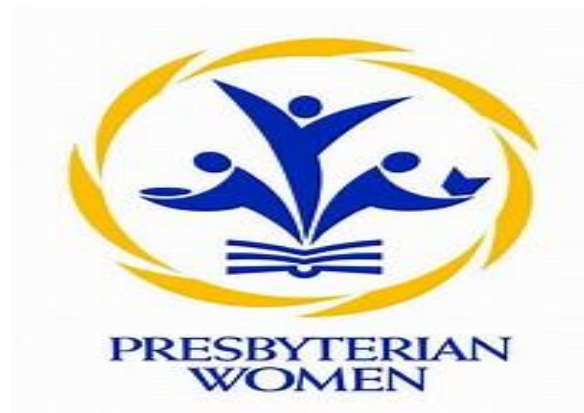


Albany Presbyterian Women's Newsletter

"He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way" Psalm 25:9

Summer 2023



Message from the Moderator

Past Moderator's Message

Charlotte Hasselbarth

It has been a pleasure to have been the acting Moderator and then Moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany. I am so proud of our growth as a group. In the last 10 years we have moved from discussing disbanding at the Presbytery level to being a PW in the Presbytery that is giving assistance to PW groups in congregations in the Northern New York Presbytery where there is no longer a Coordinating Team. I have enjoyed working with our dedicated Coordinating Team and all the women in the various churches where we have had Gatherings. Thank you for this opportunity.



The Presbytery PAL Program

PW in the Presbytery of Albany is participating in a program of PW in the Synod of the Northeast called the PWP PAL program. It's a program where PWP's with intact Coordinating Teams develop a relationship with congregation PW groups in Presbyteries that don't have a Presbytery level PW Coordinating Team. We are working with PWs in the congregation in the Northern New York Presbytery. We provide a communications link between the groups and PW at the Synod and Churchwide levels. Two such PW groups have come on board: PW in the Chazy Presbyterian Church and PW in the First Presbyterian Church of Ogdensburg. We have created a special email group for them so Information from the Churchwide and Synod levels of PW gets to them. There are 3 more PW groups in the Northern New York Presbytery that we 're trying to connect with.

Spring Gathering

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany enjoyed an informative presentation by members of The Legal Project of Albany who spoke on immigration issues with the focus on the difficulties faced by women fleeing violence in their home countries. Twenty people, including five from the Legal Project, attended and enjoyed the generous hospitality of the Roessleville Presbyterian Church. Two hundred and twenty-eight dollars were donated and when added to the speaker's honorariums which they then contributed made a total of two hundred and seventy-eight dollars given to the work of The Legal Project.

Diana Behan, the moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Hudson River, installed the members of the Coordinating Team. We are pleased to have Andrea Ralph as our new moderator with Rosalie Hemingway continuing as operating fund treasurer and Charlotte Hasslebarth, with many thanks for her nine years as acting moderator, Rev Kathi Jones, and Ardelle Stewart as members-at-large. Teresa Barenfeld will be installed as a member-at-large at a later date. Our gathering concluded with a communion service and benediction by Andrea.

Thank offering

The Thank Offering has long been a tradition of Presbyterian Women. It was started in 1888 by Mrs. Eliza Clonkey of Springfield, Ohio who urged each member of the Women's General Missionary Society of the UPC of North America to give above her usual contribution as a "Thank Offering" to her God. It is said that the women's gifts saved the worldwide missionary movement at that time. Our gifts today continue to provide much needed financial assistance to worthwhile programs that are not included in ongoing General Assembly mission support. Each year domestic and international projects are selected by the Creative Ministries Offering Committee to help meet critical needs. Forty percent of the offering is used to support hospitals and community health programs that place priority on helping the most needy members of God's community. The remaining sixty percent is used for new creative ideas for mission.

This year's grant recipients included the Troy Area United Ministries in our presbytery which was awarded \$35,890 for Tech for Teens, an expansion of their Computers for Kids Summer Program where students will learn to use Microsoft Office and do basic web design and coding.

The Synod of Middle America, Light for the Darkness New Worshiping Community Grounded Gardening was given \$10,000 to support people with mental illness through social connections, prayer, exercise, gardening, and time outdoors. The Synod of Mid Atlantic New Castle Presbytery Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Wilmington, Delaware received \$15,000 and has teamed with the Music School of Delaware to provide tuition free summer day camp to children who have experienced trauma. The program aims to help them heal through music, singing, art, dance, and drama.

The Synod of the Sun Presbytery of South Louisiana was awarded \$35,000 which will allow them to provide a full solar power system and expand their services and keep the community refrigerator running and provide reliable electricity for power tools, cell phone charging, and the irrigation system for the gardens of the Okra Abbey community ministry.

The Synod of South Atlantic received two \$50,000 grants. One went to Peace River Presbytery Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance Inc. to support the first neighborhood building consisting of sixteen apartments for agricultural workers and their families and the other to the Presbytery of

St. Augustine Gainesville Community Counseling Center, Inc. Building Resilience Through Mindfulness to provide mental health support, community education and camping, to address the challenges facing LGBTQIA+ youth who have had little access to these services. The last \$50,000 grant went to the ZAMBIA Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Zambia Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Zambia Health Department Phalaza Rural Health Center

The thank offering from local PW groups is typically sent to the churchwide office in the fall. Contributions can be sent to Presbyterian Women, Inc., Remittance Processing, PW Thank Offering, PO Box 643652, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3652.

Submitted by Rosalie Hemingway



Climate Change

Nancy Pienta

Hello PW sisters. As the chair of the Albany Presbytery Peace-making Task Force that has made Climate Change our main focus, I was asked to write an article on Earth-Care. And lo and behold, this challenge from zerowaste.org arrived in my email for a

Plastic-free July challenge. Ah, inspiration! What fun might this be if all the PW groups in our Presbytery did this, choosing your own month (maybe September or October) and we could share with each other our experiences, successes and obstacles. So this is the challenge from zerowaste.org that I am asking you to join me in.

“It may feel a little overwhelming to be one person trying to make a change in our single-use culture, but you're not alone. We believe in the ripple effect — that any zero waste action you take will influence other people (and systems) in powerful ways you may not even realize!

Depending on your level of experience with zero waste, try one of the following options for this challenge. And have fun with it! Do not let it overwhelm you.

1. Make a ripple: This option is for beginners, or those new to zero waste! Choose one single-use plastic item you use regularly and try your best to avoid it for the rest of the month. Feel free to check out our zero waste swaps page for ideas.
2. Make a splash: If you've dabbled in zero waste before and want to have a bigger impact, do the "ripple" challenge plus invite a friend or family member to join you. The impact of your Plastic Free month will be doubled and it's more fun to do it together!
3. Make a wave: If you're ready for a challenge, take the pledge to avoid any purchases that involve plastic for the whole month! Mistakes happen all the time, so collect those in a bag or a box so that you have a good record to look back on at the end of the month. And don't worry about stuff you've already bought (a half a tube of toothpaste you already opened etc.), just add those to your trash collection when you run out, and then find a zero waste alternative.

Preparing for your challenge:

Food: For most people, food and grocery shopping create the most plastic waste in their lives. Check out our zero waste food guide and figure out a plan for zero waste grocery shopping during the challenge.

To Go Kit: Get together essential zero waste tools that will help you avoid plastic when you're out and about. Want to take a minimalist approach to that? Try this.”

You might even want to include your congregation or at least share with them your own involvement. Have fun with it. If you have questions, feel free to email me at

nwpienta@gmail.com Submitted by Nancy Pienta

Tech for Teens Expansion
Troy Area United Ministries
Rev. Donna Elia, Executive Director

Troy Area United Ministries (TAUM) is grateful to the Presbyterian Women Thank Offering for faithfully embodying the love of Christ, supporting education and justice in programs like our Tech for Teens Program. What began as a Summer Youth Employment Program, a collaboration between Troy Area United Ministries and Rensselaer County, is expanding thanks to PW and others who believed in investing in young people. Over the years, we have gradually added a few Saturday Workshops. Now, Troy Area United Ministries will be able to expand those and add an afterschool program. Tech for Teens serves low-income youth from families at or below 200% of the poverty level. Its student body is diverse, including girls, boys, and nonbinary persons. About 80 % are from BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color) Communities. Instructors also come from diverse backgrounds, so students can envision themselves in leadership positions, seeing people who look like they do.

When one of the instructors reached out to me to ask if they could buy breadboards, I agreed, wondering what a breadboard is! He showed me one that a student had constructed- a hand-crafted techs machine, demonstrating the program's creativity, problem-solving skills and collaboration. I have often said that I wish I had time be a student in our program, because even from an administrative distance, I have learned things like the difference between binary and hexadecimal coding and what Arduino is! There is always a learning curve.

Students participate in many educational and employment skills-building activities. Their first task is to design and write a resumé and to practice interviewing. One-third of the students from last year's class used the resumes they wrote in Tech for Teens to obtain jobs. Students take pretests to establish a baseline and tailor the program to their needs. The highest pretest score was lower than the lowest posttest score. They develop excel skills using a power analysis of M&M colors; work in teams on web design, do research for making Power Point presentations, and engage in a very cool test your skills game called Kaboom! Tech for teens is interactive and

innovative. They also get to keep a laptop computer- a benefit for their whole family! Often, students refer their younger siblings to Tech for Teens- or they request the program again themselves!

Money from Presbyterian Women will serve students who are at-risk as they strengthen their education and employment skills. Since students are paid for their participation through the Summer Youth Employment aspect of the program, TAUM will offer gift card incentives to students for their year-round work. Academic support is only part of the equation. Both the youth and their instructors, typically college tech majors, develop soft skills, such as teamwork, public speaking, problem solving and mentoring.

Allow me to share a couple of examples of how this program is making a difference. Two years ago, Angelo applied for a scholarship through Troy Area United Ministries' MLK Scholarship Program. When the committee chair asked how he had heard about the program, he said that he had been a student in Tech for Teens (then called Computers for Kids) and heard me encourage students to apply for a scholarship if they were continuing to higher education. When he neared graduation, he remembered, applied, and was awarded a scholarship. The reach of Tech for Teens is greater than the individual program. He was also the MLK breakfast speaker this year!

Trequan particularly loves Tech for Teens and has signed up for three consecutive years and attended every available workshop. He is looking forward to more of them, including the afterschool program. In addition, his mother is very open about his sickle cell anemia. She says this program has inspired him to pursue a tech career, majoring in gaming and gives his mother great hope for his future.

Finally, we all know that teens and food go together. The program provides lunch for students, including pizza parties and other nutritious meals and opportunities for high school students to thrive, succeed and develop positive self-esteem.

Troy Area United Ministries is a validated ministry of Albany Presbytery. In partnership with interfaith communities and other TAUM provides a safe and just space for those in need, offering food, furniture, HIV/AIDS services, education, spiritual counseling, and advocacy.

USA Mission Experience - October 13-23

United States / Mexico Border

The USA Mission Experience (USAME) is a trip that occurs every six years to an area within the United States to learn about issues and participate in mission opportunities. There is a representative from every Synod. This year from October 13-23 the group will go to Phoenix, Tucson, and the Arizona–Mexico border and will focus on aspects of the immigration process such as refugee conditions, violence against women and children and challenges facing indigenous people living in Arizona. The delegate from The Synod of the Northeast is Marianne Montero, who is from New York.

PW in the Presbytery of Albany has been a strong supporter of the USAME program. We have the PWSNE representative speak at our Gatherings for almost as long as the program has been in place. We currently have established a line item in our budget every year so there is sum of money to send in the support the trip each time it is planned. The USAME Fund at the PWSNE level not only helps pay for the representative's trip, but also transportation to PW in the Presbytery Gatherings. The participants are required to speak PW at events for 2 years after the trip. Plans are already under way to invite Marianne to one of our future Gatherings. Please consider a personal monetary donation or one from the PW in your church. Make out checks to Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast, with USAME in the memo line. Send donations to our Treasurer, Nancy Lack, 15 Lincoln Avenue, Florham Park, New Jersey, 07932.

UPCOMING EVENT



Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany Fall Gathering

**Wednesday, October 25 – 11:00 am to 2:30 pm
at
Westminster Presbyterian Church**

Impediments to Children's Literacy

“Train a child in the way they should go and when they are old they will not depart from it” Proverbs 22:6

Dr. Kimberly Wilkins, recently retired New York State Educational Deputy Commissioner of P - 12 Instructional Support

Bisi Shofu, Past PWSNE Moderator

Betty Dietz, Volunteer at Wizards Wardrobe, an after school reading tutoring program and member of Presbyterian Women at Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church

- **Registration: rsvp to Andrea Ralph at ARalph20@hotmail.com or 516-849-3220 by Oct, 10 if possible so the host church can make appropriate arrangements.**
- **Registration fee of \$5.00 will be collected at the door.**
- **Bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverage are provided.**
- **New and gently used books (reading level grades 1-3) will be collected for the Wizard's Wardrobe**
- **A freewill offering will go to the *Wizard's Wardrobe*. Make out checks to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany, with Wizard's Wardrobe in the memo line.**

Westminster Presbyterian Church - 518-436-8544

Church address: 262 State St. Albany, NY, 12210

Parking address: 85 Chestnut St., Albany, NY 12210 (use parking address for GPS)

From Northern New York

1. Drive south on Route 87 (Northway) to I-90 east (Albany/Boston).
2. Drive east on I-90 to the exit for Route 787 (Troy/Albany).
3. Drive Route 787 south to Exit 4B (Route 9 North/Clinton Avenue).
4. See below for A-J steps.

From Southern New York

1. Drive north on I-87 (Thruway) to Exit 23.
2. Drive north on Route 787 to Exit 4 (Downtown Albany, Routes 9 and 20).
3. Follow signs to Clinton Avenue (Route 9 North).
4. See below for A-J steps.

From Eastern New York

1. Drive west on I-90 to the exit for Route 787 (Troy/Albany).
2. Drive Route 787 south to Exit 4B (Route 9 North/Clinton Avenue).
3. See below for A-J steps.

From Western New York

1. Drive east on I-90 (Thruway) to Exit 24.
2. Drive east on I-90 to the exit for Route 787 (Troy/Albany).
3. Drive Route 787 south to Exit 4B (Route 9 North/Clinton Avenue).
4. See below for A-J steps.

From all Directions

- A. At the first traffic signal at the bottom of the ramp, take a left turn onto Broadway.
- B. Continue on Broadway to State Street.
- C. Take a right turn onto State Street and continue up the hill toward the State Capitol. You'll cross Pearl Street and then come to the State Capitol at Eagle Street.
- D. At the State Capitol, veer toward the right and continue up the hill - this is Washington Avenue.
- E. Continue on Washington Avenue through two (2) traffic signals (at Hawk Street and then at South Swan Street – no street sign, but the Alfred E. Smith Office Building is at the far-left corner).
- F. At the third traffic signal, take a left turn onto Dove Street.
- G. Continue on Dove Street through the first traffic signal /intersection with State Street.
- H. At the second traffic signal, take a left turn onto Chestnut Street (one-way street, heading east). Westminster is on the left at 85 Chestnut Street (this is the business and parking entrance address), between Dove Street and Swan Street, just a half a block west of the State Capitol and the Empire Plaza.
- I. Parking for visitors is available in the church parking lot, which is just before the church building. If the lot is full, parking may be found on nearby streets.
- J. Ring the doorbell

“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. “Philippians 3:14

Elder Andrea Ralph
editor