



The First Presbyterian Newsletter

Volume 70, Number 10

June 2015



Youth Sunday

Youth Lead a Thoughtful Service

By Christy D'Ambrosio

Twenty young people created a very special worship experience for both the 8:30 and 10:45 worship services on Youth Sunday, May 10. They composed and delivered the prayers, sermon, and the liturgical “glue” that holds it together: scripture, musical solos, duets, and trios. The focus was on our current theme: “Called by God to reduce the widening gap between rich and poor.”

Sam Rogers wrote and delivered the sermon, “Do you love me?” Elizabeth Leupold sang the anthem and Helen Lewis (cello) played the Offertory. Emma, Maddy, and Ben Eisenbraun, the family orchestra, played a string duet and trio for the Prelude and Postlude. Katie Myers welcomed the congregation at both services and delivered the Benediction.

Katie Lamar, Lidia Boucher, Lydia Green, Imani Elad, and Dorothy Sperry composed and delivered prayers and responsive readings.

Akap Takor and Sophia Pruzek read the scripture. Pharryll Elad led the congregation through passing the peace, and Maggie Robinson led the congregation in the Lord’s Prayer. Arthur and Daniel Iyok guided us through the offertory, and Luke Eaton rang the church bell for Call to Worship.

Many parents, grandparents, and members of the congregation were present and proud to honor a lively, thoughtful, and handsome(!) group. Thank you youth of First Pres!

“When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars...
O Lord, our Sovereign,
How majestic is your name
in all the earth!”

Psalm 8:3,9

In This Issue

Pause Here a Moment.....	2-3
Youth Sunday Photos.....	4
June – More Light Month	5
Education Celebration	6
Ministry Recognition Sunday	6
Welcome to First Pres!	6
Visiting Speakers and Musicians	7
First Friday in June.....	7
CROP Hunger Walk.....	8
High School Graduates	8
Home Repair Project.....	9
Schedules and Calendar	10-11

Dates to Remember in June

Sunday, June 7, at 9:30 am -- More Light Sunday Adult Education (Rose Room) with Anthony Cortese, CEO of Albany’s St. Anne Institute

Sunday, June 21, at 9:30 am -- Education Celebration in Assembly Hall; light breakfast and a fun filled program for all ages

Sunday, June 21, at 10:45 Worship -- Ministry Recognition Sunday -- Members will be recognized for the various ministries that happen through First Presbyterian Church.

Sunday, June 28 at 9:30 am -- Summer Worship Services begin at First Pres -- Worship each Sunday at 9:30 am, **except** when a joint worship service will be held at a FOCUS Church. (See p. 10.)

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

Todd Sisley
Interim Organist

Christy D'Ambrosio
Youth Director

Robert C. Lamar
Pastor Emeritus

Elders

Clancy Cherry
Clerk of Session
Keith Barber
Joyce Bascom
Carol Bullard
Debra Fagans
Richard Gascoyne
Ray Henrikson
Charles Kite
Stephanie Kite
Harry (Skip) Meislahn
John Myers
Phillip Riddle
Roseline Takor

Deacons

L. Lee Helsby
Moderator
Diane Cornell
David Hinchen
Prudence Iyok
Annette Johnson
Ellen Kemp
Judith Mark
Ron Pettis
Jessica Piacente
Stephanie Ragone
Leslie Roccario
Peg Schalit
Gail Scott
Deb Shoup
Grace White
Robert Willower
Barbara Woodruff
Margaret Zettle

Pause Here a Moment - Youth Sermon on Youth Sunday **How Will We Answer?**

By Sam Rogers

There will come a time when all of us will be standing in front of God, and God will ask us a question—just one. He's not going to ask us how many times we've gone to church (thankfully), or how many times we have read the Bible, or how much money or time we've donated to our church. No, God will only ask us "Do you love me?"

Sitting here, it is easy for us to silently mouth the word "yes", but we won't answer "yes" or "no" with our mouths before God, we will answer with our lives. Our entire lives will be reviewed and it will be how we've lived our lives that'll truly determine whether we love God or not.

The scripture of 1 John tells us the following:

"How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?" (1 John 3:17). "For those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen." (1 John 4:20).

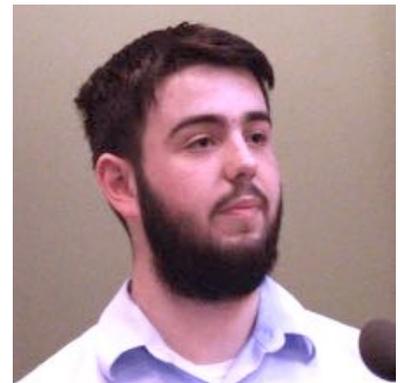
Furthermore, Jesus, in the book of Mathew, tells us how we should love God:

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." (Mat. 25:35–36).

So the Lord has made it clear to us that it is how we treat those who are most insignificant and without power that demonstrates our love for God. Showing respect and honor and concern for the rich and the powerful, on the other hand, shows love for the world. It is the twisted nature of the world to give to those who do not need, and to take from those who don't have enough. It is the twisted way of the world to fawn over the rich and the powerful, but to despise the poor and the powerless. When we give to the wealthy, when we show honor to the wealthy, when we show partiality to the wealthy and the powerful, we demonstrate our love for the world and the things of the world. But as said in the book of James "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God." (James 4:4).

We must care for the poor, the powerless, those who have no means of support, no protection, and who are oppressed by others and by circumstances; we must prevent our minds from giving into greed and

Continued on p. 3.



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

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selfishness, which not only keeps the powerless in their suffering, but comes to blame the powerless for being powerless and the poor for being poor—for we never love the world more, and we never show our hatred of God more, than when we blame those who need our help for being in need of our help, and then use that blame as a justification and pretext to deny them the help they so desperately need from us.

Loving the world and the things of the world is hatred of God. Loving those who are poor, despised, powerless, in need, hungry, naked, sick, lonely, in short, loving those who are hated by the world, this is the love of God and love for God. And, as we are told in Leviticus, “if any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens.” (Lev. 25:35).

Since we exist for God and belong to God, we show our love for God by amending our lives, and even our thoughts, so that our whole lives declare our love for God, so that when we meet God face to face on that Day of Judgment, we shall have no doubt when asked “Do you love me?” for our whole lives will have declared it.

To that end, let us learn to love God now in how we live, so that we may love Him forever when we die. Paul writes in the book of Romans “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and

acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God— what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:1–2), and declare with your whole life, that you do love God.

Our lives aren’t divided up between our real lives and our religious lives; or among our financial lives and our religious lives; or our work lives and our religious lives; or any other division that singles out our religious life as something other and distinct from everyday life. We don’t live our religious lives for an hour once a week or whenever it is that we can make it to church and then live the rest of our lives. Our religious lives should set the boundaries for how we live our lives.

Yet, our religious lives do not just consist of things like going to church and reading the bible. These things help aid in how we live our religious lives. They assist us in our religious lives, but they are not our religious lives. They are merely tools we use in our religious lives.

There will come a time when all of us will be standing in front of God, and God will ask us a question—just one. He’s not going to ask us how many times we’ve gone to church, or how many times we have read the Bible, or how much money or time we’ve donated to our church. No, God will only ask us “Do you love me?”

How will we answer?

Photos on p. 4.

The First Presbyterian



Youth Sunday -- How Will We Answer?



The First Presbyterian

Justice and Equality

June - More Light Month

By Keith Barber, Chair, More Light Committee



As the Pilgrims prepared to set sail for the New World, their Presbyterian pastor, John Robinson, admonished them to keep open minds on theological matters, since God had "more light and truth yet to break forth from his Word." In the early 1980s, Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns discovered this gem while seeking a new name for their organization, dedicated to better ministry to and with LGBT people. The old name ignored the B (bisexual) and the T (transgender)

people it sought to include. Suddenly, PLGC became More Light Presbyterians, a fellowship within the Presbyterian Church advocating for a church as big and encompassing as God's love. As Pastor Robinson challenged the Pilgrims, More Light Presbyterians challenged the church to seek a humility to find yet more light and truth from the Word of God. Ours was one of the pioneer churches in the More Light movement and we can take satisfaction in pulling the rest of the church along in this quest for God's truth and inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning people in the full life and fellowship of Christ's community.

With the rest of the Presbyterian Church(USA), we now celebrate More Light Sunday on the first Sunday of June. We've come a long way, have achieved equality in opportunities for ordination and marriage equality in the church. In looking at who else is hurting because of sexual identity or orientation issues, we became aware of young people living on the streets because their parents threw them out of the house when they came out, or ran away because of abuse from parents who could not or would not accept their sexual orientation.

We also look forward to worship at our regular times on More Light Sunday, June 7, and

wherever Pastors Miriam and Glenn lead us; and after the late service, cake in the Assembly Hall.

We will, in addition, be involved in many aspects of the community's annual Pride Fest. We ask you to join in and lend your support.

Sunday, June 7, at 9:30 am More Light Sunday



Anthony Cortese, CEO of St. Anne Institute

Adult Education (Rose Room) with Anthony Cortese, CEO of Albany's St. Anne Institute, which provides shelter and services to such young people. There's a powerful story here, well worth our time and concern.

Monday, June 8, 7:00 pm - We again host the Interfaith Worship of Welcoming Congregations to kick off Pride activities. They were so impressed with our hospitality last year that they invited us to host this worship again.

Saturday, June 13, 9:30 am - Decorating the Presbyterian Rainbow float for the Pride Parade. Presbyterian Rainbow is made up of churches and individuals from all over Albany Presbytery. As witness to the larger community, we participate in the parade and in the festival that follows. Come help out and get in on the fun. You can be in the parade if you want, and straight allies are warmly welcomed.

Saturday, June 20, 4:00 pm - Presbyterian Rainbow worship celebration in our sanctuary marking the official amendment of the PC(USA) Book of Order to better define marriage and to permit same-sex marriage in the church. Rainbow asked to use our church for this celebration in order to honor our two former moderators of the General Assembly, Bob Lamar and Freda Gardner, both of whom have provided great support and encouragement, and to honor our congregation for its pioneering role.

The First Presbyterian

Sunday, June 21 at 9:30 am Education Celebration

Join us on Sunday, June 21, at 9:30, in Assembly Hall for our Education Celebration where all ages will be celebrating our Sunday morning Christian Education program.

Join us for a light breakfast of finger foods and a fun-filled program looking back over this past year. Teachers, shepherds, adults, youth and children are all invited to join this celebration! Back by popular demand is the Backward Jeopardy Game. Come and see how much you learned this year! You'll see pictures and artwork from the year, hear about plans for next year, honor those who played a special role this year, and participate in interactive activities. Don't miss this opportunity for fellowship and a chance to celebrate our young people.

June 21 at 8:30 and 10:45 Worship Ministry Recognition Sunday

Be sure to join our entire church family on Sunday, June 21. It is Ministry Recognition Sunday, and during both services members will be recognized for the various ministries which happen through First Presbyterian Church.



Art Installations
from First Friday
in May



Greet a New Visitor This Sunday Welcome to First Pres!

By David Hinchey, Membership Committee

I'm always impressed with how many First Pres members effortlessly welcome a first time visitor to church. We are a friendly and engaging lot. I was warmly greeted on my first visit to this church and made to feel comfortable. I came back. It's important for all of us to remember to keep an eye out for new faces, and old faces too, at Sunday worship.

Coffee hour is a great time to strike up a conversation, but immediately after the service ends is when you need to "catch" a visitor. I often notice that first time visitors tend to exit quickly, so try to greet them in the aisle immediately after church. A simple "Hello, I don't believe we've met. I'm" may lead to a "Hi, I'm" You may want to mention something unique about First Pres, a great way to start a conversation. Sharing your thoughts on the service, the music, our historic building or a recent outreach experience is another way to begin an informal exchange.

Rather than immediately asking questions, sharing a bit about yourself and our church community is a great way to engage visitors. They may soon want to share something about themselves or their reaction to the worship service.

Introduce them to the pastors. Walk with them down the aisle to greet the pastors and others in the congregation. Introduce guests to someone in the church who may share an interest you have just discovered about the guest. You may want to lead guests to a brochure that tells about the church. And, be sure to invite them (and take them!) to coffee hour.



The First Presbyterian



Above: Katherine Paterson, who, along with her presentation at Author Illustrator Day, joined us as guest preacher. Katherine, born in China of Presbyterian missionaries, is a two-time Newberry Award winner and the author of *Bridge to Terabithia*.



Welcoming visitors to worship services is important to the vitality of our congregation and its continued growth. Likewise, we are blessed with a wonderful variety of visiting speakers and musicians, whom we welcome with equal joy.

Above: Zephyr Winds, Melynda Matheke, flute; Susan Gierthy, oboe; John Van Voris, clarinet; Edward Marchilok, bassoon; Virginia Fossner, French horn.



Above: Maria Rabbia, guest organist and undergraduate music major at the College of St. Rose



The Madrigal Singers of the College of St. Rose, under the direction of Dr. Michael Lister, were featured at last month's First Friday concert.

First Friday, June 5

By Michael Lister, Director of Music

It has been another exciting First Friday season this year, and on behalf of the musicians and artists that have been involved, I would like to thank David Hinchon for arranging the artists and Fiona McKinney for coordinating refreshments, and all who attended these events. Our last concert and gallery will be June 5th. For this concert the musicians of First Presbyterian will present *A Musical Cabaret*, featuring songs and standards from the musical theater spanning the 20th century. The art gallery will feature a stunning collection of pieces by Heather Blossom Brown, titled *The Art of Wood-burning*. The concert will begin at 6 pm, and the gallery (with refreshments) will open at 5:30 pm. We hope that can join us! Bring a friend or two.

CROP Walk Ending Hunger One Step at a Time

By Deborah Shoup, Co-chair, CROP

Many, thanks to all our walkers, their sponsors and our team sponsors! We have earned \$8,500 plus as of May 15. That amount translates to 200 packets of tools and seeds as well as training for farmers in Honduras, who will practice sustainable and diversified food production; \$3,375 for food and medical supplies for refugees in camps and \$2,125 for our local food pantries.

Most of our 16 walkers and bikers took the 3.5 mile walk. They ranged in age from 6 year old Cheyenne to several who were 60+. They were supported by 110 sponsors. Annette Johnson, Cheyenne's team (Diane Cornell and Cindy Winter) and Lydia Green's team (Carol and Roger) were our top solicitors of sponsors. Thanks to Annette as our co-chair as well. Thanks to Roger Green for distributing water to our walkers via bike!

Last year we received the Bronze Sneaker award from the Albany Council of Churches for making \$5,500, the third largest amount.



Ofu Takor

Congratulations to FPC High School Graduates

Graduating from High School this June are Emma Eisenbraun, Eleanor Haase, Elizabeth Leupold, Helen Lewis, Katie Myers, Sam Rogers, and Ofu Takor.



Sam Rogers



Helen Lewis



Katie Myers



Emma Eisenbraun



Eleanor Haase



Elizabeth Leupold

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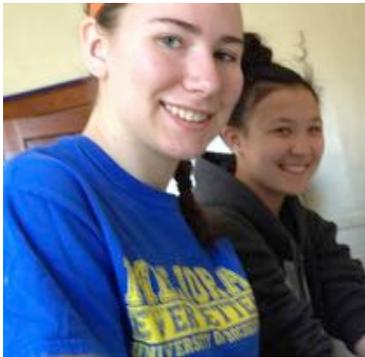
Home Repair Project

Work Continues in West Hills

On Saturday, April 25, a great group came to paint and do touch-up work at the Foskey Home. Eric Fagans installed the quarter rounds in the first floor kitchen, which has been tiled and painted and is looking fabulous. Ron Geuther, Lynn and Jackie Ellsworth painted the dining room, which was more difficult than it sounds. There was a wallpaper border along the top of the wall that needed to be removed. With a few final touch ups from Ron, Lynn and Jackie, the room was ready and painted. Ray Newkirk and Christy D'Ambrosio did some touch-up work in the first floor bathroom. Rachel Smith, Lauren Kuo, Emma and Eric Eisenbraun all worked on the kitchen upstairs, which was completed.

This home is looking very good. The work remaining includes painting a second floor bathroom, a couple of radiators, repairing some wood, lacquering a sink and changing a window to a door to accommodate a wheel chair platform. John Myers and Eric Fagans have come up with this idea and it's a good one. More info to follow.

If you would like to join this smiling group, please contact Christy D'Ambrosio (christy@firstpresalbany.org or 423-4763) or Eric Fagans (371-0131 or edfagans@me.com) for details about the next Home Repair Project Work Day. Looking forward to seeing you there!



The First Presbyterian

Summer Schedule Starts June 28

9:30 am **Worship Service at First Presbyterian Church**
each Sunday **except** when a joint worship service
will be held at the following **FOCUS** Churches:

July 5 **First Presbyterian Church**
9:30 am We are the hosts!

August 2 **Emmanuel Baptist Church**
9:30 am 275 State Street, Albany

September 6 **Trinity Methodist Church**
9:30 am 235 Lark Street, Albany



**Photos from
Youth Sunday**

Education Grants

By Carol Bullard, Membership
Committee Chair

First Presbyterian Church awards
education grants to members who
seek financial assistance in
continuing their education. These
funds may be used in any way
during the school year for any type
of studies beyond high school. A
simple Education Grant Request
form can be obtained from the
church office. Completed forms
must be received by Tuesday,
August 11, 2015.



Ushers and Greeters

- Jun 7** **8:30 am** Ellen Eisenbraun
10:45 am Team 1 – Elizabeth Leupold, Helen Lewis,
Katie Myers, Mia Robinson, Jenna Scarlett,
Ofu Takor
- Jun 14** **8:30 am** Jackie and Lynn Ellsworth
10:45 am Team 2 – Joanne Gascoyne, Richard
Gascoyne, Bob Stevens, Linda Stevens
- Jun 21** **8:30 am** John Myers
10:45 am Team 3 – Keith Barber, David Haase,
David Hannay, Margaret Hannay
- Jun 28** **9:30 am** Team 4 – Jeff Durgée, Ray Henrikson,
Prudence Iyok, Rachel Smith, Roseline
Takor

Deacons' Flower Ministry

- Jun 7** Rensselaer & East – Leslie Roccario, Deb
Shoup, Diane Cornell
- Jun 14** Guilderland-Schenectady – Grace White,
Ellen Kemp, Peg Schalit
- Jun 21** Albany South – Annette Johnson, Jessica
Piacente, Bob Willower
- Jun 28** Delmar – Barbara Woodruff, Stephanie
Ragone, Gail Scott

**The Delmar Neighborhood Flock hosts June
Coffee Hours.**

Fair Trade Market is Sunday, June 14.

The First Presbyterian

June 2015

1 Monday (Office Closed)

Presbytery at Silver Bay

2 Tuesday

Presbytery at Silver Bay

- 5:30 pm **Committee Night**
- Membership
 - Outreach & Mission
 - Property
 - Worship
- 7:00 pm Dinner
- 7:30 pm • Comm. & Tech. and Property
- More Light

3 Wednesday

12:00 pm JI/JO

4 Thursday

- 6:00 pm Bell Choir
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir

5 Friday

- 5:30 pm First Friday Art Display
- 6:00 pm First Friday Concert

7 More Light Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for All Ages
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir
- 10:45 am Worship (Communion)
- 11:45 am Fellowship

8 Monday (Office Closed)

7:00 pm Welcoming Congregations
Interfaith Worship

9 Tuesday

6:45 pm Deacons

10 Wednesday

12:00 pm Staff Meeting

7:30 pm Dads' Small Group

11 Thursday

7:00 am Men's Bible Breakfast

7:30 pm Chancel Choir

12 Friday

12:00 pm Newsletter Deadline

13 Saturday

9:30 am Float Decoration and
Pride Parade

14 New Member Sunday

- 8:30 am Worship (Communion)
- 9:30 am Education for All Ages
- 9:45 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:45 am Worship
- 11:45 am Fellowship
- Fair Trade Market
- 12:15 pm Montreat Orientation

15 Monday (Office Closed)

1:00 pm PEO

6:00 pm FOCUS Board Meeting at
Emmanuel Baptist Church

16 Tuesday

10:00 am Clergy Meeting

17 Wednesday

12:00 pm JI/JO

18 Thursday

5:30 pm South End Development
Group at Howe Library

7:30 pm Chancel Choir

20 Saturday

9:00 – 3:30 Home Repair Work Day

4:00 pm Presbyterian Rainbow
Celebration

21 Ministry Recognition Sunday

8:30 am Worship (Communion)

9:30 am Education Celebration

9:45 am Chancel Choir

10:45 am Worship (Communion)

11:45 am Fellowship

22 Monday (Office Closed)

23 Tuesday

6:00 pm Session Dinner and
Meeting at Charlie Kite's

24 Wednesday

7:30 Dads' Small Group

25 Thursday

12:00 pm Newsletter Folders

27 Saturday

6:00 pm South End Development
Dinner

28 Sunday

9:30 am Worship (communion)

10:30 am Fellowship

29 Monday (Office Closed)

30 Tuesday

4:30 pm Pastors for Peace

Italics = Outside Group

AA Meeting Schedule

Mon 5:30 pm

Tue 5:30 pm

Wed 5:30 pm

Thurs 5:30 & 7:30 pm

Fri 5:30 pm

Sat 5:30 pm

Sun 5:30 pm

Get Well Group

Wed 7:30 pm

Heldeberg Music Schedule

Mon 5:30 pm

Wed 10:30 am & 5:00 pm

Thurs 9:30 & 10:30 am

New Office Hours

Tuesday through Friday
8:30 am to 1:30 pm
The office is closed on
Mondays June 1–Sept. 7

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
362 State Street
Albany, NY 12210

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Lectionary

- Jun 7 2nd Sunday after Pentecost**
1 Samuel 8:4–11 (12–15) 16–20 (11:14–15) Psalm 138
2 Corinthians 4:13–5:1 Mark 3:20–35
- Jun 14 3rd Sunday after Pentecost**
1 Samuel 15:34–16:13 Psalm 20
2 Corinthians 5:6–10 (11–13) 14–17 Mark 4:26–34
- Jun 21 4th Sunday after Pentecost**
1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4–11, 19–23) 32–49
Psalm 9:9–20 or 1 Samuel 17:57–18:5, 10–16
Psalm 133
2 Corinthians 6:1–13 Mark 4:35–41
- Jun 28 5th Sunday after Pentecost**
2 Samuel 1:1, 17–27 Psalm 130
2 Corinthians 8:7–15 Mark 5:21–43

See the Newsletter on line and in color at
www.firstpresalbany.org
Also see us on www.facebook.com 



New Office Hours
Tuesday through Friday
8:30 am to 1:30 pm
The office is closed on Mondays
June 1- Sept. 7

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Editor Rev. Glenn D. Leupold
Layout Richard C. Gascoyne

Please notify the church office of any change in address.

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