



THE WESTMINSTER MESSENGER

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

Summer 2015

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“Summertime, and the Living Is Easy!”

But, is living ever easy? Recently a friend took one of those elegant river cruises offered on “Masterpiece Theater”. When she and her partner arrived on board, they were told the river was low and the boat could go nowhere.

Is living ever easy?

We gather, every summer Sunday -

the first Sundays with friends of the FOCUS churches
and all other summer Sundays at Westminster -
men, women and children dreaming of the easy life while dealing with
boats stuck in rivers without water!

COME, JOIN US! •

Pastoral Reflections

Pastor Jim Reisner

I WONDER

The Memorial Day Parade goes right by our house. As we watched this year, there came hundreds of soccer players, Little Leaguers in their uniforms, Brownies and Girl Scouts. A pick-up high school band belted out Sousa marches while a pipe and drum corps chased our dog into the house and behind the sofa.

We applauded them all until the fire engines signaled the end, and people went home.

Life is hard, harder than we want to admit. We need to find our affirmations wherever we can. Sometimes I think Westminster folk ought to stand on State Street and applaud people as they head for work, “Well done!”

“Does God give out standing ovations?”

Is it too fanciful to think God gives out standing ovations, that in the silence of our unacknowledged good deeds we might hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant”? Or maybe we might represent God, applauding the simple, noble and gracious acts that make our world a better place.



Sundays at Westminster

Worship at 9:30
Communion every Sunday

Sunday, July 5

9:30 Worship

FOCUS Worship

at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday, July 12

9:30 Worship

Jim Reisner leading worship

Ecclesiastes 9:17 - 10:1

“A Fly in the Ointment”

Sunday, July 19

9:30 Worship

Jim Reisner leading worship

Family outing to the State Museum following worship

Matthew 7:13-23

“Wolves in Sheep’s Clothing”

Sunday, July 26

9:30 Worship

Andrea Holroyd leading worship

Sunday, August 2

9:30 Worship

FOCUS Worship

at Emmanuel Baptist

Sunday, August 9

9:30 Worship

David McMillan leading worship

Sunday, August 16

9:30 Worship

Paul Randall leading worship

Sunday, August 23

9:30 Worship

Peter Durkee and Pastor Reisner leading worship

Sunday, August 30

9:30 Worship

Pastor Reisner leading worship

Jeremiah 13:20-27

“Can a Leopard Change His Spots?”

Sunday, September 6

9:30 Worship

FOCUS Worship

at Trinity United Methodist



FOCUS

CHURCHES OF ALBANY

Summer

Worship Schedule

First Presbyterian in Albany

Sunday, July 5 @ 9:30 am

Emmanuel Baptist

Sunday, August 2 @ 9:30 am

Trinity United Methodist

Sunday, Sept. 6 @ 9:30 am

Children & Youth

WE ARE GRATEFUL

At each baptism, we stand and make a promise: “We, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture those being baptized, by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them to know and follow Christ and to be faithful members of his church.”

Some of us are called to nurture children through teaching and leading in the educational ministries at Westminster. We are grateful for the commitment of Lynne McKee, Shirley Diven, Christabel Abban, Cindy Dwyer, Sue Fedak, Martha Reisner, Sue Schell, Hannah Ohemaa-Takyi, Martinson Owusu, Sheila Wrede, Tom Norman, David Hershey, John Bossung, Willie White, Valerie Shanley, Alex Scaptura, and Andy Scaptura.

WESTMINSTER’S GRADUATING SENIORS

We celebrate the faith and accomplishments of our high school seniors as they take the next step in their journey: Andrew Wrede, Channelle Ndagire, Kate Gallagher and James Josiah.

WPC YOUTH WIN \$3,000 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SCHOLARSHIPS

The Capital Area Council of Churches presented two \$3,000 Martin Luther Jr. Scholarships at its June 8 Spring Assembly. Both of the winners are members of Westminster Presbyterian Church -- James Josiah and Channelle Ndagire. ●



... and Speaking of Music

FIRST FRIDAY SAX APPEAL!

On Friday evening, August 7, at 7:00 PM, Westminster Church will host a very special (and unusual) concert by the Decho Ensemble, a quartet of professional saxophonists who perform classical music on historic instruments. The group plays saxophones which are replicas of instruments built in the 1800s—instruments which project a uniquely warm and homogenous sound.

Founded in 2011 by saxophonists Sarah Marchitelli and Jacob Swanson, the Decho Ensemble has performed throughout the Northeast, and has been heard on television and radio throughout North America and Europe. Critics have praised the group's "blend and precision," and hailed them as a "winning combination in every way!" Their Westminster program will include music by Bach, Singelée, Philip Glass, Daniel Knorr, and Saratoga Springs composer Michael Lanci, who will be in attendance that evening. You can hear a sample of their outstanding music-making on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9EAvo17MjQ>

We are indeed fortunate to be able to host this outstanding ensemble. Admission to the concert is free, and a freewill offering will be received.

August 7 is a First Friday in downtown Albany—an evening full of special events at various nearby galleries, restaurants, and concert venues. Why not take it all in? Art, dinner and a concert: the makings of a perfect midsummer evening!





FOCUS
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

“to everything there is a season.
A time and place for everything
under heaven...”

Ecclesiastes 3

To the FOCUS Congregations

Dear Friends,

Today I share with you my intention to bring my work with FOCUS Churches of Albany to a close. With God’s help, I have determined it is now time for me to move on to the next step in my journey.

Since 1999 I have been blessed with the most meaningful and challenging work of my career so far. It has been a calling, my life’s work in this time and place, and I have been honored and privileged to have walked with you in this shared life called FOCUS.

I will leave fulfilled in the knowledge that together we have accomplished a significant piece in our common ministries. We received the mantle from ecumenical visionaries and created a faith based nonprofit organization that lives out of a mission of hospitality, mercy, advocacy and justice. It is a hybrid ministry that continues to be an ongoing experiment of living God’s reign together.

There are many FOCUS chapters ahead and I truly believe God is with you and blesses you with all good things as you continue this gift called FOCUS.

I will be transitioning from FOCUS at the end of the year. The specifics of next steps are both nebulous and clear—I look forward to what God has for me next. I hope to see you around as I plan to stay put and work and play in the Capital Area.

We are on the journey together. Know that you have blessed me and have been to me a great community of support, challenge and care.

Sincerely, with gratitude and love,

Rev. Debra Jameson •

... to the
FOCUS
Congre-
gations



Mission in Albany's South End

MISSION IN ALBANY'S SOUTH END

AVillage..., Inc., is hosting Westminster youth and adults for a three-day mission trip to the South End June 29, 30, and July 1, working on community gardens and helping at a field day and cookout at Ezra Prentice Homes. But there are plenty of opportunities year-round for volunteers who want to get involved in the South End community.

Creating new gardens and recreation spaces in a neighborhood that has more than its share of vacant lots is an on-going activity that requires a range of skills. Ezra Prentice, the public housing project on the far southern edge of the city that is best known these days because of the oil trains in its backyard, has 150 children under the age of 14, and AVillage has started a new literacy and youth activity program with residents. Volunteers can help with homework and reading programs or participate in games and sports activities.

AVillage members meet every Thursday at 5:30 and all are welcome. This is where we discuss the issues of the day and make our plans, and visitors are always welcome.

For information, contact Elder Willie White ((518) 859-4305), or Tom McPheeters ((518) 433-0679) or Tim Dodman, or see any of us at church. ●

AFRICAN MINISTRIES COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Volunteers are needed to help with planning and promoting three activities. Contact the church office or Lois Wilson if you willing to distribute "Save the Date Flyers" or assist with planning.

1. **Saturday, October 17 dinner program**, 5 to 9 pm, "International Mission: Benefits and Lessons Learned". Special invitations will be sent to Presbyterian congregations that have sponsored Mission Trips and to Westminster's African partners.
2. **Sunday, November 7, African Family Night**, 5 pm to 9 pm. Chair, Gabriel Ofori-Okai. We are seeking volunteers to promote the program and to highlight ongoing committee mission projects in Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.
3. **2016 Mission Trip to West Africa**, led by Pastor Jim Reisner. The goal is to announce specific trip details in Fall 2015, including the estimated per person cost. Preliminary details will be discussed with those interested.

SUNDAY FAMILY OUTING TO NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM - July 19

A number of Westminster families have expressed interest in learning more about State Museum activities. After the coffee hour on July 19, Ruthanne Brod will talk about the State Museum and answer questions about exhibits and activities of particular interest to children and youth. A simple meal (make-a-sandwich or bring your own food) will follow. Interested families, who are asked to arrange for their transportation, will head for the Museum (which is free) about 12:15 pm. ●

JULY into AUGUST CALENDAR

2015

JULY 1

7:30 am FOCUS Express
Serving Albany- Youth Mission

3

Office Closed

4

Fourth of July

SUNDAY July 5

9:30 am FOCUS Worship
at First Presbyterian Church

6

7:30 am FOCUS Express

8

7:30 am FOCUS Express

SUNDAY July 12

9:30 am Worship

14

7:30 am FOCUS Express
7:00 pm Session

15

7:30 am FOCUS Express

16

7:00 pm Center Square Assoc.

SUNDAY July 19

9:30 am Worship

21

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Compassionate Friends

22

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Mission

SUNDAY July 26

9:30 am Worship
1:00 pm Prayer
in the African Way

28

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi

29

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi

SUNDAY August 2

9:30 am FOCUS Worship
at Emmanuel Baptist

4

7:30 am FOCUS Express

5

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Christian Life & Learning

7

7:00 pm First Friday
Saxophone Quartet

AUGUST

SUNDAY August 9

9:30 am Worship

11

6:30 pm Tai Chi

12

6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Pine Bush Dinner

SUNDAY August 16

9:30 am Worship

17-19

Building Closed
for floor maintenance

SUNDAY August 23

9:30 am Worship

24

5:00 pm Albany Soul Cafe

25

6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Session

26

6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 pm Mission
7:00 pm Christian Life & Learning

SUNDAY August 30

9:30 am Worship

1:00 pm Prayer
in the African Way

SEPTEMBER

1

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi

2

7:30 am FOCUS Express
6:30 pm Tai Chi

SUNDAY September 6

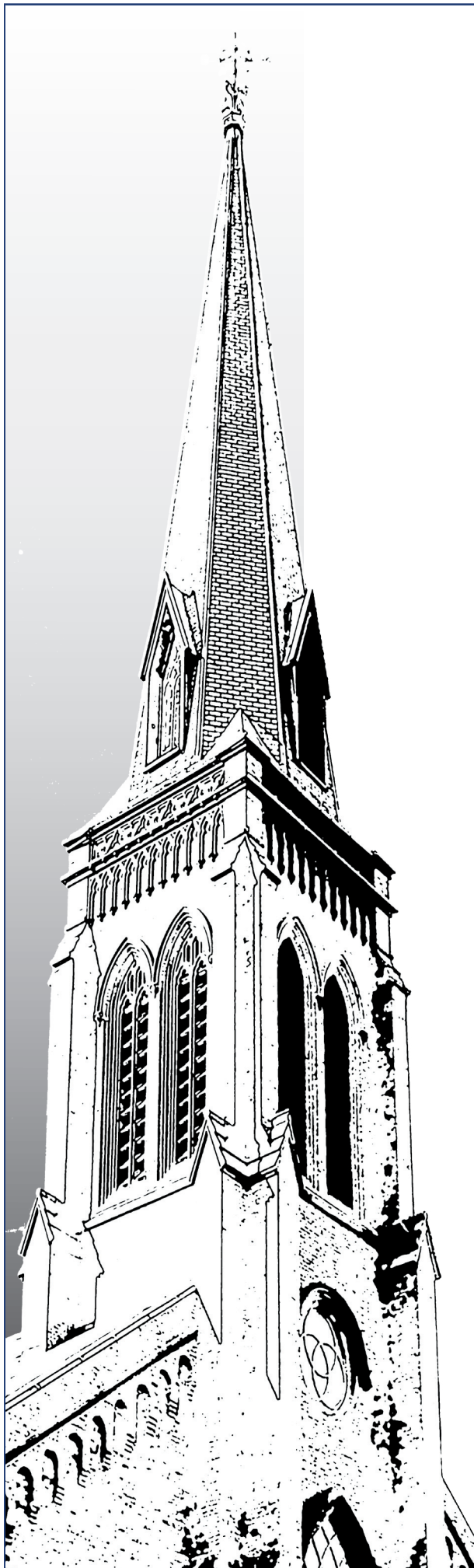
9:30 am FOCUS Worship
at Trinity United Methodist

September 7- Labor day

Office Closed

Save the Date:

September 13th- Kirkin'



Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9 am- 4 pm Monday-Friday

Phone: 518.436.8544

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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