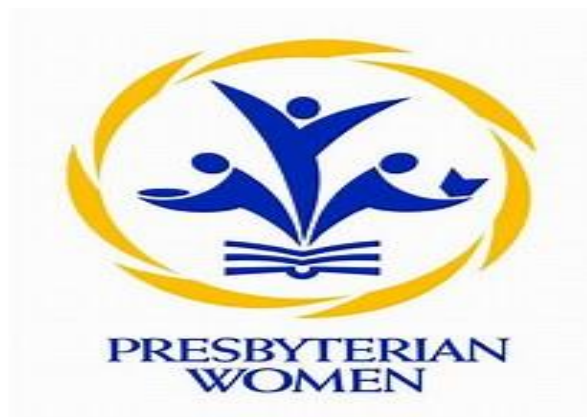


# ***Albany Presbyterian Women's Newsletter***

*"My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding"* **Psalm 49:3**

**Winter 2024**



## ***Message from the Moderator***

**Andrea Ralph**

It is an honor to become the Moderator of the Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany. I have prayerfully accepted position this and have enjoyed working with our dedicated Coordinating Team. In our community of Presbyterian women, we celebrate the rich experiences and expressions that each individual and group bring to the table. Whether we find ourselves drawn to advocacy, fellowship, mission, or nurturing spirituality, we recognize that each avenue holds its own significance and contributes to the collective journey of Presbyterian Women. We know Presbyterian Women are aligned under a shared Purpose, but the gifts of the Spirit allow us to live into the Purpose in our own, unique ways. One of the purposes of Presbyterian Women in the Albany Presbytery Coordinating Team is to be a resource for PW groups and other women's groups that wish to have some involvement in PW activities or form a PW group.

If your congregation has a women's group that has an interest in affiliating with Presbyterian Women and you would like me to visit, please contact me at [aralph20@hotmail.com](mailto:aralph20@hotmail.com). The only thing a women's group needs to be to consider itself a Presbyterian Women's group is for its activities to fit into any aspect of the Presbyterian Women's Purpose. Feel free to reach out to anyone on our team.

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May we continue to embrace the diversity of gifts and callings among us, knowing that it is through our unique contributions that we collectively embody the fullness of our Purpose.

### **Presbyterian Women's Purpose**

**Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves**

- **to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,**
- **to support the mission of the church worldwide,**
- **to work for justice and peace, and**
- **to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.**

***Our Moderator, Elder Andrea Ralph nominated to be on the  
Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Board of Directors***  
**by**  
**The Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany**

Elder Andrea Ralph, our current Moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany and a member of Roessleville Presbyterian Church has been nominated to be the Black/African American/African Member-at-large on the Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Board of Directors. This position has been created to ensure that the voices of Black, African American and African women are heard and to bring a diverse point of view. She will be installed to this position at the Presbyterian Women's 2024 Churchwide Gathering in St. Louis, Missouri in August and serve a three-year term.

We are very aware of Andrea's dedication to Presbyterian Women and her leadership skills. We're extremely happy and proud that her abilities are recognized beyond our Presbytery. Andrea's exposure to Presbyterian Women at the Churchwide level will be a real benefit to PW in the Presbytery of Albany.

***Presbyterian Women's Page on Presbytery Web site.***

We have a page on the Albany Presbytery Web site. It has been recently updated. See <https://albanypresbytery.org/presbyterian-women/>

***Presbytery PAL Program***  
**By Charlotte Hasselbarth**

Last year PW in the Synod of the Northeast established the PWP PAL program. It had been noted that Presbyterian Women's (PW) groups in churches in presbyteries where there is no longer a presbytery level Coordinating Team, are missing a critical information flow from the Churchwide and Synod levels of PW.

PW in the Presbytery of Albany was asked to establish a communication link with PW leaders and other interested women in the Northern New York Presbytery. We have been very fortunate to have created a relationship with three PW in the congregation groups in the Northern New York Presbytery. The PW in our Presbytery has established a special email group for people in the Northern New York Presbytery. This connection has yielded an unexpected benefit. In the process of creating the email group I got to know Margot McGorman, a member of PW of Jefferson County (a combined PW group from First Presbyterian Church of Watertown and close by Stone Presbyterian Church). Her PW was involved in the creation of "Women of Grace Widows Fund", a mission program in Malawi. Margot was invited to speak at the "Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast Caring and Sharing Meeting" that focused on Together in Service on Sun, Jan 7. Her talk inspired much interest and many questions.

Link to a video about "Women of Grace Widows Fund" <https://youtu.be/WNxbQrV7YZA>

Link to the "Women of Grace Widows Fund" newsletter  
<http://www.womenofgracewidows.org/images/newsletters/2022-WOGnl.pdf>

## ***Fall Gathering***

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany Fall Gathering was held at Westminster Presbyterian Church and topic was “Impediments to Children’s Literacy”. The guest speaker was Dr. Kimberly Wilkins, recently retired New York State Educational Deputy Commissioner of P-12 Instructional Support. The session began by presenting statistical data illustrating the disparities or gaps in literacy levels among students in public schools. Dr. Wilkins explained reading is the foundation for educational success and opportunities in life. Children without the necessary literacy skills can fall behind quickly, and the consequences last a lifetime. The interactive session was an opportunity to reflect on personal experiences in school and present situations with children and grandchildren. The interactive nature of the session encouraged participants to reflect on their own experiences with literacy in school, as well as their observations of literacy challenges faced by their own children and grandchildren. This reflective exercise helped participants better understand the significance of addressing literacy gaps and exploring potential solutions to support improved literacy outcomes for all students. Past Moderator Bisi Shofu followed with an informative discussion entitled “Education is the Key”, explaining how we as presbyterian women can play an active role to support literacy. Participants donated over fifty books which were given to Wizards Wardrobe for distribution to students. Encouraging reading at home is crucial for fostering literacy and a love for books among students. The gathering closed with a Book Dedications Service led by Pastor Kathi Jones.

***Least Coin***  
**by Rosalie Hemingway**

The Fellowship of the Least Coin is a worldwide program where people around the world set aside a coin of the lowest denomination of their country when saying a prayer for wholeness and fellowship for all peoples. These coins are collected and when put together become a large amount which is used for several types of grants. Project grants numbering twelve and totaling \$47,000 in 2023 went to support mental health, menstrual health, bee keeping, peacebuilding, and children's sports. Block grants totaling \$52,000, scholarships to individuals of \$1,000, and emergency grants of \$8,000 for disaster relief brought the total to \$108,000 for the year.

Additional information may be found in the November/December issue of Horizons or on the Presbyterian Women's website [www.presbyterianwomen.org](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org). Please considering participating in this fundraising endeavor in 2024 and sending your contributions to the Churchwide office at: Presbyterian Women, Inc., Remittance Processing-Giving, PO Box 643652, Pittsburgh, PA 15264.

***Presbyterian Women of the First Presbyterian Church of Valatie***

The Presbyterian Women of the First Presbyterian Church of Valatie will be following a long tradition of leading the service on the second Sunday of March. Doing this service annually has given them the opportunity to inform the congregation of the activities and interests of Presbyterian Women on a local and international level. They will be using the Celebrate the Gifts of Women service *Wonder Women, Real or Myth?* From the November/December Horizon's

Magazine. The service will be available on Zoom at 10:00am March 10 using the Zoom ID of 849 2354 4850 and PC 375517 or on the church's Facebook page.

### ***"The Lighthouse" - PWSNE newsletter***

The deadline for the next edition of the "Lighthouse" is March 1. Our editor, Susan Silliman Smith is looking for event fliers, poems, recipes, book reviews, stories about how you are serving God, what is unique about your PW group and anything you would like to share. She would like photos. Put PWSNE **LIGHTHOUSE** in the subject line. and send to [august13sss@gmail.com](mailto:august13sss@gmail.com).

### ***Spring Gathering***

The Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Albany extend a warm invitation to you to join us for our upcoming Spring Gathering. This special event will take place at Trinity Presbyterian Church, located at 185 Swaggertown Road in Scotia.

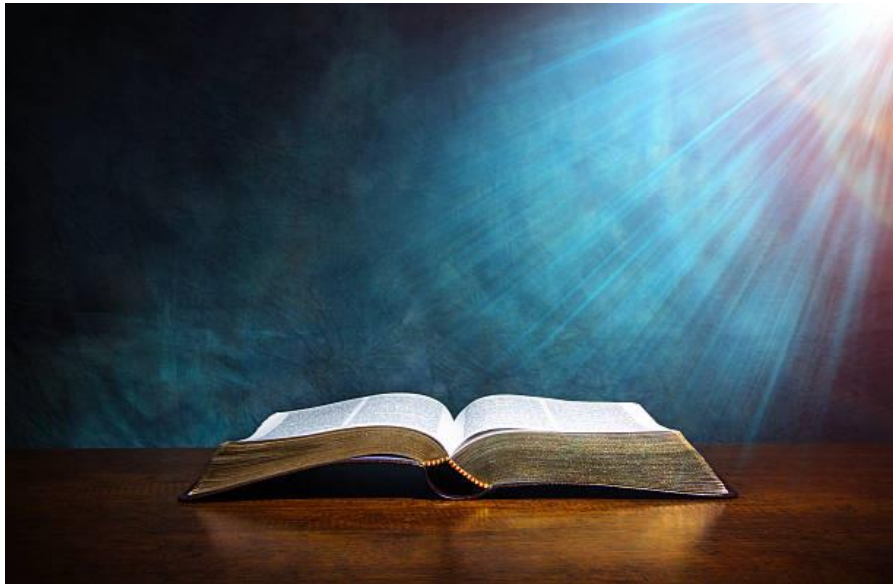
We are thrilled to announce that our guest speaker for the occasion will be Marianne Montero. She will be sharing captivating highlights from her mission experience, offering insight and inspiration to all who attend.

Mark your calendars now for this not-to-be-missed event! The gathering will commence at 12:00 PM and continue until 3:30 PM, allowing ample time for fellowship, learning, and reflection.

Stay tuned for more details on registration and additional information about the event. We look forward to coming together as a community to celebrate, learn, and grow. See you there!

### ***New Name for the Newsletter***

As we embrace the dawn of a new year, it is time to rename the Albany Presbyterian Women's Newsletter. If a name resonates within you, we encourage you to share your suggestions. Your contributions will be carefully reviewed by the coordinating team and a new name will be selected. We eagerly await your submissions.



### ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany invite you to  
celebrate a

# World Day of Prayer Service

“I beg you...bear with one another in love.” Ephesians 4:1-3

The service is written by Christian women in Palestine.



Saturday, March 2

1:30 - 2 pm - Fellowship time

2-3 pm - Worship Service

A freewill offering will be received.

Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church  
2291 Western Ave., Guilderland, NY 12084 & Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89370962958?pwd=aVBVMDA4WV15S254K2lEWUtzYUpmZz09>

Meeting ID: 893 7096 2958  
Passcode: 703098



*Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany invite you to  
celebrate the*

**Spring Gathering**



**Wednesday, April 24, 2024  
Trinity Presbyterian Church**

**85 Swaggertown Rd, Scotia, NY 12302**

**12:00-3:30pm**

**Guest Speaker Marianne Montero  
Presbytery Mission Experience**

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His mighty power.  
Ephesians 6:10*

*Elder Andrea Ralph*  
Editor

