

Dear Friends, Lent • 2019

As of Ash Wednesday, March 6, we will be in the church season of Lent once again. We associate Lent with a time to give something up, or perhaps a time to re-try our New Year's resolutions. But Lent is more than giving up just for the sake of giving it up. It is not suffering a little loss to show our appreciation of what Jesus suffered for us.

Repentance means not just turning from bad behavior but also turning toward good or Godly behavior. So too, Lent is replacing what you give up with something that draws you closer to Christ's purpose in your life, as an individual or a church. One way to think of the 40 days of Lent is that it is roughly a gift of 10%, or a tithe, of the year. And like any gift we give to God, we expect it to be used to spread the love and grace of Jesus.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, and in a blog or two during Lent, I will share thoughts on keeping a holy Lent in our individual lives. There will be some things to give up or turn from and some things to take on or turn toward. In this article I want us to think about the congregation itself as a body, and consider what this body can turn from and turn towards. All relate to things that get said in churches which can have a limiting impact on church life.

First, give up the phrase "someone should." It may sound like someone is pointing out a concern for the church. But too often it also means "I'm letting myself off the hook." Replace it, instead, with "what can I do."

Next, give up the attitude of "Don't rock the boat." Nobody wants to upset others unnecessarily. We also need to remember that the only time boats don't rock is if they are on land, not going anywhere. Replace it with "Real boats rock," and then enjoy the journey and the occasional turbulent times. Reduce the times you fall back only on "what worked before," which causes us to mistake a means for an end. Replace it with "what means do we need to use now to accomplish the same calling of Christ." Give up "They don't listen to my/our opinions," with "What is Christ trying to tell me/us."

And of course, we've already begun the effort to give up only saying "We are a welcoming church." We've been learning what it means to say "We are first an inviting and then a welcoming church." Our goal is for all of us to feel comfortable inviting someone to join us in worship on Easter.

Peace, Pastor Bill

	io ide	as for Keeping a Holy Lent
	Day 1:	Check out the Daily Devotion on the church's Facebook page
	Day 2:	Invite a friend to share these ideas with
V	Day 3:	Don't turn on the car radio
1	Day 4:	Put aside money for One Great Hour of Sharing
77		(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus
	Day 5:	Take 5 minutes of silence at noon
	Day 6:	Look out the window until you find something of beauty you had not noticed before
\Box	Day 7:	Give 5 items of clothing to Goodwill or similar charity
7	Day 8:	No complaining day
4	Day 9:	Do someone else's chore
77	Day 10:	Buy \$5 fast food gift cards to give to homeless people you encounter or places helping the homeless
	,	(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus
	Day 11:	Call an old friend
\Box	Day 12:	Pray the Paper (pray for people and situations in today's news)
N	Day 13:	Read Psalm 139
	Day 14:	Pay a few sincere compliments
7	Day 15:	Make your day snark-free
Λ	Day 16:	Explore the work of the Presbyterian Church USA here: www.presbyterianmission.org
	Day 10.	(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus
	Day 17:	Forgive someone
7	Day 17:	Internet diet
N	Day 19:	
	-	Change one light in your house to an LED bulb
A	Day 20:	Pray for your enemies.
	Day 21:	Ask for help
	Day 22:	Tell someone what you are grateful for
7	Day 224	(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus.
N	Day 23:	Introduce yourself to a neighbor
	Day 24:	Read Psalm 121
A	Day 25:	Bake a cake
	Day 26:	No shopping day
	Day 27:	Walk, carpool, bike or bus it
7	Day 28:	Share a prayer with someone
N		(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus
4	Day 29:	Write a thank you note to your favorite teacher
	Day 30:	Invest in canvas shopping bags
Λ	Day 31:	Make 10 people smile today
	Day 32:	Donate art supplies to your local elementary school
	Day 33:	Read John 8:1-11
	Day 34:	Worship at a friend's mosque, synagogue or church and look for the beauty
N		(Sunday) Give thanks for the love of Jesus
4	Day 35:	Confess a secret
	Day 36:	No sugar day - where else is there sweetness in your life?
Ā	Day 37:	Put aside more for the One Great Hour of Sharing
	Day 38:	Educate yourself about a person who is a good role model
	Day 39:	Pray for peace
	Day 40:	Pray for your enemies (you probably have new ones by now) then decide which
ALC: UNKNOWN BEING	,	



Lenten Study Opportunity

Wednesdays at Noon, starting March 13

You're invited to share in a 6 session Lenten study on "Acceptable Faithfulness." Old Testament prophets often scolded the people who thought if they merely followed rituals, God would be satisfied. But God looks at our faithful behavior as well. Using Old Testament passages, the study will look at the acceptable faithfulness as we:

- voice gratitude
- take the long view
- choose well
- accept responsibility
- · welcome the future and
- trust God in times of conflict

Bring a brown bag lunch. If interested, contact Rev. Paul Randall, randallpaul@ymail.com or 518-269-4382.

Join Us for Our Ash Wednesday Service:

March 6 at 7:30 pm

Join us for readings, time for reflection, hymns and imposition of ashes.

Maundy Thursday Service A Celebration of Sacramental Meals:

April 18 at 7:30 pm

Join us in the Assembly Hall on Maundy Thursday, 7:30 pm on April 18. Through scripture, song and reflection, we will look at the special and sacramental meals in the Bible. Each of these add a dimension of meaning to communion. These include:

- A Meal of the Forgiven: The Feast of Joseph and His Brothers
- Passover, a Meal for Remembrance
- The Feast on the Mountain, Isaiah's prophecy of the meals in God's kingdom
- The Triumphant Wedding Feast Revelation's image of Christ as the Bride groom hosting the celebration of his union with the church
- Jesus Eating with Tax Collectors and Sinners showing the radical hospitality offered by Jesus
- The Last Supper

We will share in communion around tables as Jesus did with his followers at the Last Supper.

Good Friday Service - "Faces at the Cross"

April 19 at 7:30 pm

Join with us April 19 at 7:30 pm for our Good Friday Service. Narrative selections from those present at the Last Supper, the arrest, trial and crucifixion will combine with music and prayer to explore the meaning of Christ's death. Speakers will represent the owner of the upper room; a servant girl from the courtyard; Barabbas the thief; Simon from Cyrene along the path to Calvary; a Roman soldier at the foot of the cross; and Mary the mother of Jesus. The service will end with a period of darkness before departing.

Now That the CAT Is Out of the Bag

As has been reported, we have the results of the CAT survey in a "Vital Signs" report. The first step in sharing this and beginning to get the congregation's input and help was the Jan. 19 "So What Workshop." About 41 members took part in the workshop. Some arrived late; some left early.

People were divided and seated at nine tables. Eight groups were assigned a survey finding involving church life: Hospitality, Morale, Conflict Management, Governance, Spiritual Vitality, Readiness for Ministry, Engagement in Education, and Worship and Music.

The ninth group discussed the top three priorities for the church based on people's responses.

- 1. Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.;
- 2. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church; and
- 3. Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.

All groups were asked to discuss their topics in terms of:

- 1. What struck them about the report findings;
- 2. What additional information was needed and how it might be obtained; and
- 3. List WPC's strengths in this area, WPC's weaknesses in this area, and what were the opportunities, and challenges/threats for each area. The lists developed have been transcribed and are available.

The report, and the community overview presented in Second Hour on January 10 are available to read online - look for the links to these CAT study Results reports provided in our weekly news emails. The Vital Signs report, pages 16-24 deals specifically with these markers of church vitality. On page 16, you'll see a diagram of the first 8 areas discussed. The reading shows how Westminster compares to similar churches that have done the CAT survey. The higher the number, the better.

The report was shared with Albany Presbytery's COMAC committee. They approve it as an adequate mission study, and gave the church permission to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee to search for the next called pastor. Session is working on a slate of candidates.



Dear Pastor Bill and Westminster Presbyterian Church

I write this letter to formally thank you, Pastor Bill and the entire WPC community, for the immense support, love and grace you have shown me and my daughter. Your supporting prayers have had great impact on my life. Thank you so much for Grandma Mary. I really appreciate the church for being a part of our lives. Nyamempaebo and I are very grateful. Thank you.

Yours faithfully, Nana

Three Became One...A Hundred Years Ago

This spring Westminster will be 100 years old. This year, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana will also be 100 years old.

In the nineteenth century, Second Presbyterian was located on Chapel Street, near the former site of the Ten Eyck Hotel. Third Presbyterian, was located across from what became the Palace Theater and then, early in the twentieth century, merged with Second.

In 1919, the newly merged congregation ran out of coal. The frozen Presbyterians brought their pastor, P.V. Moldenhawer, with them to worship in the State Street Presbyterian church. Without a pastor of their own, the State Street congregation voted the merge with Second. All was well, except the Second folk rejected the name "State Street." The new church would be known as "Westminster."

Now, 100 years later, a committee is forming to plan Second Hour programs, a celebratory Communion and a potluck luncheon celebrating not only Westminster's centennial but that of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. If you would like to work on this project, contact Dave McMillan at 518-269-4326 or edmcmillan@hotmail.com.

One Great Hour of Sharing



able food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs

supported by One Great Hour of Sharing — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People — all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (March 6-April 14), each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.

One Great Hour of Sharing - makes a difference in the world.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA)

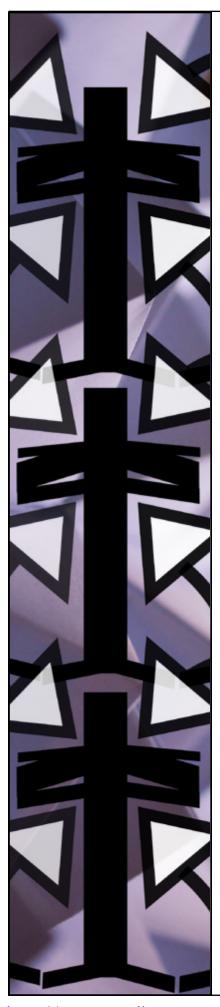
- Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees
- Receives 32% of funds raised

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP)

- Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed
- Receives 36% of funds raised

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE (SDOP)

- Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues
- Receives 32% of funds raised



Westminster Concerts During Lent

Two special musical performances are planned at Westminster during this year's season of Lent: one by our own Capitol Chamber Artists, and one by the musicians of Siena College.

On Sunday, March 10, at 3:00 pm, the Capitol Chamber Artists, now celebrating their 50th year, will present a concert of baroque-era chamber music by Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel. Performing will be the group's founder, violinist Mary Lou Saetta, harpsichordist Al Fedak, and André O'Neil, who returns to the group following an absence of several months during which he underwent chemotherapy. Come help us as we welcome André back with our gratitude and best wishes for his continued recovery. As always, admission is free for members and friends of Westminster.

And on Sunday evening, April 7, the musicians of Siena College will present a sacred concert in our sanctuary entitled "Pax hominibus" ("Peace to All"). Under the direction of Professor Timothy Reno, the Siena College Choir and the Clare Singers will present two extended works with orchestral accompaniment: the Introduction and Gloria by Antonio Vivaldi and J. S. Bach's Cantata 77 ("Thou Shalt Love the Lord Thy God"). Susan Fedak will be one of the featured soloists, and Al Fedak will be at the organ. A freewill offering will be received. We encourage all to attend this special event as part of our annual observance of the holy season of Lent.

Schuyler Inn Book Distribution Event:

Wednesday, March 13 at 4:30 pm

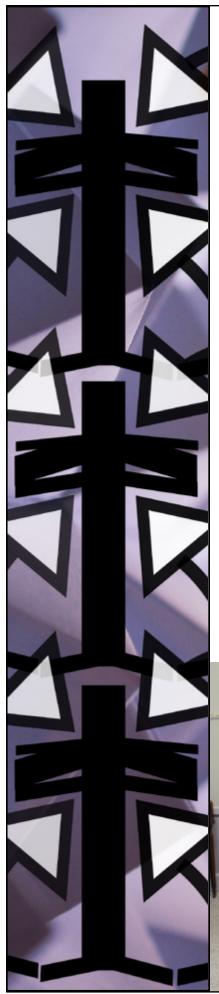
Schuyler Inn book distributions continue to be very popular with residents, both children and adults. The next event will be help on Wednesday, March 13 from 4:30 pm until 6:000 pm. Grassroot Givers continues to donate the books. Also, due to the generosity of congregation members, we are able to give out gift cards to the families, in their choice of Price Chopper or Walmart. Thank you to all who participate in this endeavor, through donations of books, gift cards, or time. Please contact Gail Garrison for more information: garrisongail1@gmail.com

Report From Session

We welcomed at our January meeting two new members, Jessica Chamberlain and Leah Threatte.

Leif Hartmark has agreed to stay on as a Representative to the FOCUS Executive Council. Tom McPheeters will chair the Nominating Committee for 2019. Susan Schell was elected Clerk of Session, and Session organization for 2019 will be finalized at our February meeting.

We will follow a similar Communion schedule to last year, with Easter and All Saints Day served in the pews and the remainder served by intinction. Session was happy to approve the baptism of Nyamempaebo Amoabeng Appiah, daughter of Dankwa Nana Akua Gyameraa and Patrick Appaiah.



Church School News

Come to the Pancake Brunch on Sunday, March 3 - the last Sunday before Lent. Let's help our youth raise funds to get to the Presbyterian Youth Triennium this summer (July 16 -20 at Purdue University). This will be an intergenerational event - a team of adults and youth will start cooking during worship and have a pancake brunch ready to enjoy right afterwards in the Assembly Room. We hope you will come support our youth and enjoy a time of fellowship, along with pancakes hot off the griddle!

Bowling for Beds: Our youth and children participated in the Bowl-a-Thon to raise funds to support the Emergency Overflow Homeless Shelter. And, they had fun in the process while joining in the bowling at Del Lanes in Delmar on February 9th! Many thanks to all supported our children and youth in their fundraising efforts for this great cause.

'Bring a Friend to Church' Sunday: Remember, children are encouraged to invite a friend to church every third Sunday of the month. Pastor Bill always has an interesting children's message and one never knows what fun Worship Plus activity Judy has prepared. Parents, remind children to bring a friend to share in the fun.

We Invite You!

Come to the Third Floor and Help Teach Songs to the Children: We'd like to encourage anyone who feels so moved, to come teach our children some songs. Please get in touch with Belinda if you would like to do this.

And, thank you to our dedicated teachers.



From the Budget Corner

If you missed the WPC Annual Meeting, haven't had time to review the financial details or were a bit mystified with all the numbers and charts in the Annual Report, here is a recap.

We ended 2018 with a budget deficit of \$20,000. Why? We have lost several significant givers over the past several years, making pledge and plate income lower. At the same time, our housing/building expenses were higher than expected. Our Capital Campaign (CC) for the 2017-2019 period also has a significant impact on pledge and plate income and our hope is that the CC monies turn into pledges in 2020.

The 2019 budget is much the same, we begin the year with a \$55,000 deficit. As we continue to spend more than our income, our endowment has also decreased to its current value of \$2.5 million. The endowment currently makes up 2/3 of our income. At our current income/expense ratio, it will not last a decade.

We are in a year of significant change and opportunity. The CC will end this year, we will search for a full-time pastor and we must change our financial equation. How?

- We all must think and pray about our personal Stewardship
- We must seek external sources of income (office space rental, wedding venues, etc). All ideas are welcome!
- We continue to clean our membership rolls to lower Presbytery responsibility (Basic Witness Support) and mailing costs. Please consider alternatives to WPC paper mailings. Could you receive an electronic copy? If you need paper, would you be willing to pick it up at WPC?
- We have created and adopted a financial policy, improved our financial practices and are exploring opportunities for alternate Investment Advisement
- We will explore partnering with local colleges to provide Community Services opportunities while gaining insight on the use of our space and cost savings ideas
- We will explore further grant opportunities and fund raising to support our programs

Thank you to all who have pledged! Thank you to all who freely give their time and talents! Working together, being open to change and believing in the holy spirit will lead us to a sound future and continued enjoyment of our WPC worship and ministry, fellowship and programs well into the future.

A Prayer* (Shared by Lisa Petter & Tim Dodman)

Holy Sustainer, we gather to face the disheartening news that our budget is not sustainable, that our needs for ministry and our people's faithful generosity need to be aligned in a new and creative way. O God, do not allow our story--your story of your presence in this place--be shaded with pessimism and hopelessness. God, forgive us when we are tempted to slip into a narrative of scarcity--for you are a God of abundance and creation.

Remind us that you are a God that is constantly inviting us into relationship with you. Let us see this moment as an invitation to imagine our ministries anew. Join us in this work, guide us in our conversations around our resources and call us into a fuller and broader understanding of what abundant resources you have placed in our community. Amen

*From 99 Prayers Your Church Needs (but Doesn't Know It Yet) by the Bethany Fellows, ed. Cara Gilger (St. Louis, Chalice Press, 2018). Reproduced with permission.

You are Invited! African Spring Dinner: March 30, 5:00 - 8:30 pm

Raising \$10,000 to support 2019 program goals, including these highlights:

- Continue support for Ebola orphans in Liberia and Sierra Leone
- Support for the Hope Mission School in Liberia partnering with FACE Africa to repair the hand water pump and renovate the latrine completed over 7 years ago
- Keep Girls in School: Westminster partners in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Ghana receive the MoonCatcher health education curriculum and appropriate supplies to support the goal of removing barriers to school attendance for girls posed by difficulties in menstrual management
- At Hope Mission School in Liberia a nurse has been hired to run the area's first twice-monthly health clinic, teach health classes, and direct the local menstruation management program

Program highlights include:

- Keynote Speaker: Hon. Paul Tonko, Congressman "Update from Washington"
- Guest Speaker: Ellie von Wellsheim, Founder of The MoonCatcher Project
- Children's activities and "Dancing for Dollars" with the Westminster Drum Circle

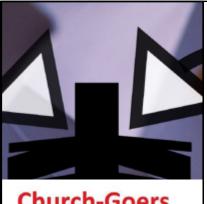
Donations gratefully accepted online at <u>wpcalbany.org/give</u> or <u>CLICK HERE</u> (select "African Mission" in the pull-down menu). Checks also accepted payable to: Westminster Church ("African Dinner" in memo line).

Please bring a "Dish-to-Pass" to share at dinner, if able.

Registrations are encouraged, but not required, by Tuesday, March 26 for planning purposes:

- Online Registration preferred: Register today or go to wpcalbany.org/upcoming-events
- Call: 518-436-8544 or Email: office@wpcalbany.org





Church-Goers



set your clocks AHEAD one hour before going to bed Saturday Night



Worship & Second Hours

Sermon Themes: The 7 Deadly Sins

Sunday, March 3

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Sloth" Ecclesiastes 1:1-17, Luke 9:28-43 Second Hour: Pancake Brunch - Youth Triennium Trip Fundraiser

Sunday, March 10 Lent 1

Daylight Savings Time starts

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship

"Lust" 2 Samuel 11:1-5, 14-17; 1Corinthians 6:11-20

Second Hour: Stories of African Mission

Sunday, March 17 Lent 2 9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Gluttony" Proverbs 23:1-317-19, John 6:26-35

Worship Plus

Second Hour: Worship 101

Sunday, March 24 Lent 3 9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Greed" Genesis 13:1-13, Luke 12:15-25

Second Hour: Worship 101. Part 2

Sunday, March 31 Lent 4 9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Envv" Genesis 4:1-12, Matthew 13:54-58

Second Hour: Singing in Worship

Sunday, April 7 Lent 5 9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Wrath" Numbers 22:22-30; Mark 11:15-19

Second Hour: What is Multi-cultural Worship?

Sunday, April 14 Palm Sunday

9:00 Bible Study and Worship Preparation

10:00 Worship Rev. Bill Schram leading worship "Pride" Genesis 3:1-7, Luke 19:28-40

Second Hour: Who Wrote the New Testament and Why

Wednesdays at Noon, starting March 13

You are invited to share in a 6 session Lenten study, "Acceptable Faithfulness."



MARCH SUNDAY March 3 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Church School
11:30 am Second Hour
12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class
7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:30 pm Tai Chi
7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service
12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal
12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class
SUNDAY March 10 9:00 am Bible Study

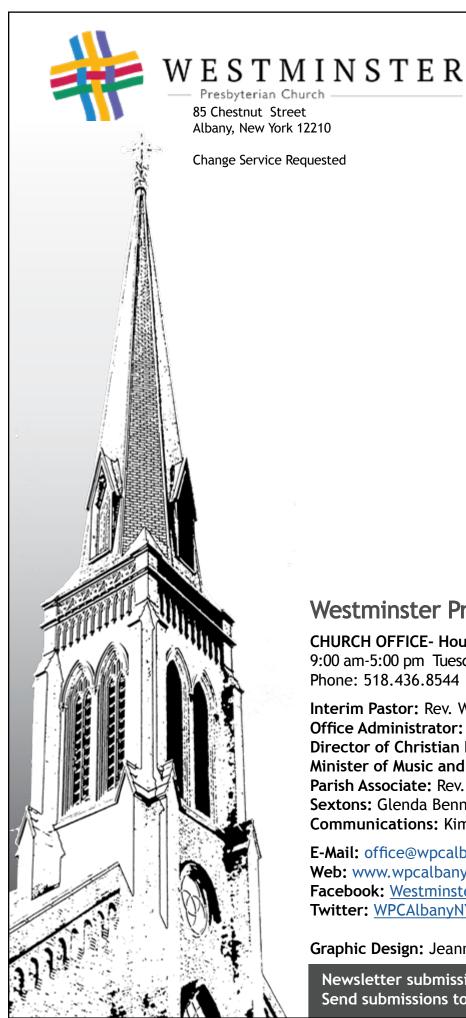
10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Church School 11:15 am Second Hour 3:00 pm Capital Artists Concert 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 12 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:30 pm Tai Chi 7:00 pm Session Meeting 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast Noon Lenten Study "Acceptable Faithfulness" 4:30 pm Schuyler Inn Book Distribution Event 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal 15

SUNDAY March 17 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Worship Plus 11:15 am Church School 11:30 am Second Hour 11:15 am Deacons Meeting 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 19 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:30 pm Tai Chi 7:00 pm Compassionate Friends 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting 20 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast Noon Lenten Study 6:00 pm Pine Bush Dinner 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class SUNDAY March 24 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Church School 11:30 am 20s+30s Brunch 25 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:30 pm Tai Chi 27 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast Noon Lenten Study 28 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm African Spring Dinner

SUNDAY March 31 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Church School 11:15 am Second Hour 12:30 Prayer in the African Way APRIL 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:00 pm African Network Meeting 6:30 pm Tai Chi 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast Noon Lenten Study 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class **SUNDAY April 7** 9:00 am Bible Study 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am Church School 11:15 am Second Hour 7:30 pm Siena College Choral Concert 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 6:30 pm Tai Chi 7:00 pm Session Meeting 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast Noon Lenten Study 11 7:00 am FOCUS Breakfast 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class 7:30 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal 12 12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class

12:15 pm EBA Seniors Class

SUNDAY April 14 Palm Sunday



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Westminster Presbyterian Church

CHURCH OFFICE- Hours

9:00 am-5:00 pm Tuesday & Thursday; Friday 9:00 am-12:00 noon

Phone: 518.436.8544

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Office Administrator: Jennifer Schoenfisch Director of Christian Education: Belinda Quaye

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

Parish Associate: Rev. Paul Randall

Sextons: Glenda Bennett, Joy Tallmadge, John Fox

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Newsletter submissions are due by: March 21 Send submissions to: newsletter@wpcalbany.org