



## **PASSION FOR THE CITY; COMPASSION FOR ITS PEOPLE**

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**November 2012**  
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### **“How wonderful** it

would be if we could help our children and grandchildren to learn thanksgiving at an early age. Thanksgiving opens the doors. It changes a child’s personality. A child is resentful, negative—or thankful. Thankful children want to give, they radiate happiness, they draw people.”

- Sir John Templeton

What Templeton says of children is true for all of us. Either we are grateful or grating, thankful or spiteful. Gratitude is the genuine and fitting response to God’s grace. This harvest month of November presents ample opportunity for us to affirm our gratitude for the abundance of God’s blessings. This month we express our thanksgiving in worship.

### **Thanksgiving opens doors**

We practice stewardship by dedicating our financial pledges for 2013. And as all is safely gathered in, we look to the future and walk through the doors that God’s providential care has opened for us •



# PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

By Pastor Jim Reisner

## THE KIND OF KINDNESS JESUS WANTS

When Jesus talks about piety, he is critical of those who pray, or fast, or give alms for show. Instead, Jesus says, do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.

Giving should be second nature, and if we think about it too much or keep score or grade ourselves on our own goodness, we are messing the whole thing up. Jesus cares about motivation. It's not just the action that counts; it's the motive behind the action.

What's the difference, we might ask? Isn't kindness kindness? But I am sure almost all of you can conjure up from your memory a moment when you received help from someone who really needed to help you. Their motivation wasn't so much kindness as having you be aware that they were being kind to you.

One afternoon, a wealthy man was riding in the back of his limousine when he saw two men eating grass by the road side. He ordered his driver to stop and he got out to investigate.

"Why are you eating grass?" he asked one man.

"I don't have any money for food." the poor man replied.

"Oh, come along with me then."

"But sir, I have a wife with two children!"

"Bring them along!", he said to the other man.

They all climbed into the limo and once underway, the poor fellow said, "Sir, you are too kind. Thank you for taking all of us with you."

The lawyer replied, "My pleasure, the grass in my back yard is about two feet tall."

### What's the difference, we might ask?

Sometimes in the practice of being our brothers' keepers, we are more about keeping than we are about kindness. We want to keep the one in need in her place so we can keep helping her and keep feeling good about ourselves.

The good souls who help in the FOCUS Breakfast Club share a common dream. They look forward to the time when they open the doors one early morning to discover that no one is waiting there in need of a meal.

Are we feeding people to feel good about ourselves or are we feeding people to end hunger? Motivation matters ●



# FROM THE THIRD FLOOR

By Andrea Joy Holroyd



## FROM THE THIRD FLOOR

October is a deceptively busy month. Nestled in the calendar after the Back-to-School month of September, and before the busy holiday rush of November and December, October almost seems like it should be a relaxed month, with time to feel settled in the new routine. Many of our youth, though, find themselves having to juggle homework and sports and other extra curricular activities. Our High School Seniors are also in the crunch of figuring out which college programs to apply to; our youngest youth are dealing with friendships that are going through changes. Say a few prayers for all our youth as they go through these transitions in their lives.

At the end of November we will be giving out materials for you to do with your family for the season of Advent. Advent means coming, and there are many activities that you can do to help prepare for the arrival of Jesus on Christmas morning. The youth will be handing out packets during the 2nd hour on November 25th ●





# MUSIC at WESTMINSTER

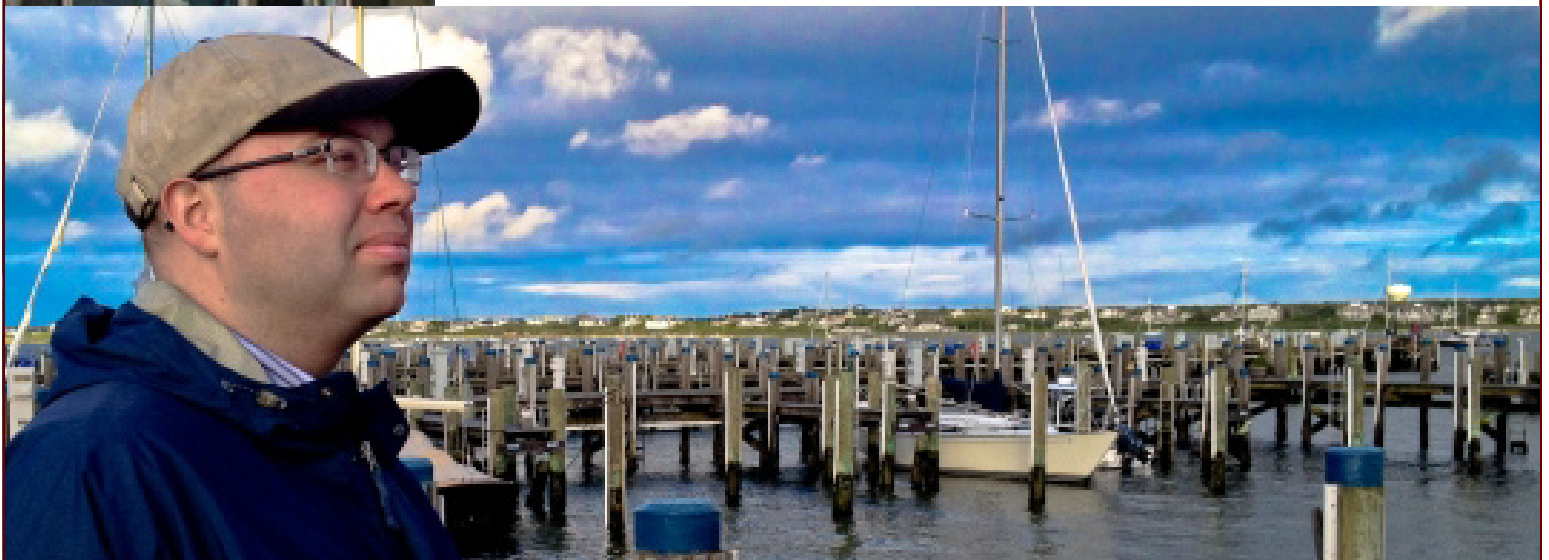
By Sue and Al Fedak

## HARVARD COMPOSER/ORGANIST TO PERFORM AT WPC

Carson Cooman is something of a musical wunderkind. Barely 30 years old, he has already composed and published about 700 musical works, from hymn tunes to operas and symphonies, many of which have been performed and recorded by choirs, orchestras, soloists, and chamber ensembles all over the world. In fact, his works appear on about forty CDs, of which seventeen, on the Naxos label, are devoted entirely to his music. He is also an accomplished performer who specializes in modern organ repertoire. More than 130 compositions have been written expressly for him by over 100 composers around the world (including Al Fedak). Carson has given premiere performances of new works by some of the most distinguished contemporary composers, including Peter Maxwell Davies, Daniel Pinkham, Colin Mawby, and Emma Lou Diemer. He has recorded many of these works himself; his most recent CD, released this past June, is titled *A Marvelous Love: New Music for Organ*.

Born and raised in western New York, Carson Cooman holds degrees from Harvard and from Carnegie Mellon University. For the past several years he has held the position of Composer-in-Residence at Harvard's Memorial Church. For more information about Mr. Cooman and his work, visit [www.carsoncooman.com](http://www.carsoncooman.com).

Carson will perform a recital at Westminster Church on Friday night, November 2, at 7:30 PM. His richly varied program will include music of Åberg, Hovhaness, Vasks, Sandresky, Asplund, and Nagel, as well as pieces by Westminster composers Al Fedak and Iteke Prins. A freewill offering will be received, and refreshments will follow. Do plan to attend, and bring guests! ●







# STEWARDSHIP UPDATE AND NEWSWORTHY NEWS

By Susan Schell

## STEWARDSHIP JOURNEY CONTINUES

We are off and running with continued energy and enthusiasm at Westminster this fall! As we continue our Stewardship Journey, we celebrate Abundant Joy—Overflowing Generosity. We have enjoyed such a rich worship experience, including the annual Kirkin, amazing music including a taste of the hymns from our new hymnal (coming soon) and participation by our visiting missionaries from Ghana. Our Christian Life and Learning program is vibrant from the tiniest tots to adults, mission opportunities are abundant, and the Trustees have worked harder than ever to plan for long term maintenance of our beautiful building.

### Abundant Joy, Overwhelming Generosity

As we enjoy the fruits of all of these activities, we invite you to join us for Stewardship Sunday, November 11, when we will have the opportunity to generously respond to the joy of celebrating our personal faith commitments.

*Susan Schell*  
Stewardship Budget Committee



### NEWLY ELECTED TO SERVE

Congratulations to our new leaders who were nominated and elected to church offices at the congregational meeting on Sunday, October, 21st. Elected as elders are: Fatmata Hilton, Tony Mason, Margaret Randall and Allan Tedrow. Our new deacons are: Sue Barwig, Cindy Falle, Claudia Hartmark, Dodie Seagle and Sarah Sebagala. Coming on to the Board of Trustees are: Kelly Crisfield, Ian McClumpha, Zack Rosenau, Eve Ryan, and Pete Seagle.

After Session approves our new officers' training, the new officers will be ordained and installed on Sunday, January 6, 2013 ●





# SECOND HOUR HISTORICAL SERIES

By David McMillan

## NEW OCCASIONS...NEW DUTIES

The first three Sundays in November, the 4th, 11th and 18th, during Second Hour following worship, David McMillan will present, "New Occasions, New Duties...", an historical survey of the three congregations that formed Westminster.

Second and Third Presbyterian Churches merged into Second Church in 1910. Eight years later, in 1918, when Second had a minister but no coal and State Street had coal but no minister, they merged into the State Street building, but only after Second insisted on a new name for the church - Westminster.

David will focus on the pastorates of William Buell Sprague who served the Second Presbyterian Church from 1829 to 1869, Ezra Abel Huntington who served Third Presbyterian from 1836 until 1854, and Kenneth Brakeley Welles who served Westminster from 1928 until his death, August 21, 1953. He will draw on resources from the New York State Library and the Library of the Albany Institute of History and Art as well as records on deposit in Westminster Church.

None of the buildings of these churches remains today, except for the reconstructed shell of the former State Street Church. Following the merger with State Street, the home of Second Church for more than a century on Chapel Street became a theater, night club, wrestling arena, roller skating rink and finally the Atterbury Playhouse before being torn down. Third's second home on Clinton Square ultimately became the site of the White Tower where generations of Albanians enjoyed coffee and hamburgers after attending The Palace, The Grand or The Strand theaters.



# SECOND HOUR HISTORICAL SERIES cont.

By David McMillan

David invites you to join in recalling the tempestuous beginnings of Third Church when members of First and Second were drawn by the preaching of Homer Cumming, judged to be both a great preacher and insane. When the Presbytery would not accept him into membership, the church became Congregational! This was the history inherited by Rev. Huntington. We will also remember the revolution in Second Church, just as Rev. Sprague arrived, when a large part of the congregation departed to form Fourth Presbyterian!

## We can see the changes in the faith and belief of our church

David also invites you to join him in considering the changes in both faith and practice from the times of the Excising Act of 1837 when several western presbyteries were thrown out of the denomination because of competing forms of revivals and opinions about slavery, until the present when many churches consider departing over issues of ordination and sexuality.

We will also read portions of Rev. Huntington's farewell sermons when he chastised his people for their despondency as the more affluent folk of Albany left Clinton Square and moved west toward the neighborhood where State Street was soon to be established.

By contrasting the Covenant signed by all new members of State Street Church in the nineteenth century and the sermons of Rev. Welles in the twentieth, we can see the changes in the faith and belief of our church.

By the way, David will be grateful if anyone can answer this questions - did Kenneth Welles have a doctoral degree? Everyone called him "Dr. Welles", but none can tell when or where this degree was awarded ●





# MISSION UPDATE

## FOCUS BREAKFAST & EMERGENCY OVERFLOW DINNERS

With the coming of cold nights Westminster opens its doors to people in need with hot meals and a warm place for the night.

The FOCUS breakfast program will shift from Breakfast Express to the Breakfast Club on Tuesday, November 6th, Election Day. Hearty full breakfasts will be served on Tuesdays, Wednesday, and Thursdays in our Assembly Room. If you are interested in volunteering in the ministry of gracious hospitality, you may contact the Rev. Deb Jameson at the FOCUS office, 443-0460.,

For the past ten 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 or to cook a meal for twenty people. Please contact Valerie Shanley, 366-8747, or Martha Reisner, 439-3281, if you can help ●



## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING GOES LOCAL

We have great news concerning our friends at AVillage. Willie White came to Westminster on Sunday, October 21st, to share with the congregation a letter from the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Self-Development of People Fund. The letter confirmed that AVillage will receive a grant of \$20,000 from SDOP for their work of building and transforming community in the South End of Albany.

The Self Development of People Fund is one of the ministries of our denomination supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing offering that we receive each year on Palm Sunday. How wonderful it is to see our mission dollars going to such an inspiring and deserving use ●



# USHERS for NOVEMBER

WESTMINSTER  
CHURCH

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

Date:	Ushers:
November 4	Tim & Lisa Dodman, Maxine Quaye
November 11	David Hershey, Bob Stone, Allan & Mary Jean Tedrow
November 18	Arden Leach, Eve Ryan, Alex & Andrew Scaptura
November 25	John Bojnowski, Carol Bromley, Tony Mason, Marie McClumpha

## THANK YOU

I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to the congregation of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York where I have now been a pastor for ten years. During the reception on October 21st, I heard many kind and gracious words from you about this past decade. I want to let you all know how much I enjoy being your pastor, and how honored I feel to be working for and living in the community of faith which is Westminster. On behalf of Martha, Joseph, and Charlie, I say thank you for your love and support.

With love,  
*Jim*

# NOVEMBER HAPPY BIRTH DAY

## 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 ●

# GOD IN OUR COMMUNITY

## NEIL BRESLIN TO SPEAK AT THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Our annual Thanksgiving Interfaith Service takes place this year at Trinity United Methodist Church on Lark Street on the evening of Tuesday, November 20th at 7:30 pm. New York State Senator Neil D. Breslin will be our speaker. This Thanksgiving tradition dates back to the 1920's when damaging fires caused Trinity, First Unitarian Universalist Society, and Westminster to nest at Congregation Beth-Emeth while their sanctuaries were repaired. The four congregations have joined together at Thanksgiving time ever since •

## CRTC CLASSES

*Joan Chittister: Equipping Ourselves for Social Change*, Nov. 9, 7-8:30pm & Nov. 10, 9am-4pm, *Niskayuna Reformed Church*, A simulcast partnership with Trinity Wall Street. Come make the connection between contemplation and social action with this distinguished speaker. \$105. Discounts don't apply, but scholarships are available! Register NOW!

*Matthew Fox* coming April 19-21, 2013! Watch for details! Register online at [www.crtc.org](http://www.crtc.org) or by phone at 518-462-2470 •

## Worship and Second Hours:

**NOVEMBER 4** All Saints' Day with Communion  
I Corinthians 15:52-59 *An Unquenchable Trust*  
2nd Hour: New Occasions, New Duties, Part 1 David McMillan

**NOVEMBER 11** Stewardship Sunday  
II Corinthians 8:1-7 *Generosity Overflowing*  
2nd Hour: New Occasions, New Duties, Part 2 David McMillan

**NOVEMBER 18** Thanksgiving Sunday with Confirmation  
I Kings 17:8-24 *And Then What?*  
2nd Hour: New Occasions, New Duties, Part 3 David McMillan

**NOVEMBER 25** St. Andrew's Day  
John 1:35-42 *Andrew the Apostle*  
2nd Hour: TBA

# NOVEMBER CHURCH CALENDAR

11  
20  
12

## NOVEMBER

1

6:30 pm Youth Choir  
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

2

7:30 pm Organ Concert

3

5:00 pm African Family Night

### 4 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship & Communion  
11:15 am Bell Choir  
11:15 am New Occasions, New Duties  
11:15 am Church School

6

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

7

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
7:00 pm Christian Life and Learning

8

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
6:30 pm Youth Choir  
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

10

9:00 am Confirmation Retreat

### 11 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Bell Choir  
11:15 am New Occasion, New Duties  
11:15 am Church School  
7:00 pm Youth Group

12

Office Closed

13

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
6:00 pm Session & Deacons' Dinner  
7:00 pm Deacons' Meeting  
7:00 pm Session Meeting

14

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

15

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
6:30 pm Youth Choir  
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

### 18 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Bell Choir  
11:15 am Adult Education  
11:15 am Church School

20

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
7:00 pm Thanksgiving Service  
7:00 pm Trustees' Meeting

21

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

22

Office Closed  
7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

23

Office Closed

### 25 SUNDAY

10:00 am Worship  
11:15 am Bell Choir  
11:15 am TBA

26

7:00 pm Mission Committee

27

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

28

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast

29

7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast  
6:30 pm Youth Choir  
7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal





## Westminster Presbyterian Church

85 Chestnut Street  
Albany, New York 12210

## Westminster Presbyterian Church

**CHURCH OFFICE- November Hours**

9 am- 3 pm Monday-Friday

Phone: 518.436.8544

**Pastor:** James L. Reisner

**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

**Director of Christian Education:** Andrea Joy Holroyd

**Administrative Secretary:** Nancy J. Sokil

**Sextons:** Glenda Bennett, Joy Tallmadge

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Send submissions to: [westminsternewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:westminsternewsletter@gmail.com)**