



# THE WESTMINSTER MESSENGER

Westminster Presbyterian Church • 262 State Street • Albany • New York • [www.wpcalbany.org](http://www.wpcalbany.org)

## October 2015

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### OCTOBER BEGINS...

October begins with World Communion.

Perhaps our faith today must begin with the world -

- with Christians killed for their faith,
- with refugees fleeing wars that never end,
- with leaders who, quite simply, don't know what to do.

October begins with World Communion.

Perhaps we should begin - together -

- with a bit of bread and the cup -
- with prayer -
- and, by the grace of God, with hope. ●



# Pastoral Reflections

Pastor Jim Reisner

You may remember the author, Robert Fulghum, popular a generation ago. A former minister, he wrote about life's lessons in a style filled with humor and insight. All of his books have long and odd titles. His first and best-known book was entitled, "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten". The title of his second book was even more odd-- "It Was On Fire When I Lay Down On It". That title, Fulghum tells us, was taken from a newspaper story he read. Seems a small town fire department was summoned one day to a house from which smoke was pouring. The firemen broke into the house and found a smoldering bed with a man sound asleep on it. After rescuing the man and dousing the fire, the obvious question was asked. *"How did the mattress catch on fire?"* The man responded, *"I don't know. It was on fire when I laid down on it."*

Let's fess up. At one time or another, all of us have carelessly and willfully jumped into a hole not knowing its depth. For most of us, that depth turned out to be no more than a misstep in a pothole, and we have gone on unaffected by it. For others, that hole turned out to be an abyss into which their lives went into free fall sometimes for years.

**"Sometimes folks lay down right on the fire, but they are still in need of saving."**

Sometimes folks lay down right on the fire, but they are still in need of saving. We enter into dangerous territory when we begin to decide who is worthy of our charity, and who is not.

Barbara Brown Taylor has written, *"Jesus has a relatively easy time with sinners. Their hearts are already broken, so it is not hard for him to get inside. But the righteous are like vaults. They are so full of their precious values and so defended against those who do not share them that even the dynamite of the gospel has little effect on them."*

*"The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."*

Psalm 51:17



# International Mission & Annual African Family Night

## IN AFRICA: WPC Supports Individual Children and School Buildings

The African Ministries Committee has allocated all of \$21,450 given to the Committee in 2015 to projects in West Africa (40 percent from the Church Mission Budget & 60 percent from other sources.) It is evaluating field reports and collecting information on emerging needs in current projects.

Known priorities for money raised for African Family Night on November 7:

- Support our 11 Ebola orphans at the same level as was done for five months with a \$2,000 grant from the National Peace Corps Association. See new picture of Baby Princess, our Ebola orphan lost six relatives to Ebola in one week.
- Solar lights (available for \$100 each) for current partners who need light at night to illuminate a classroom at night or to deliver a baby. See light pictured in September Messenger.
- Money to address overcrowding at Hope Mission School in Liberia, completed in 2014. Only school within 5 miles walking district for many children.
- Items we need for \$175 container to be shipped in mid-January to Hope Mission School for distribution in Spring 2016 by WPC team led by John Kucij, Lyn Kucij, and Felicia Kollie-Gambles. •





# Children & Youth 20s & 30s , Volunteers

## CHILDREN'S WORSHIP PLUS

Once a month, children through 6th grade leave worship for their own special program in the chapel. We call it Worship Plus. They learn about worship, faith in Jesus, and special times in the church year. After Worship Plus, they can go right upstairs to their classes for Big Group/Small Group. This fall, the Worship Plus dates are:

- October 18th
- November 8th
- December 6th

## YOUTH WORSHIP SERVICE

Who put the kids in charge?? We did!

We are letting the children and youth loose to have their own worship service. October 25th at 7 pm in the Chapel, children and youth of all ages, will come together with songs and scripture. We might even put a skit together on the spot. Come be a part of the fun!

## 20S AND 30S BRUNCH

Let's go out after church! We usually gather after church (around 11:30) and walk to one of the fine establishments in our vicinity for sustenance and refreshment. Mark your calendar for the 20s and 30s Brunch this fall:

- October 11th
- November 15th
- December 13th

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE EMERGENCY OVERFLOW HOMELESS SHELTER

The Emergency Overflow Homeless Shelter, operated by the Capital Area Council of Churches at First Lutheran Church in Albany, will open its doors again for the season in November to serve up to 19 men each night. Westminster provides volunteer services on Sundays throughout the cold season. Volunteers serve on a rotating schedule. There are two great options for getting involved in this ministry of service:

- Provide on-site hospitality. Join the team of WPC volunteers who provide hospitality to Shelter guests on Sunday evenings. For more information or to sign-up for this role, please contact Valerie Shanley at (518) 366-8747 or [vshanley@nycap.rr.com](mailto:vshanley@nycap.rr.com)
- Prepare nourishing dinners. WPC volunteers team up to prepare meals for delivery to the Shelter on Sunday evenings. To get involved, please contact Diana Maiwald Wight at (518) 621-7154 or [dzyee2@aol.com](mailto:dzyee2@aol.com)\*

\*Sign-up sheets will also be placed on a bulletin board in the Chestnut Street hallway area\* •



# Session

## REPORT FROM SESSION

You are invited to read the minutes from our monthly Session meetings posted in the Chestnut Street hallway after they are approved each month.

Session typically meets once in the summer, and this year we met in July and then September 8. At the September meeting we were happy to approve a baptism of Narkey Ejiroghene Amoyaw, son of Addy Amoyaw and Victoria Obinije, born February 15, 2015. We also welcomed back Pastor Rosenau from her maternity leave. Baby Walden attended his first Session meeting. We heard reports that church school begins September 20 and that the ECHO cluster is very busy working on developing our new web site and getting the word out about many events and activities. We also acknowledged the fine work of our departing Administrative Assistant Kristen Southworth over the past year and look forward to welcoming Jennifer Schoenfisch as the new Assistant in the church office.

Kelly Crisfield, Chair and one of the Trustee representatives of the Stewardship Budget Cluster, distributed the latest draft of the 2016 budget and reviewed modifications to the draft since our July meeting. The draft will be presented to Trustees at their meeting next week, and a preliminary report that is a first reading of the budget will take place during second hour on September 27. This provides an opportunity for congregational input. Budget approval will take place at our October Session meeting. In addition, the Nominating committee will provide a preliminary report on the slate of officers for 2016 after the church service on September 27. During the Congregational Meeting on November 1 we will present the adopted 2016 budget and hold the election of church officers. The Stewardship Budget Cluster has requested that a separate Income Generation Group be formed.

The Board of Trustees works hard all year long to not only maintain but enhance the look of our building, and at our July meeting we passed a motion to commend the Trustees, especially Forrest Holroyd, for their efforts. Representatives from Session and Trustees are attending each other's meetings to keep communication flowing between the two boards. ●

# Westminster Performs!

## DUO MYDO - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7:30 PM

The Swiss/Scottish musical ensemble, Duo MyDo (Douglas Bruce, organist, and Myriam Hidber Dickinson, flutist), will perform a concert at Westminster Church on Friday, October 23, at 7:30 PM. Douglas and Myriam are no strangers to Westminster: this will be Myriam's second appearance here and Douglas's third since our Skinner organ was restored in 2003. But it will also mark the pair's final concert here before Douglas retires from his busy schedule of touring on the international circuit. Mr. Bruce, born in the Scottish city of Perth, grew up in Edinburgh, trained as an organist in Liverpool, and pursued a career in international banking in Switzerland before returning to the organ in 2001. He now lives in Germany. Myriam Dickinson studied at the Zurich Conservatory, and has taught and/or performed in Switzerland, Brazil, Italy, Austria, France, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Egypt, the US, Indonesia, and Angola. She teaches at several schools in the Zurich area.

The duo's October 23 concert promises to be most enjoyable, and will feature colorful works by both Johann and C. P. E. Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Franck, Reger, Rheinberger, and others. Admission is free, an offering will be received, and refreshments will follow. Don't miss this final chance to hear this talented pair! •



## INTERFAITH CHORAL CONCERT - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 4:00 PM

On Sunday afternoon, November 8, the Choir of Westminster Church will join forces with Congregation Beth Emeth's Professional Choir in a program featuring musical settings of Old Testament texts, selections from the Jewish High Holy Day liturgies, and Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, accompanied by organ, harp, and percussion. Sue Fedak will conduct. The special guest performer will be Cantor Glenn Groper, who will be retiring from Beth Emeth next spring. Come, enjoy the music!•





# FOCUS News

## FOCUS NEWS

The FOCUS Winter Breakfast Program will open for the season on Election Day, November 3, 2015. This program is hosted by Westminster Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the cold weather. It serves anyone who



**FOCUS**  
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

wishes to enjoy the best breakfast in town. It happens because of the volunteers who are willing to get up a little earlier than usual to cook and serve the food, wash the dishes, and chat with the guests.

The breakfast operates 7:00- 9:00 am. Volunteers are on duty 6:30 - 9:15 am. If you wish to help out, please contact Belinda Quaye at the FOCUS office 443-0460. ●

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## JOHN WALKER, ORGANIST - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 7:30 PM

John Walker, current President of the American Guild of Organists, will perform a recital at Westminster church on Friday, November 20. A longtime friend of Al and Sue Fedak, John has held organist positions at Manhattan's Riverside Church, Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh and Brown Memorial Church in Baltimore, and has taught at Manhattan School of Music, Duquesne University, San Jose State University, and Peabody Conservatory. He has performed widely throughout the world, and has trained many of today's leading organists. In addition to works by Bach, Franck, and Schumann, his concert at Westminster will include works by several American composers. The event is co-sponsored by the Eastern NY Chapter of the AGO. Mark the date and plan to attend! ●







## THANK YOU! by Arthur Fullerton

When you were a child did you learn to say thank you? I remember my Mom reminding me, “Tell her, thank you”, whenever someone did something nice for me. We train our children to be grateful, because as Shakespeare said in King Lear, “Turn all her mother’s pains and benefits to laughter and contempt, that she may feel ... How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is to have a thankless child.” Gratitude and gratefulness are praised in the Bible as the proper response to the generosity of God and to the generosity of others.

In Mark 12:41-44 we learn Jesus’s attitude toward generosity and gratitude: “Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’ “

When Jesus pointed out the generosity of the widow, His point was not only the generosity of the giver, but more importantly Jesus explained to his disciples the importance of being grateful for the smallest acts of generosity.

Have you ever made a list of the people and things you are grateful for?

Do you write letters of gratitude thanking people and institutions for their kindness to you?

Making the practice of gratitude a daily part of our life seems like extra work, yet scientific studies show that practicing gratitude leads to happier, healthier lives.

Gratitude is a recognition of our dependence on others. When we recognize our dependence on God, we acknowledge that our accomplishments are only made possible because of God’s gifts to us. A life of genuine gratitude is a life enmeshed with others, dependent on others, and dependent on God. Practice gratitude, it will change your life. ●

Jennifer Schoenfisch is our new Administrative Assistant. She will be working Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 5:00, and Fridays from 9:00 until 12:30. The Church Office will be closed on Mondays and will be open from 9:00 until 12:30 on Wednesdays.

Jennifer also works for the Albany Presbytery at their office in First United Presbyterian Church in Troy. Let’s show Jennifer a warm Westminster welcome.

Church Office Hours: Monday - Office Closed  
Tuesday - 9:00 - 5:00  
Wednesday - 9:00 - 12:30  
Thursday - 9:00 - 5:00  
Friday - 9:00 - 12:30



# Mission

HELP SUPPORT CHILDREN WHO NEED SAFE WATER, FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE & BASIC EDUCATION

- **October 17** at Westminster: “International Mission: Benefits and Lessons Learned,” 5 to 8:30 p.m. Free-will offering for meal. RSVP by October 15 to [info@wpcalbany.org](mailto:info@wpcalbany.org). Keynote speaker: Colleen Dundas, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer - Malawi 2013-15 and ; University at Albany School of Public Health, Master’s International Candidate - 2016. Ms. Dundas and the members of the panel will encourage members of the audience to exchange ideas on how to involve the community in sponsoring addition projects in developing countries.
- **November 1** at Schuyler, 2 pm - 4:30 pm: This fall Westminster has established contact with the Graduate School Council of the University at Albany to assess Schuyler needs. It is seeking help from volunteers and shoppers for this crafts and Bingo party. Contact [LWilson502@aol.com](mailto:LWilson502@aol.com) or the Church office if you would to volunteer. Unused Bingo prizes will go to the Kid’s Club Supplies Corner open three times a week to serve Schuyler residents.
- **November 7**, 5 to 8:30 p.m. African Family Night at Westminster. RSVP by November 5 to [info@wpcalbany.org](mailto:info@wpcalbany.org) Committee chair: Gabriel Ofori-Okai. Head Chef: Sabina Ofori Okai. Keynote speaker: Hon. Kathy Sheehan, Mayor of Albany.
- **The Liberia Trip Support Team** will seek community donations for a container to be shipped early in 2016. School supplies, gently used books, dental supplies, cloth bags, solar lights for the Hope Mission School, T-shirts for individual children, reading glasses, basic medical supplies, and Hand Turbine AM/FM Weather Radios (with solar panel, cell phone charger, flashlight) will be among the items in the container.







# Worship & Second Hours

## WORSHIP & SECOND HOURS

### Sunday, October 4

### *World Communion*

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation  
10:00 Worship  
Pastor Reisner leading worship  
2nd Hour: Reception in honor of Anne Older

Isaiah 56:1-8  
"Woven Together"

### Sunday, October 11

### *Healing Service*

9:00 - Bible Study and Worship Preparation  
10:00 Worship  
Pastor Reisner leading worship  
2nd Hour: Healing Stories, a conversation led by Pastor Reisner

II Kings 5:1-19  
"The Low and the Mighty" -

### Sunday, October 18

9:00 - Bible Study and Worship Preparation  
10:00 Worship  
Pastor Rosenau leading worship  
2nd Hour: Texts and Tunes, led by Al Fedak

Isaiah 53:4-12  
"What's All This About?"

### Sunday, October 25

### *Reformation Sunday*

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation  
10:00 Worship  
Pastor Reisner leading worship  
2nd Hour: African Summit  
1:00 Prayer in the African Way

Habakkuk 2:1-4; Romans 1:16-17; 3:22-31  
"Justified"

### Sunday, November 1

### *All Saints' Day*

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation  
10:00 Worship  
Pastor Reisner leading worship  
2nd Hour: Congregational Meeting, Election of officers •

Romans 14:7-12  
"We Are the Lord's"









# WESTMINSTER

— Presbyterian Church —

## Westminster Presbyterian Church

### CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9 am- 5 pm Tuesday & Thursday; Wed. & Friday 9 am- 12:30 pm  
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

**Office Administrator:** Jennifer Schoenfisch

**Church School Assistant Coordinator:** Belinda Quaye

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

