to Barbados on a cultural exchange program. Mr. Melton oversaw the restoration of the Portland cathedral’s 1928 E. M. Skinner pipe organ, an instrument quite similar to Westminster’s.

This month, Albert Melton will return to Albany to perform a solo recital at Westminster Church on Friday, November 11, at 7:30 PM, with a program of works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and more. The event is partially underwritten by a Community Art\$Grant from the NYS Council on the Arts and the Arts Center of the Capital Region. Admission is free, a freewill offering will be received, and a reception will follow.

Spread the word and plan to attend, to welcome back one of this area’s finest musicians! •

Children and Youth

Pastor Frances W. Rosenau

Youth Retreat

The youth group went on a retreat recently to Holmes Presbyterian Camp. As you may have heard, the boating was very popular! The focus of the retreat was on team building. We played games and worked on exercises to cultivate leadership, listening, and working together as a team.

As you can see, a good time was had by all ●



Our Westminster Family:

Fatmata

Hilton came to the US from Sierra Leone in 1982, completing her education in the Albany area. She joined Westminster in 2008, serving first on the Board of Trustees and currently as a Deacon. She now works for the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, and is a former officer of SUSU, a group of eight women from eight different African countries who support the African immigrant community in the Capital District. She and her son live in Cohoes.

Fatmata is also a member of the board of African Women of Love Ministry (a group of women born in Sierra Leone, based in New Jersey). In that role, she regularly joins with the other members to support people in her home country who suffer every day from a lack of basic necessities -- clean water, medicines to treat disease, mosquito nets, etc. They are sending a shipping container to Sierra Leone in mid-November and would really appreciate clean, gently used items suitable for a country which is located near the equator: summer clothes, sheets, light-weight blankets, towels, canes, aluminum crutches, toiletries like soap, tooth paste, tooth brushes, etc. Donations should be clearly marked for Fatmata and left in the small meeting room no later than Sunday, November 13. Any of these will be greatly appreciated ●

Columbia High

School Senior and Westminsterite Matt Scaptura has been a vocal student of Sue Fedak's for many years, and is applying to colleges for a vocal performance degree.

This November, Matt will be part of the large, student-only cast of *Les Miserables (Student Edition)* being performed by the resident student theatre company at the Cohoes Music Hall from November 10 to the 20th. He will be playing two roles, the Bishop and Prouvart, a student.

Matt's evening performances are on Nov. 17, 18 and 19 at 8 PM; as well as matinees on Nov. 19 and 20 at 2 PM. For tickets, you can go to www.cohoesmusichall.com or call the Box Office at 518-237-5858. Let Matt know when you are coming and he might even sign your program ●

Les Misérables

School Edition

**Mosaic-
Arts
Concert
Sunday
Nov. 6th**

**Up-
coming
CRTC
Classes**

**HAPPY
BIR
TH
DAY
November
DAY**

At 5:00 PM on Sunday, November 6, Mosaic-Arts, Westminster's own resident opera company founded and directed by Kelly Hutchinson, will present an innovative concert of operatic excerpts called "The Big Five." This will be a concert unlike any you've ever attended: each performer will sing a work of his or her own choosing, but the audience will get to choose the next! The concert will be held in the church sanctuary; refreshments will follow downstairs. Freewill donations will be received at the door •

God in the Details: Faith and Science Dialogue Saturday, November 5th, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. The more we learn from science the more we begin to grasp the fullness of God's glory! This course will cover two themes within the faith-science dialogue: cosmology and creation; and evolution and human nature, taught by The Rev. Dr. Wesley J. Wildman of Boston University's School of Theology

Go Ye: The Nuts & Bolts of Planning a Mission Trip- A Resource Sharing Event, with a panel of area presenters, Sat., Nov. 19, 9 am-12:30 pm, Westminster's own Pastor Frances Rosenau and Elder Lois Wilson are part of a panel who will help answer your questions about planning a mission trip. Hear about planning, fund raising, finding volunteers, & more! Course fee: \$45. Registration deadline: Nov. 3, 2011

Register online at www.capitalrtc.org or by phone at 518-462-2470. Watch our website for information on these and many other courses available in 2011. Scholarships and group discounts available for most classes; please contact us for an application •

Celebrating the following birthdays in November:

• Paul Randall	Nov.6	• Jane McLaughlin	Nov.16
• Cynthia Frye	Nov.8	• Grant H.	Nov.17
• Marianne Rings	Nov.10	• Eleanor K.	Nov.17
• Olive N.	Nov.10	• Dr. Alex Filipp	Nov.19
• Ian McClumpha	Nov.11	• Peter Leue	Nov.22
• Ben Wilhelm	Nov.13	• Michael Kinum	Nov.30
• Greg Dwyer	Nov.15		

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

B	I	N	G	O
1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55
56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95
96	97	98	99	100

Volunteer Opportunities at Schuyler Inn

- **Sunday, November 13:** Monthly Sunday afternoon party. Set-up, 1 p.m.; Craft Party, 2 p.m.; Bingo, 3 p.m.; Clean-up, 4 p.m. Thanks to all who have already signed up to help with this party. We'll have to cancel the party unless we have a minimum of 15 volunteers! To sign-up to be a volunteer, contact Margaret Randall or Lois Wilson, or call the church office at 436-8544.

- **Sunday, November 27 and Sunday, December 4:** During Second Hour, you have an opportunity to pick up a and later fill either a shoe box for family basics or a family fun bag for a Schuyler Inn family. Shopping suggestions for both will be provided; only new items are requested for these Christmas presents. Completed shoe boxes and family fun bags need to be returned to the church by Monday morning, December 12. If you want to help and won't be in church on either Sunday, please call the church office at 436-8544 and make arrangements to pick up a shoe box or family fun bag at another time.

- **Saturday, December 17:** Traditional holiday party. Santa Claus will appear, and family photos will be taken. There will be holiday-related crafts, and the distribution of gifts. Extra volunteers are needed to make this a wonderful event for Schuyler families and veterans. Please see Lois Wilson or Margaret Randall or call the church office at 436-8544 to sign up for this annual event •

Casting Call for Christmas Pageant



CALLING ALL:
 Angels
 Shepherds
 Cows
 Sheep
 Cattle
 Kings
 and Saviors

Pageant practice begins Thursday Dec. 1st 6:30 PM



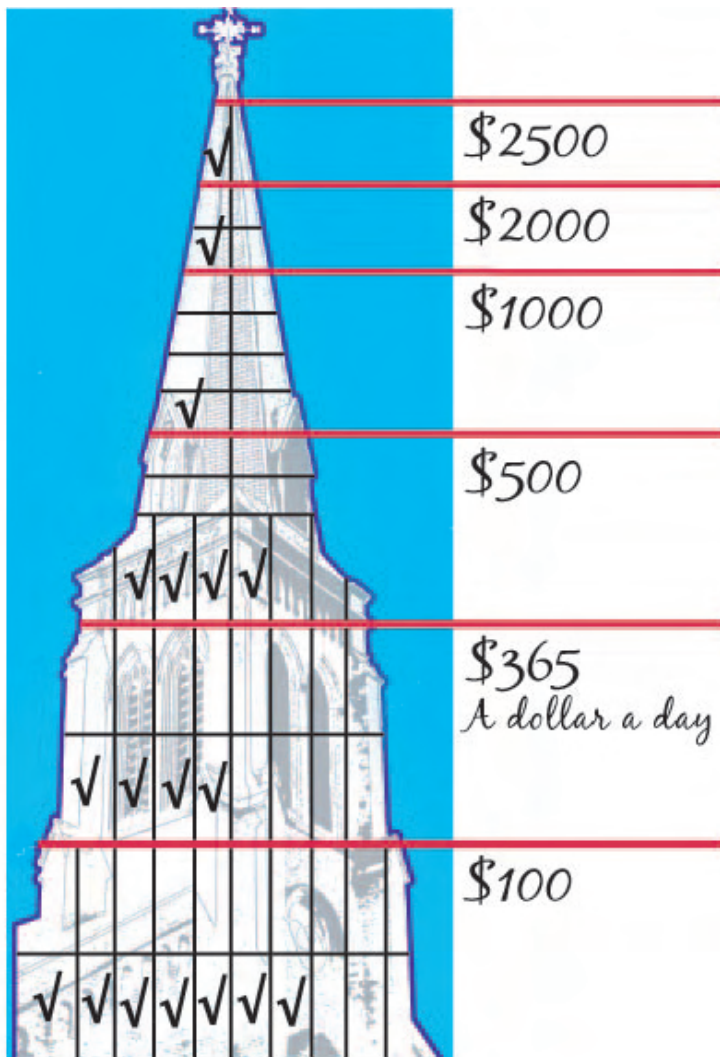
Westminster is... Going for It! This year,

by Kelly Crisfield

the Budget/Canvass committee, in consultation with the 2020 Vision Committee, has developed a new income category called "Challenge Giving." The Budget/Canvass Committee, concerned about the size of the endowment draw, kept the dollar amount of that draw the same for 2012. However, the program budget of the church will grow next year to support the growing number of activities and mission projects. To meet the gap in funding, the Committee has created a new category of income called "Challenge Giving," above this year's base pledge amount. The amount to be raised by this challenge is \$34,000.

Living Generously

Challenge Giving



Westminster Presbyterian Church
85 Chestnut Street, Albany, NY

You can see on the graphic that there are many ways that members can meet this challenge. To meet the total needed, we need an assortment of gifts, both large and small: from \$100, to a \$1/day (\$365), all the way up to \$2500. As of Wednesday, October 25, over 35% of this amount was already pledged by church officers.

The 2012 pledge cards will include a line for Challenge Giving, in addition to your pledge.

We invite you to give according to who you want to become in your relationship with God. Please join us for Stewardship Sunday, November 13, 2011 when we will celebrate our personal faith commitments and God's generosity toward us as we continue to grow in living generously as disciples of Jesus Christ ●

Pastor Reisner Celebrates 30th Anniversary of Ordination

Jim Reisner grew up listening to the stories of China. His grandparents had been agricultural missionaries in Nanjing where his grandfather founded a school of Agriculture and Forestry which still exists today. At some point, Jim realized that he could experience some of the breadth and diversity of the stories he heard in his childhood by serving as a pastor to urban congregations.

Jim has served two other city congregations. Thirty years ago, when just out of seminary, Jim was called as Assistant Pastor at Park Central Presbyterian Church in Syracuse. In 1986, he was called as pastor to First Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey, where he served before coming to Albany in 2002.

The Reisners feel especially blessed to be in Albany and serving Westminster. Thirty years into it, Jim finds something new every day that makes his work challenging, fascinating, fun, and rewarding. He is having a great time being your pastor ●

Sermons & Second Hours:

NOVEMBER 6 All Saint's Sunday Communion Matthew 5:1-12
Pastor Reisner, preaching "Blessed"
2nd Hour: Christian Responses to War, Part 2

NOVEMBER 13 Matthew 25:14-30
Pastor Reisner, preaching "Time, Talents, All"
2nd Hour: Christian Responses to War, Part 3

NOVEMBER 20 Thanksgiving Sunday Matthew 25:31-46
Pastor Reisner, preaching "When Do We See Him?"
2nd Hour: Reception for Pastor Reisner's 30th Anniversary of Ordination

NOVEMBER 27 Advent 1 Job 10:22
Pastor Reisner, preaching "The Land of Deepest Night"
2nd Hour: Advent Stations

Church Calendar

11 20 11

This Month's Events:

NOVEMBER

- 1
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
- 2
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
7 pm Christian Life and Learning
- 3
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
6:30 pm-7:15 pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal
- 4
6 pm First Friday
- 5
5:00-8:30 pm African Family Night

6 SUNDAY

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

- 8
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
7 pm Stated Session Meeting

- 9
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program

- 10
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
6:30 pm-7:15 pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

- 11
7:30 pm Organ Recital:
Albert Melton

13 SUNDAY

- 10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Church School
11:15 am Second Hour
11:15 am Bell Choir
2-4 pm Schuyler Inn Party

- 14
7 pm House Committee

- 15
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
7 pm Board of Deacons
7 pm Board of Trustees

- 16
7:30 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
- 17
7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
6:30 pm-7:15pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal

20 SUNDAY

- 10:00 am Worship
10:30 am Worship Plus for Kids
11:15 am Church School
11:15 am Second Hour
11:15 am Bell Choir
12:45-3 pm Youth Group
at Equinox

22

- 7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program
7:30 pm Interfaith Thanksgiving
at Beth Emmeth

23

- 7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program

24

- 7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program

27 SUNDAY

- 10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Advent Stations

29

- 7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program

30

- 7-9 am FOCUS Breakfast Program

Upcoming Events:

DECEMBER

4

- 5 pm MOSAIC Arts Concert
"Cards & Cocoa"

17

- 5 pm MOSAIC Arts Concert
"Amahl and the Night Visitors"

18

- 10 am Christmas Pageant

24

- 7:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

25

MERRY CHRISTMAS

31

- Watchnight



Westminster Presbyterian Church

85 Chestnut Street
Albany, New York 12210

Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Fall 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

E-Mail: info@wpcalbany.org

Web: www.wpcalbany.org

Facebook: Westminster Albany

Twitter: [jim_reisner](https://twitter.com/jim_reisner)

The Messenger is published 10 times a year.

Editor: Nancy Burton **Graphic Design:** Jeanne Bianchine

• Send December newsletter submissions by November 15
to: westminsternewsletter@gmail.com