



The First Presbyterian Newsletter

Volume 71, Number 8

April 2016



"Peace be unto you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
John 20:21-22

Reflection and Hope in the Lenten and Easter Season **A Celebration of Black History**

By Roger Green

Although February was officially Black History Month, the celebration is so much a part of the education, reflection and joy of First Pres that it has become intermeshed with the Church calendar and the seasons of Lent and Easter. The following recap in words and photos is a record of how that experience brings us to Easter and rebirth.

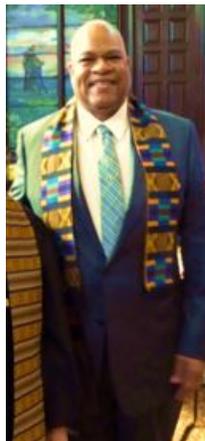
Dr. Oscar Williams, a professor of Africana studies at UAlbany, led a discussion during the Adult Education class on how Black History Month came to be. National Negro History Week started in 1926, and a half century later, the annual celebration took its current form. There seemed to be a consensus in the class that Black History Month continues to be important and, alas, necessary.

The following week the Black Lives Matter phenomenon was the Adult Education topic of discussion, led by Roger Green. For the next two weeks Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, the transitional presbyter for the Albany Presbytery led the discussion on the acclaimed book *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. She began the first session by reading aloud the first section, for one hears the message differently that way. The book was highlighted in a recent episode of the ABC sitcom *Black-ish*.

Guest preacher David Traynham of the New Horizons Christian Church on Catherine Street in Albany was highlighted the last Sunday worship in February. He delivered a rousing sermon, with a booming delivery in the style that was joyously received by our congregation.

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The honorary kente cloth was presented to Reverend Traynham in honor of his activism in the community. Kente cloths were also given to Dr. David Hannay, and, in absentia, Dr. Margaret Hannay, for always being the epitome of Christian welcoming and inclusion.

Continued on p. 4,
Black History.



The First Presbyterian



**First Presbyterian
Church**
Albany, NY
Founded in 1763

**Dr. Miriam Lawrence
Leupold**
Dr. Glenn D. Leupold
Co-Pastors

Dr. Michael Lister
Director of Music

Trevor Kahlbaugh
Organist

Christy D'Ambrosio
Youth Director

Robert C. Lamar
Pastor Emeritus

Elders

Keith Barber
Carol Bullard
Gladys Crowder
Richard Gascoyne
Annette Johnson
Stephanie Kite
Harry (Skip) Meislahn
John Myers
Phillip Riddle
Mary Rogers
Roseline Takor

Deacons

Prudence Iyok
Moderator

Diane Cornell
Lee Helsby
Ellen Kemp
Peter Kimuli
Judith Mark
Joe Mathias
Jerry Nathan
Ron Pettis
Leslie Roccario
Peg Schalit
Gail Scott
Deb Shoup
Grace White
Robert Willower
Barbara Woodruff
Margaret Zettle

Pause Here a Moment....

A View of Life – Who Are We?

[Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from a sermon by J. Herbert Nelson, Director of the Office of Public Witness, PC (USA), Washington, D.C.]

“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. God is doing a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43: 18:19a)

God is calling the Presbyterian Church (USA) to live out a new call in transforming a broken and dying world. At the core of our challenge is making a new discovery about who we are. Our identity is found in what we are becoming – not what we used to be or our circumstances. Our challenge is akin to the pastoral challenges of assisting people in restoring hope in a new future. A story is told by a pastor who counseled a woman who could not find satisfaction in her life. She complained, “The people at my job always leave their work undone and I am the one that has to clean up their mess. They take long breaks and talk about people all of the time. I know they are talking about me too! Some of them come in and play games on their computers, look at Facebook and talk on their cell phones.

“My husband never wants to talk. My children act like they live in a zoo. Their rooms are never clean and they leave stuff all over the house. My mother in law is staying with us and the place is crowded.”

After listening for a long time, the pastor took a piece of paper and folded it in half. The pastor asked the woman to take the paper and on one side list the positive things in her life. She helped her begin the list by saying “You have a job. In view of so many job losses, that is a good thing, wouldn't you agree,” the woman nodded her head in agreement. The Pastor said, “Write that down.” She then assisted the woman in listing other things that were positive in her life, such as her children and husband being healthy; her husband assisting the children with their homework; and the woman's children doing well in school. The woman was then instructed to take the other side of the paper and in the coming week write all of the bad or not so good things occurring in her life. “Then, let us sit down next week at this same time and discuss your list.”

A week later the woman missed the appointment; did not return phone calls; and had not been in Church. At the grocery store several weeks later, the pastor saw the woman and shared her concern at not having seen or heard from her: “I have not seen you in church and you did not return my call. Oh yes, and the appointment we had, you missed it. What happened?” The woman explained that she and her husband went on a vacation without the children. It was the first vacation that they had taken by themselves in over two years. “Who kept the children while you were gone” asked the pastor. The woman responded, “My mother-in-law.” The pastor then asked “Are the children still doing well in school?” The woman responded, “They are all on the honor roll.” The pastor then asked the big question, “How are things with your job?” The woman's response was, “You know, those people on that job sure have changed.”

The reality is that her view of her own life changed. She recognized that her circumstances did not define her.

Get Your Picture Taken! Time for a New Directory

By Leslie Roccario

The Membership Committee is producing a new pictorial directory for First Presbyterian Church. We have lots of new members and faces and we need EVERYONE to be included!

Dick Gascoyne and Tim O'Toole will be our photographers again this time around. As we did last time, pictures will be taken after 10:45 services in a few church building locations on several Sundays. We hope that you can get your whole family smiling and in one place on one of our designated picture days:

- April 10
- April 17
- April 24

For families with college students, and those we didn't capture the first couple of times, pictures will also be taken on:

- May 22
- June 5

Associate members and regular visitors are welcome to be included, we'll put an asterisk by your name. Non-member spouses of members are included too.

We will also have a master copy of the information we have gathered from you, and we ask that you check it to be sure all is current and up to date for your alphabetical listing in the back.

Treats for each child who behaves and takes a great picture!

Is it Christmas?

SERRV

By Deb Fagans, Outreach and Mission Committee

No, it's not Christmas. But Outreach and Mission has decided to have a spring SERRV sale. We have noticed that the spring catalog has many items that are not in the Fall and Winter catalogs and thought that they might appeal to our congregation. So we thought we'd try it this year.

Do you have birthdays coming up? Maybe weddings? How about graduations? Think fair trade and SERRV and all the people your participation in this sale helps to have better life. We thank you in advance on their behalf.

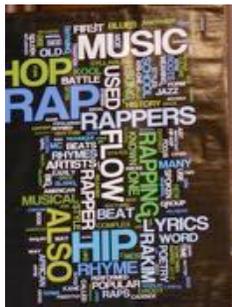
Look for the catalogs in April.

Saturday, April 9 at Giffen School Author & Illustrator Day

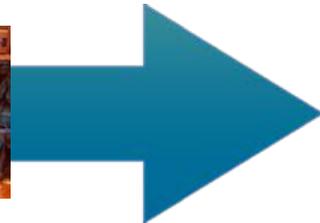
We have a wonderful line-up of authors and illustrators: Pat Cummings, Nina Crews, Renee Watson, and Caldecott Medal winner, Jerry Pinkney.

The students will be performing. There will be a couple of new twists. And it's a way to show Giffen Elementary School staff and children that we care. If you have not signed up, it's not too late to show your support. You will find something to do, something to see, something to hear, and a community to support. Check out our web page to see what's happening.

<http://giffenmemorialelementaryschool.weebly.com/2016-author-illustrator-day---april-9-2016.html>



Speak Loud! Speak Proud! See pp. 6-7.



First Presbyterian Church - Called by God to reduce the widening gap between rich and poor.

The First Presbyterian

Black History,
Continued from p. 1.

There was special music at the 10:45 service from the Choruses from Cameroon, sung in the Kenyang and Douala dialects. The performers were Heidi and Prudence Iyok, Roseline and David Takor, Mirabelle Beck, Dickson Awah, Veronica Besong and Regina Tabe.

The annual BHM luncheon, coordinated by Carol Green, was the usual grand finale. Many thanks to the speakers, performers and food preparation folk.

Special thanks to Michael Lister, who picked out music by African-American composers, not all in the gospel genre; Tory Bullock, who set up the Rose Room and Assembly Hall for various activities; pastors Glenn and Miriam; and especially Annette Johnson, who arranged for two of the speakers.

The entire reflection and celebration add depth to our understanding of recent and recurring events in our nation and give us pause for introspection and collective repentance in the Lenten season and cause to rejoice in the resurrection and in hope during Easter and beyond.



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A Rap and Hip-Hop Production **Speak Loud!** **Speak Proud!**

By Christy D'Ambrosio, Youth Director

This year's youth musical, "Speak Loud, Speak Proud," was an original rap & hip hop production, created during a workshop period, similar to A Chorus Line and other Broadway shows, utilizing spoken word performances, rap and hip hop. The focus was on the youth and their lives in today's world.

Cast members included Nyla Barrow, Imani and Pharryll Elad, Lydia Green, Brianna Obi, Arthur and Daniel Iyok, Lauren Kuo, Eva and Eli Rice, Jordan Scarlett, and Akap Takor. The original spoken word pieces were written with the help of Katie Lamar, Guilderland High School Senior. Katie served as co-Director and spent the fall with the cast helping them write both group and solo raps and performance pieces.

Michael Lister, once again, assembled a fabulous pit orchestra comprised of First Pres youth (Maddy and Ben Eisenbraun), members of our congregation (Peg Schalit and Susan Gierthy), as well as professional musicians from the community (Christian Diefendorf) and St. Rose students (Jahna Stanton, Brittanie Farnum, Rachel Inglis and Gabriel Pellino). Michael directed the orchestra and the Chancel Choir in the finale, "Glory" from the soundtrack of the film *Selma*. The youth sang all of John Legend's (the composer) lyrical choruses and Common's raps.

Amy Scarlett choreographed innovative and fun dances utilizing the hip hop genre of dance, while Araglin Kite organized props, sets, and the cast themselves. Barbara Speck assisted Christy D'Ambrosio with her duties as co-Director and last, but not least, Tim O'Toole videotaped the entire production.

Speak Loud, Speak Proud was entertaining, moving, funny, and poignant....and a tribute to the Youth of First Pres.

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Sunday, April 3 and 10 at 9:30 am

Inquirers' Classes

Have you been visiting First Presbyterian Church? Are you interested in learning more about First Pres? Are you interested in learning about becoming a member? If so, please plan to attend two Inquirer Classes on Sundays, April 3 and 10, from 9:30-10:30 in the Library.

Come and explore with Pastor Miriam church membership and your hopes and dreams for where you can serve God.

Those people who decide to join will be recognized in worship on Sunday, May 1. Register to attend by calling the church office (449-7332). If you have any questions contact Miriam at the church.

The Upper Rooms

The Women at the Tomb

A new rotation in The Upper Rooms (our Christian education program for children in kindergarten through 5th grade) begins April 3 and runs through April 24. This rotation's theme is "The Women at the Tomb," and the children will explore Matthew 28:1-10 through a movie, art, drama and cooking.

Students in grades 6 through 8 are using a middle school curriculum called *Journey to Adulthood* with teachers Ellen Eisenbraun and Amy Robinson.



April 16-18, Washington D. C.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days and Democracy Awakening

More than 100 organizations representing a diverse array of movements and hundreds of thousands of people are coming together for a Democracy Awakening event to demand a democracy that works for all of us. Plan now to be part of the crowd that will converge upon Washington, D.C. for an array of actions, including demonstrations, concerts, teach-ins, a rally, lobbying, and more – all in support of a democracy in which votes are not denied and money doesn't buy policy.

This will mark an unprecedented coming together of historically separate communities and reform proposals. Help build a nation that is truly of, by and for the people. Ecumenical Advocacy Days will be one of the participating groups joining the throng on Sunday the 17th calling for solutions that protect the people's right to vote and prevent real human voices from being drowned out by big money.

The theme for the Ecumenical Advocacy Days program that weekend is *Lift Every Voice: Racism, Class and Power*. "Moral Monday" founder, the Rev. Dr. William Barber, will join the Children's Defense Fund founder, Marian Wright Edelman, and IMA Word Health executive, the Rev. Amy Gopp, as keynote speakers. The FOCUS ministry has some scholarship help available. To learn more or sign up, visit advocacydays.org and to learn more about Democracy Awakening, go to democracyawakening.org and get involved!

Christian Education for all ages -- Every Sunday, 9:30-10:30



Quilts sewn for the Baby Institute and dedicated in Sunday worship

The First Presbyterian

First Friday

By Michael Lister, Music Director

March (pictured here)

In Concert – Giacomo Carissimi's *Jephthe* featuring First Pres soloists and Zephyr Winds

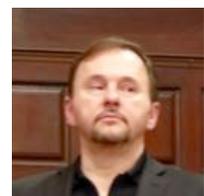
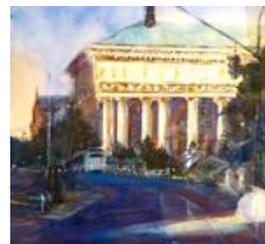
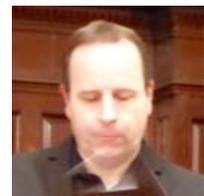
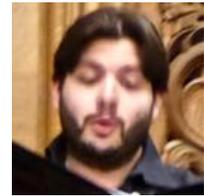
In the Gallery – Kevin Kuhne's watercolors and Constructions

The next First Friday, May 6

In Concert – Capital City String Quartet

Our next First Friday concert on May 6 will feature our former soloist Will Hayes and his ensemble the Capital City String Quartet. They will perform clarinet quintets by Mozart and Brahms featuring their guest clarinetist Tom Gerbino. We look forward to hearing this guest ensemble in performance, and hope you can join us for our next-to-last concert of this season!

On behalf of the musicians of First Presbyterian, we would like to thank our First Presbyterian community and friends for their support again this season.



The First Presbyterian

Deacons' Doings

By Leslie Roccario, Deacon

Look for an upcoming mailing from your new flock Deacons (some are not new!) to see who they are, their contact information, and who else you share a flock with! Flocks are generally organized by geographic location so we are able to assist each other better. When you see it is your flock's turn to host Coffee Hour at church (a monthly responsibility) offer to assist your Deacons, either by bringing some snacks, or serving, or both! Working the coffee hour is a great way to meet the congregation and fulfilling the opportunity to serve. It's fun! You'll like it!

Also, if you like visiting those who can't come to church or enjoy writing notes, let your Deacon know. This is a great way to help your Deacon spread the love to those in the congregation who need some extra attention.

You don't have to be a Deacon to serve!



Ushers and Greeters

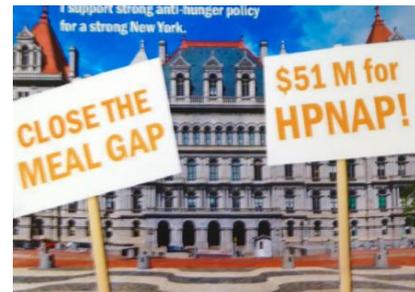
Apr 3	8:30 am	Bruce Brynolfson
	10:45 am	Team 3 – Keith Barber, David Haase, Bob Stevens, Linda Stevens
Apr 10	8:30 am	Ellen Eisenbraun
	10:45 am	Team 4 – Jeff Durgée, Ray Henrikson, Prudence Iyok, Rachel Smith, Barbara Woodruff
Apr 17	8:30 am	Bruce Brynolfson
	10:45 am	Team 5 – Don Mark, David Pettis, Ron Pettis, Marilyn Riddle, Phillip Riddle, Barbara
Apr 24	8:30 pm	Jackie and Lynn Ellsworth
	10:45 am	Team 6 – Diane Cornell, Dee Dee Edwards, Lee Helsby, Harriet Seeley, Cynthia Winter

CROP Hunger Walk

Save Sunday, May 1, and join us for the CROP Walk. This is sponsored by Church World Service. The goal for our area is to raise \$100,000. Twenty-five percent of the money raised goes to local food pantries and soup kitchens. CWS tells us that “with more than 40,000 people in our region utilizing local free meal programs to provide adequate food for their families, this percentage is very helpful.”

If you would like to help organize this year's efforts by FPC or simply want to sign up to walk, please get in touch with Annette Johnson at 434-7455.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is ever on the alert for advocacy issues that address the widening gap between rich and poor.



Men's Bible Study takes a pause during Lent for breakfast together.



Deacons' Flower Ministry

Apr 3	Delmar - Barbara Woodruff, Margaret Zettle, Gail Scott
Apr 10	Albany East – Joe Mathias, Jerry Nathan
Apr 17	Latham-Loudonville – Prudence Iyok, Ron Pettis, Peter Kimuli
Apr 24	Rensselaer & East – Leslie Roccario, Deb Shoup, Diane Cornell

**The Guilderdland-Schenectady
Neighborhood Flock hosts
April Coffee Hours.
Fair Trade Market is Sunday, April 10.**

April 2016

3 Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for all ages
- 9:30 am Confirmation Class
- 9:30 am Inquirer's Class
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:45 am Worship (Communion)
- 11:45 am Fellowship

4 Monday

- 6:00 pm *Music Together*

5 Tuesday

- 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 1:00 pm Staff Meeting
- 5:30 pm **Committee Night**
 - Membership
 - Outreach & Mission
 - Property
 - Worship
- 7:00 pm Dinner
- 7:30 pm • More Light

6 Wednesday

- 12:00 pm JI/JO
- 4:00 pm Presbytery Meeting

7 Thursday

- 7:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 am *Music Together*
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

8 Friday

- 12:00 pm Newsletter deadline

9 Saturday

- 9:30 am–2:00 pm *Author & Illustrator Day, Giffen Elementary School*

10 Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for all ages
- 9:30 am Confirmation Class
- 9:30 am Inquirer's Class
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:45 am Worship
- 11:45 am Fellowship and Fair Trade Market
- 11:45 am Photo ops

11 Monday

- 6:00 pm *Music Together*

12 Tuesday

- 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 6:45 pm Deacons

13 Wednesday

- 6:30 pm Small Group B
- 7:30 pm Dads' Small Group

14 Thursday

- 7:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 12:00 pm Endowment Subcommittee
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

15 Friday

- 6:00 pm Potluck Dinner

16 Saturday

- 6:00–8:00 pm *Carla Fisk, Rose Room*

17 Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for all ages
- 9:30 am Confirmation Class
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:45 am Worship (Communion)
- 11:45 am Fellowship
- 11:45 am Photo ops

18 Monday

- 6:00 pm FOCUS at Trinity Methodist
- 6:00 pm *Music Together*

19 Tuesday

- 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 10:00 am Clergy Meeting
- 12:00 pm – 9:00 pm *Presidential Primary*
- 7:00 pm Session

20 Wednesday

- 12:00 pm JI/JO
- 7:15 pm Small Group B³

21 Thursday

- 7:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 am *Music Together*
- 12:00 pm Newsletter Folders
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

24 Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for all ages
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:45 am Worship - Baptism
- 11:45 am Fellowship
- 11:45 am Photo ops

25 Monday

- 6:00 pm *Music Together*

26 Tuesday

- 9:00 am Men's Bible Study

27 Wednesday

- 6:30 pm Small Group B
- 7:30 pm Dads' Small Group

28 Thursday

- 7:00 am Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 am *Music Together*
- 6:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

30 Saturday

- 11:00 am Bob Jackson Memorial Service

AA Meeting Schedule

- Daily 5:30 pm daily
- Wed 10:00 pm
- Thurs 7:30 pm

Get Well Group

- Wed & Fri 7:30 pm

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Albany, NY 12210

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The First Presbyterian

Lectionary

- April 3 Second Sunday of Easter**
Acts 5:27-32 Psalm 118:14-29 or Psalm 150
Revelation 1:4-8 John 20:19-31
- April 10 Third Sunday of Easter**
Acts 9:1-6 [7-20] Psalm 30
Revelation 5:11-14 John 21:1-19
- April 17 Fourth Sunday of Easter**
Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23
Revelation 7:9-17 John 10:22-30
- April 24 Fifth Sunday of Easter**
Acts 11:1-18 Psalm 148
Revelation 21:1-6 John 13:31-35

See the Newsletter on line and in color at
www.firstpresalbany.org

Also see us on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

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Please notify the church office of any
change in address.

Recordings of the worship service
are available from the church office.