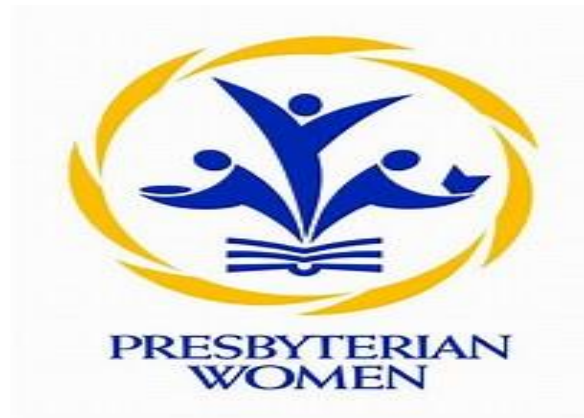


Albany Presbyterian Women's Newsletter

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. - Isaiah 41:10

Fall 2025



Message from the Moderator

Andrea Ralph

This season, I've been reflecting on how the Spirit moves among us—not always in grand, dramatic ways, but often through the steady, faithful rhythms of women showing up for one another and their communities. In moments of planning, praying, serving, and simply being present, I see the heart of Presbyterian Women in action.

It is inspiring how each of you brings something uniquely vital to our shared work. Some of you lead with boldness, others with quiet strength. Some are drawn to mission, others to spiritual growth or community care. Every expression of service reflects the many ways God is at work through us.

As your Coordinating Team, we remain committed to being a resource and a support for PW groups throughout our Presbytery. Whether your group is thriving,

rebuilding, or just getting started, you are not alone. Together, we create a network of encouragement, inspiration, and faithful action.

Let us continue moving forward—grounded in our Purpose, guided by grace, and open to the new things God is doing in and through us.

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.**

You're Invited: Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering 2025

The Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany joyfully invites you to our Fall Gathering—a time to reconnect, reflect, and renew our shared commitment to faith, service, and sisterhood. This gathering is more than just a meeting—it's a chance to gather as a community of faithful women who care deeply about living out our Purpose. In a world that often pulls us in many directions, this is sacred space to pause, listen, share, and grow together in spirit and mission.

We're honored to welcome two dynamic and faithful women who will share firsthand how Thank Offering Grants—funded by generous giving through Presbyterian Women—are transforming lives right here in our Presbytery.

Mary Anne Davis, Vice Moderator of the Presbytery of Albany, will speak about how a Thank Offering Grant helped St. Peter's Presbyterian Church renovate its kitchen—a project that supports both hospitality and mission in their congregation and community.

Rev. Donna Elia, Executive Director of Troy Area United Ministries and Pastor at St. Peter's, will share about not one, but two Thank Offering Grants that launched and expanded "Tech for Teens"—a program helping young people gain access to the tools and skills they need to succeed in an increasingly digital world.

Their stories remind us that when women come together in faith, pray, and give, God multiplies our efforts beyond what we can imagine.

Fall Gathering Details

RSVP by **October 23** to **Andrea Ralph** at

ARalph20@hotmail.com or (516) 849-3220

Your RSVP helps the host church plan for seating and hospitality.

Registration Fee: \$10.00, collected at the door

Lunch: Bring your own bag lunch

Hospitality: Dessert and beverages will be provided

Offering: A freewill offering will be received to support PW mission

Come for the fellowship, stay for the inspiration. Whether you're deeply involved in a PW group or just curious to learn more, plan to come. Let us continue walking together in faith and purpose as we celebrate the strength of women united in Christ's service. We hope to see you there!

Spirit-Filled Fellowship at the 2025 Annual Gathering and Business Meeting

Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast

The 2025 Annual Gathering and Business Meeting of the Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast was a beautiful two-day event filled with spirit, fellowship, and worship at Hamilton Union Presbytery Church in Guilderland, NY. Held both in person and via Zoom, the theme, “Refreshment for the Journey – Come Get Recharged,” truly came to life as women from across the synod came together in faith and community.

We were deeply moved by two heartfelt presentations from recipients of the Thank Offering, both from the Albany Presbytery. Mary Anne Davis, Vice Moderator of the Presbytery of Albany and Rev. Donna Elia, Executive Director of Troy Area United Ministries and Pastor at St. Peter’s These inspiring women shared their powerful stories of how PW support is making a difference in their ministries and communities.

Day one ended with fun and games during dinner, offering time to relax, laugh, and bond. We returned the next morning for meaningful worship and practical workshops designed to equip and support PW groups. The two workshops- “How to Set an Agenda” and “How to Take Minutes”-were well received and offered valuable tools for effective leadership and organization.

During the business portion of the meeting, we covered important updates, shared reports, and looked ahead to the future of our work. Lunch was a time of joyful fellowship and connection with one another.

We celebrated the installation of our new officers, followed by closing worship that sent us out with renewed purpose and gratitude. Warm conversations and

heartfelt hugs marked our departures, sealing a weekend of encouragement and connection.

A special thanks goes to the women of Albany Presbytery and Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church, whose hospitality made the gathering even more joyful and welcoming.

Truly, this was a weekend to remember—full of spiritual refreshment, sisterhood, and hope for the journey ahead.

Thank Offering

Presbyterian Women's Thank Offering was initiated in 1888 and has been supporting organizations with grants to support mission for many years. Each year domestic and international projects are selected to help meet critical needs. Forty percent of the offering is used to support hospitals and community health programs. The remaining sixty percent is put toward new creative ideas for mission.

This year St. Peter's Presbyterian Church in Spencertown, NY, Albany Presbytery, received a Thank Offering grant of \$50,000 to put toward a complete renovation of their kitchen. St. Peter's is a significant gathering place for the community, including people of diverse backgrounds, races and socio-economic circumstances. The church has a long history of welcoming and advocating for the LGBTQ+ community, for refugees, and other oppressed people. Several years ago, St. Peter's started Soul Café, a pay what you can or not at all meal

which gathers a wide array of people in a way that fundraising dinners do not. Building upon its history of hospitality to bring the wider community together, St. Peter's will increase its presence as a community center with the renovated kitchen. Cooking classes and learning to make healthy meals with local produce are part of their outreach plan.

Another \$50,000 grant was given to the Hope Housing Collaborative of Lewis County. Olympia Presbytery, for building tiny home duplexes in Centralia, Washington. Homestead Presbytery received \$5000 to provide beds for children in need in Omaha Nebraska,

Another seven grants ranging from \$6,000 to \$45,800 and totaling \$132,897 were awarded from the money collected in 2024. Everyone is encouraged to support the Thank Offering and the work that they do to better the lives of others.

Rosalie Hemingway

Financial News

Twenty years ago, Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany (PWA) had sixteen active groups that contributed to our operating fund. That number gradually diminished to two plus a few donations from generous individuals. In 2010 we instituted a \$5.00 registration fee for our Spring and Fall Gatherings to maintain a financial fund to cover our expenses. This fee was increased to \$10 this year due to the lack of donations. We use our income to support the operating budget of Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast (PWSNE) and give a small honorarium to each of our speakers. We

also cover some of the expenses for our moderator to attend the PWSNE and churchwide gatherings, and support the representatives on USA Mission Experience trips. Two women were recently given scholarship money to help meet the expense of attending the Horizon's Bible Study workshop at Stony Point Center. All money collected from the free will offerings at the Spring and Fall Gatherings is given to mission projects of the speaker's choice. It would be appreciated if each PW group in the Presbytery of Albany would make a small contribution to help cover our expenses. Such a contribution is a tangible statement of unity and commitment to Presbyterian Women's mission. Thank you in advance, Rosalie Hemingway, treasurer, and the Coordinating Team of PWA



Presbyterian Women's Prayer Circle

Before her death last year Ardelle Stewart, a long-time member of the coordinating team of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany, had been suggesting setting up a coalition of women throughout our Presbytery

who would take on the responsibility of praying for others. She was thinking especially of women who could no longer take an active role in fund raising or attending gatherings due to physical limitations but had the time to advocate for those in need through prayer. Our coordinating team would like to create a group in Ardelle's memory to carry out her wishes. No meetings would be required but a communication system via email, phone, or text would have to be set up so that prayer needs could be shared. If you would be willing to coordinate such a group or to take part in praying for others, please contact: Rosalie Hemingway email silver3213@gmail.com or phone 518-758-7886

Horizon's Bible Study Workshop Experience

Thank you to PW in the Presbytery of Albany

By Charlotte Hasselbarth

I deeply appreciate the \$200 scholarship toward the cost of attending the 2025-2026 Horizons Bible Study Workshop, on "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ" at Stony Point Center from June 19-21. It was held in The Gilmor Sloane House, a charming mid-1800's style country home on the Stony Point Campus.

About twenty women attended. Some were new to me and some were people I had known for many years from other PWSNE activities. Our Moderator Elder Andrea Ralph and I rode there together, which made the experience even nicer.

It was led by a team of two clergy women: Rev. Joyce Mackichen Walker and Rev. Sarah Henkle. They led activities that promoted discussion on a few of the lessons in the study. I learned that there are many ways of looking at the various Biblical characters and stories. Our conversations provided a lot of food for thought.

I expected to come home with handouts and guides to help in leading the Bible study in my PW group. There were no handouts. However, I left with a strong connection to this Bible study. The program provided interesting information, activities and discussion. I felt connected to the Biblical characters we talked about. The leaders provided historical information on familiar Bible stories and characters plus led very stimulating discussions. They encouraged personal sharing. I came away with a deeper sense of how the experiences of various Biblical characters may have affected their lives. I'm looking forward to the time when my PW starts this Bible Study. I will have a long wait, as my PW is a year behind.

The contributions from the individual PW groups in our Presbytery and registration fees from our Gatherings provided the income that allowed for me to receive such a generous scholarship.

I'm happy to assist any group with the lessons in Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ. Contact me at chasselbarth@hotmail.com or 518-356-0637, if you would like some ideas.



We're Renaming Our Newsletter—And We Want Your Ideas!

It's time for a new name for the Albany Presbyterian Women's newsletter, and we'd love to hear your creative ideas! Whether it's something meaningful, inspiring, or fun, your suggestions are welcome. The Coordinating Team will thoughtfully consider all submissions as we choose a name that reflects who we are and where we're going as Presbyterian Women.

Send in your ideas—we can't wait to see what you come up with!

Presbyterian Women's Page on Presbytery Web site.

We're excited to share that we have a dedicated page on the Albany Presbytery website! For more information and updates,

See <https://albanypresbytery.org/presbyterian-women/>

Stay connected and explore all that's happening in our PW community!

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. -Romans 15:13

Editor

Elder Andrea Ralph



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Contributions to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany

Date _____ Church _____

Treasurer or Donor _____

Phone Number and/or email address _____

Address _____

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany operating fund \$ _____

Other \$ _____ Check Number _____ Total \$ _____

Make checks payable to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany or just PWA

Send to: Rosalie Hemingway, 3213 Church Street, Valatie, NY 12184

Phone 518-758-7886 or email silver3213@gmail.com.



Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany Fall Gathering

**Thursday, October 30, 2025 - 11:30 am to 2:30 pm
at First United Presbyterian in Troy
1917 5th Ave, Troy, NY 12180
(518) 272-2771**

Speakers:

Mary Anne Davis, Vice Moderator of The Presbytery of Albany will speak on the Thank Offering Grant that St. Peter's Presbyterian Church received to renovate its kitchen.

Rev. Donna Elia, Executive Director of Troy Area United Ministries and Pastor of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church will speak on the two Thank Offering Grants that Troy Area Ministries received to establish its "Tech for Teens" and then to expand it.

Details:

- RSVP to Andrea Ralph at ARalph20@hotmail.com or 516-849-3220 by Oct 23. if possible, so the host church can plan.
- Registration fee of \$10.00 will be collected at the door.
- Bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverage are provided.
- A freewill offering will be received.