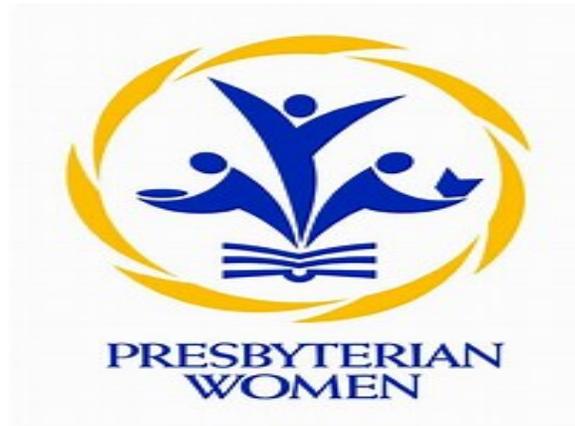


Albany Presbyterian Women's Newsletter

***Blessed are all who hear the word of God and obey it!
Luke 11:28***

Winter 2021



Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever

Message from Acting Moderator

The Steering Committee of PW in the Albany Presbytery is grateful to Andrea Ralph, who has graciously offered to be our newsletter editor. It's so important that we share information with each other. The need is especially great, at this time when being together is so limited.

I know that you're wondering what will happen with the Churchwide Gathering. The in-person Gathering has been cancelled. I will send out any information that I get to the PW in the Albany Presbytery email group.

We are looking for new members for our Steering Committee. It's not a labor-intensive committee. We are mainly looking for news ideas. Our major work is planning our two Gatherings each year. We make a lot of decisions via email and meet on Zoom meetings as needed, at a mutually convenient time. We meet 2 -3 times a year. There is no term of service. You can be part of the Steering Committee for as long as it works for you.

Charlotte Hasselbarth
chasselbarth@hotmail.com or 518-356-0637

Pastor's Perspective

“Called to Serve”

I am a Presbyterian minister. Sometimes that is how I introduce myself when I meet new people. But I have also introduced myself as a social studies teacher and a Program Evaluator for the New York State Department of Health. I have introduced myself as Stewart's wife; as Ben and Elizabeth's mother, as Connor, Ava, Emma and River's "Nana". I am "called" to all of these roles!

I have always been grateful that ordination in the Presbyterian tradition is an ordination to "function". I am a teaching elder. I am not a priest. I am not "above" or "below" anyone else or between God and human beings in any way. This is a difficult thing to maintain in our world, where we want to place one another in various pecking orders. But hierarchy is not part of our theology or polity. It is also important not to equate "calling and vocation" with a profession or "our job". For ordained ministers, our calling or vocation is often our job or profession, but not always. For the 13 years, before I retired this summer, I was, after St. Paul, a "tentmaker" (Acts 18:1-3; 20:33-35); I worked full time at a secular job while serving in my ordained function as a parish associate and guest preacher. My "calling" did not go away when I changed jobs. My calling is much bigger than a job, role, or function in any of the seasons of my life.

I think the best definition of what it means to be called by God is one coined by Presbyterian minister and spiritual author Frederick Beuchner. He wrote "**The place God calls you is the place where your *deep gladness* and the world's deep hunger meet.**" I especially like the idea that our calling is a deep gladness. It is this deep gladness that makes our calling more than a job, when it is our job. It is deep gladness that allows us to identify something as a calling that we might not otherwise recognize as service to the Lord. It is the deep gladness that allows us to do a secular job or have an identity that provides the time and resources to follow our calling.

Where does your 'deep gladness' meet the world's deep hunger? It is worthwhile to spend time thinking about how and where we are called to God's service. It is also worthwhile to explore how our calling has changed over our lifetimes. If service is making you weary, or overwhelmed or depressed, it may be time to step back in prayer and contemplation or to seek the community of others who are called to similar work to share the load as we seek to follow Jesus. Over the

years I believe Presbyterian women has been a model for how to be a community of service to others -providing mutual support and comfort as we reach out to address the world's great need. May we continue to share the load with deep gladness, as we reach out together to a deeply complicated and hungry world?

MJ Pattison

Bio: I am a member of the Albany Presbytery (HR). I served as parish associate at Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church in Guilderland, from 2007 to 2018 and provided pulpit supply to the Presbytery while working as a Program Research Specialist at the NYS Department of Health from 2007-2020.

Financial News

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany Financial Report

Thank you to the two Congregational Presbyterian Women's (PWC) groups that sent contributions for the PW in Albany Presbytery (PWP) operating fund last year and the PWC and individual who have already contributed in 2021. All donations are greatly appreciated and will help us meet our financial obligations. Also thank you to those who have contributed toward supporting a representative to the USA Mission experience trips (USAME). The moderator of PW in the Synod of the Northeast (PWSNE) went on the mission trip to the Finger Lake's region of our state in 2019 and gave her report at the October Zoom gathering. We continue to accept contributions and to set aside money each year so we can support our representatives to both the USA Mission Experience and Global Exchange trips. We have set up accrual funds for these trips so if you wish to contribute to either or to the operating budget of the PWP please designate on your checks the fund and amount for which is intended. This year we have sent \$100 to the USAME and \$100 to the PWSNE to help them with their expenses. Contributions should be sent to Rosalie Hemingway, 3213 Church Street, Valatie, NY 1284.

CELEBRATE THE GIFTS OF WOMEN

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2021

Horizons January/February 2021 Issue

In 2021, on Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday, we are invited to honor women who work for transformative change and seek to end poverty and injustice. Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday is March 7, 2021, Horizon's magazine January/ February issue has resources for your congregation or women's groups to use on March 7, or any day you choose. Horizon's includes preparation for a full service, Gathering Prayer, Call to Confession, Confession of Sins and a Sermon starter provided by the Reverend Dr. Jennifer L. Lord and, Dorothy B. Vickery Professor of Homiletics and Liturgical Studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

World Day of Prayer 2021 is Friday, March 5th

The World day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action," and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March. World Day of Prayer takes place internationally on March 5th.

2021–2022 PW/*Horizons* Bible study

What My Grandmothers Taught Me,

Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus

This spring the new *Horizons* Bible will come out. In the book of *Matthew*, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary are mentioned for a reason. Their stories will lead us into the good news about Jesus Christ. The author, Merryl Blair poses these questions:

- How might Jesus have heard the stories of his grandmothers?

- What might the young Jesus have felt as he heard about his family?
- What might the stories of these women have added to his sense of identity, as part of a particular family in a particular time and place?
- Have you thought about Jesus' grandmothers?
- What can these Grandmothers-of-the-Faith teach us?

For more information about this new Bible Study see:

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/matthews-genealogy/>

Hands on Mission Project

Living out the PW Purpose during the Pandemic

Tea For the Soul to Go

Presbyterian Women in Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church

Last May, our Interim Pastor Rev. Janice West received a note from the Pastoral Care Dept. at Albany Medical Center about its *Tea For the Soul to Go Project*. The department wanted to give the hospital staff decorative bags of snacks that included a note of appreciation. Our PW group felt that this was a project that we could easily take on during the pandemic. We planned it for mid-May to the end of July and invited our congregation to participate. We asked that the decorated paper lunch bags and financial donations for the purchase of the snacks be left on the front porch of one of our PW members or they could be sent directly to the hospital. The bags kept coming in and we have now decided to make this an ongoing project.

It was an easy project for us to do. Many of the bags were decorated by children.

Bags and monetary donations (make out checks to Albany Medical Center Pastoral Care Department, with *Tea for The Soul To Go* in the memo line) are sent to:

Albany Medical Center, Pastoral Care Department
Mail Code 19
43 New Scotland Ave.
Albany, NY 12208

Albany Medical Center's Pastoral Care Dept. has made caring for the staff a top priority, so the need for decorated bags and financial donations will continue.

If your PW group would be interested in this project and wants more information, contact the Rev. Virginia Vogel-Polizzi, Pastoral Care Administrator, at the Department of Pastoral Care at Albany Medical Center at 518.262.3176 or vogelpv@amc.edu.

PW in the Newton Presbytery Spring Gathering
Saturday April. 10 - 10 am on Zoom

Family Promise Presentation – Thank Offering Recipient

There will be a presentation by Linda Werts, the Moderator of PW in the Geneva Presbytery. She will speak about *Family Promise of Wayne County, New York, Inc.* It received a 2020 Thank Offering Grant of \$22,500.

Family Promise is an organization that helps homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence. Individual community chapters provide a day center for families so that have a home base and arrange for the families to spend the night at local host churches.

The day center is a house where clients can do laundry and receive case management services. School age children receive school transportation from this location. Computers are provided for guests and there is a playroom for children. Guests use this address to receive mail and to include on job applications.

This grant was to renovate the building used as a day center and emergency overflow shelter. For more information, see fpwayne.org

There is a Family Promise branch in the Albany area. For information, see fpalbanycounty.org

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany

Spring Gathering – Zoom Gathering

Thursday, April 22 – 10:00 am to noon

Creation Care - How Can We as a Church Respond to God's Call?

Our speaker will be Nancy Pienta, Moderator of Presbyterian Women of First Presbyterian Church of Valatie, member of the Albany Presbytery Mission Committee, and member of the Peace-Making Task Force.

The freewill offering will go to the Capital Region of NY Chapter of The Climate Reality Project. It educates the public about climate science and solutions, builds coalitions with other climate activists, and conducts issue advocacy campaigns in order to bring about the rapid and just implementation of economy-wide climate solutions at the local, state, and national levels as well as the development of resiliency plans. Send donations to Rosalie Hemingway, 3213 Church St., Valatie, NY 12184. Make out checks to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany, with The Climate Reality Project on the memo line.

For further information contact:

Rosalie Hemingway at 518-758-7886 or silver3213@gmail.com
Charlotte Hasselbarth at 518-356-0637 or chasselbarth@hotmail.com

Presbyterian Women's 2021 Churchwide Gathering

The PW Churchwide Gathering that had been planned for August 5–8, 2021 in St. Louis, Missouri has been cancelled.

The Gathering Planning Team is preparing an online national program and worship service. Details will be sent in *The Gathering Quest* email series, *Horizons* magazine, PW social media channels and on www.presbyterianwomen.org. The Triennial Business meeting will be online on Aug. 4 -5. Ardelle Stewart will be our Voting Representative with Andrea Ralph will be her alternate.

Up Coming Events Save These Dates

To submit an article for the Spring newsletter the deadline is May 1, 2021. Please submit to Elder Andrea Ralph at aralph20@hotmail.com.

PW in the Newton Presbytery Spring Gathering- Saturday, April 10th beginning at 10 am on zoom.

April 22, 2021, 10 am to noon Zoom Spring Gathering of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany. The program will be *Creation Care - How Can We as a Church Respond to God's Call?*

The Fall Gathering on Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany will be at the First Presbyterian Church of Hudson Falls. A Saturday date to be determined. Proposed program will be on Westminster Presbyterian Church's African Mission

Early August-The Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering on zoom. The Theme is *Rejoice in Hope*.

***For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations
Psalm 100:5***

Elder Andrea Ralph
Acting Editor