



St. Peter's Press

July 2023

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Reconciliation and Healing Require Remembering the Past

By Mary Anne Davis



In 2020, deep in the thick of our first global pandemic, I was thinking about staying away from other people. Figuring out where to get toilet paper and groceries while not going to the store was high on my list. Finishing 600 pieces of pottery by myself was a pressing concern. I was not

thinking about racial justice.

Then George Floyd was murdered, and the world blew up a bit more. I made signs with my soon-to-be daughter-in-law, and we drove to Great Barrington, where, donning masks, we marched with hundreds of other, mostly white, concerned citizens whose eyes had finally been opened to the calamity that is racism in the United States. Soon after, we made a Black Lives Matter banner for the church, and I was tapped to head up the Albany Presbytery's Anti-Racism Task Force. Feeling WAY out of my depth, I said yes! "Have you met me??" *(That is how Phillip Patterson would have said it.)*

Many book studies and meetings later, I became further activated on the road to helping with a shift in the way we look at race in this country.

Visiting lynching sites was NOT on my list. (Who knew that lynching occurred in NYS?) However, a fellow traveler within the Presbytery, Elena Delhagen of Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church in Guilderland, put a compelling program together that Rev. Elia and I joined. Did I mention that Donna is my co-chair on the Anti-Racism Task Force, and Teresa Barenfeld also serves on it? St. Peter's is into this stuff up to our eyeballs!

Our first stop was Newburgh where we had an amazing and very moving time that included a full-on church service, complete with a

Rachmaninoff concert by a gifted pianist on a mighty grand piano!



Mayor of Newburgh with the head of the NAACP in Newburgh

The service was followed by a trip to the plaque that the NAACP installed last year at the courthouse marking the spot where Robert

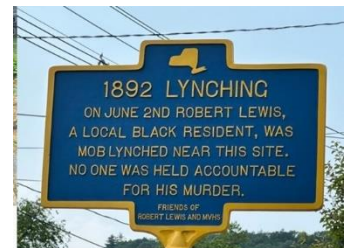
Mulliner was lynched on June 21, 1863. The mayor of Newburgh was there with the Vice President of the NAACP, as well as congregants and concerned citizens from across the spectrum. Even Rob Trawick, our own General Presbyter, came!

From Newburgh, Donna and I made our way to Freedom Farm in Middletown, NY, where Edgar Hayes, co-founder and Director of the farm, took us on a tour. The farm grows organic produce to share with people in need while teaching youth and young



adults sustainable agriculture practices and how to live out one's faith.

We then drove 20 miles to Port Jervis, attended a more modest church service, and then walked to the site of the lynching of Robert Lewis on June 2, 1892.



Port Jervis, NY

I am grateful to have marked Juneteenth in this way and especially grateful to have accompanied Donna on the first leg of her civil rights sabbatical.

Reconciliation and Healing by Mary Anne Davis (Continued)

During her sermon on June 25, Rev. Elia presented two bags of dirt collected at the lynching sites we visited. She will take them to The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, created by the **Equal Justice Initiative** (EJI) on a 6-acre site in downtown Montgomery, Alabama, which she will visit later this summer as part of her civil rights sabbatical. This collected soil will be added to many others at the EJI-created memorial designed to acknowledge the horrors of racial injustice.

I feel so lucky to be part of what Dr. Peniel Joseph has called the *Third Reconstruction*. We live in a time when more and more white people are joining this movement toward racial justice as we face our racially tainted past. Given so many growing concerns in this country and planet, I feel that we need all hands on deck to come to terms with our own foolishness and collaborate thoughtfully to address climate change and inequality. (*Learn more about Dr. Joseph at https://aalbc.com/authors/author.php?author_name=Peniel+E.+Joseph.)*

Imam Muhammed Al-Rahman offered the benediction at our service at Calvary Church in Newburgh. He quoted from Dr. Ibrahim Abdul-Malik. It seems an apt closing for this article:

“We implore you, today, to touch each individual in this group. Imbue her/him with the fervor to translate verbal commitment into effective action. Give each of us the internal strength and humility to reach out to ‘the other,’ who, after all, is our sister, our brother—for you created us all.”

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Collection of Toiletries for Immigrants—Give a Helping Hand



St. Peter’s is participating in the Columbia County Sanctuary Movement by

collecting toiletries to provide to the immigrants now in our area, who need a helping hand.

Please bring your contributions to the box in the narthex on the table near the right sanctuary door.

UREC Presentation



More than 30 people attended the presentation on June 25 after church by Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, founders of the Underground Railroad Education Center (UREC). The UREC researches and preserves the local and national history of the Underground Railroad movement centered in the Albany area, its international connections, and its legacy to today’s social justice issues. They strive to empower people of all ages to be agents of change toward an equitable and just society.

Their talk centered on the use of the following eight principles: Document Based; Reality vs Myth; Public vs Secret; Movement, Not Safe Houses and Routes; African American Leadership; Civil Disobedience; Language and Public Memory; and Relevance Today.

They also told us about the *Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence*, which they purchased and are restoring to preserve its history and return it to the state it was in when the Myers lived there. This house was a headquarters for Underground Railroad activity in the Capital Region in the mid 1850’s, as documented by a Vigilance Committee flier that has survived from that period along with other historic records. In 1860, Stephen Myers said, *We devote all our time to the care of the oppressed who come among us. We have arrivals every few days from southern oppression, and forward them to the next depot...*

UREC has tours of the residence, conducts programs for youth, and many other activities. See their website for more information: <https://undergroundrailroadhistory.org/mission/>.

Before the Stewarts’ presentation, we enjoyed a delicious lunch with handmade sandwiches by Bella Waldorf, chips, desserts, and beverages. This was made possible by the deacons and a grant from Thrivent Financial. Thank you to Christa Slater for submitting the grant request.

Clara Gott Grants Awarded

The Clara Gott Committee met on Sunday, June 25 to vote on grant applications received by the June 15 deadline. The following requests received grants:

- Lucky Rehabilitation Center, Inc., to help with their operating costs. Since they opened in the spring of 2021, this facility has taken in more than 600 animals, and their success rate for animal recovery is 73%, compared to an overall state percentage of 39%.
- High and Mighty Therapeutic Riding and Driving Center, Inc., to provide therapy for nursing and rehabilitation residences at Barnwell, Pine Haven, Camphill Ghent, and the FASNY Fireman's Home.
- Bella Waldorf Laptop Project to help with the purchase of a laptop that will help Bella as she goes back to school to support her professional career and her participation in the community.
- Family Resources Centers of Columbia County to create materials to help prepare children who attend their play groups for entering school. This includes handouts for families on Kindergarten Readiness Skills.

The next deadline for applications is September 15. Applicants can submit grant requests only once per calendar year.

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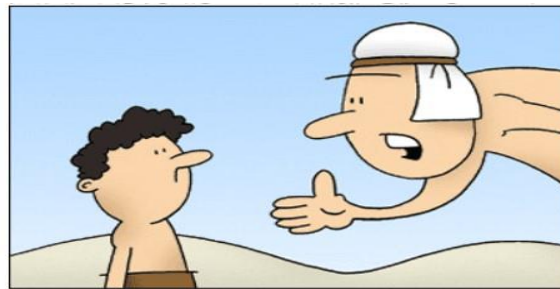
Women Unabridged Book Club

The book for July is *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus, recommended by three book club members. This book has been reviewed as "laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant...." It has been



named book of the year by the New York Times, Washington Post, and other prestigious sources. The meeting is scheduled to be at Teresa Barenfeld's pool at 6 PM on July 17. Teresa says, "come early and bring your swimsuit!"

The book club always welcomes new participants. For questions, contact Denise Davis, 518-392-9690, or Teresa Barenfeld, 518-755-3273.



Thanks to Benoit Paquette (See Numbers 14) 03-14-2006
 WE'VE BEEN WANDERING OUT HERE FOR YEARS NOW ... I THINK IT IS ABOUT TIME TO STOP ASKING IF WE'RE ALMOST THERE YET

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Margy Quinn Made a New Quilt!

She's done it *again!* The talented and generous



Margy Quinn has made a new quilt for us to raffle, with the winning ticket to be drawn at our Christmas Bazaar on December 2. The first chance to sell raffle tickets is during the Blueberry Festival on Sunday July 30, from 9 to 4 at the Austerlitz Historical Society on Route 22. If you are

interested in selling tickets at the festival, contact Wendy Diskin on her cell, 518-929-2488, or via email, wendydiskin@gmail.com. Last year, the quilt raffle raised about \$600 for St. Peter's.

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Food Pantry Donations Are Appreciated!



Keep your Food Pantry donations coming! This month, we received a thank-you note from the Ghent Food Pantry, saying: *St. Peter's Church, Thank you for the groceries that you donated to the pantry. It is greatly appreciated.*

July Lectionary Readings

2nd: Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13;
Matthew 10:40-42

9th: Genesis 12:1-9, 18-26; Psalm 145:8-14;
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

16th: Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

23rd: Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

30th: Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



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July Worship Sundays at 10 AM (In-person and via Zoom)

2nd: Nina Nichols, MDiv.
Communion

9th: Rev. Donna Elia

16th: Rev. Beth Illingworth

23rd: Lay Leader Nancy Ordman

30th: Rev. Donna Elia



Rosemary for Remembrance: Sowing Herbal Hopes and Wishes By Rachel Page Elliott

Balm brings you sympathy and Marjoram joy.

Sage is long life . . . Sweet Woodruff augurs well for health — A blessing richer far than wealth.

While Lavender means deep devotion.

Herb of sweet omen, Rosemary conveys

Affection and remembrance all your days.

May Heaven and Earth and Man Combine

To keep these blessings ever thine.

Note: In August, we'll welcome Valatie Presbyterian congregants to St. Peter's on the 6th, and we will join them in Valatie on the 20th. Jere Wrightsman will lead worship on the 13th, and Rev. Donna Elia will lead us on the 27th.

♪ Happy Birthday to: ♪



*Did we forget your birthday?
If you would like to be added to our
birthday list, please contact one of our
Deacons.*

John Lange	7/3
Thomas Cozzolino	7/3
Adam Fischer	7/7
Kate Lippert	7/10
Ann McChord	7/11
Hannah Cozzolino	7/13
Raeph Sanderson	7/13
George Jahn	7/15
John Cozzolino	7/19
Emma Braley	7/20
Lael Cashen	7/21
Teresa Barenfeld	7/25
Morgan Deane	7/27
Galen Lange	7/29



Chase your dreams
Class of 2023

Congratulations to the 2023 graduates within our church community! Their families are rightfully very proud of their accomplishments and look forward to their “what’s next” scenarios!



Left: Luke Eaton, son of Rev. Donna Elia and Marian Eaton, graduated from Niskayuna High School on June 21. He is going to Columbia College in Chicago to major in acting, concentrating on voice acting.

Right: Jane Fischer, daughter of Sandy and Adam Fischer, granddaughter of Joel Dyslin, and granddaughter of Marie Fischer, graduated from Chatham High School on June 23. Jane plans to attend Hudson Valley Community College in the Fall.



Lauryn Garner, daughter of Heather Garner and granddaughter of Carol and George French, graduated from Fordham University on May 20 with a PhD in Clinical Psychology. In August, she will start a 2-year post-doctoral position at The Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES, MILESTONES, BIRTHDAYS, AND PHOTOS FOR THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER NO LATER THAN JULY 20.

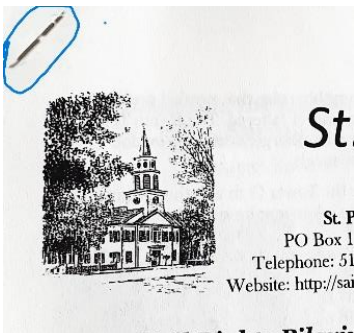
Photo Album



Kate Lippert and her mom Jennifer Thompson took the first shift of the bake sale on June 24, which was part of the Market on the Green event organized by the Spencertown Academy. Vicky Jensen took the afternoon shift. Thanks to all of you. In addition to the delicious desserts provided by our great

congregational bakers, Jennifer and Kate invented a delicious beverage: organic fresh lemonade-rhubarb, served in a small mason jar. WOW! We raised almost \$300 for St. Peter's at this event.

Just look at that abundant, delicious-looking (and tasting) lunch served to accompany the June 25 Underground Railroad Education Center talk! This was billed as a "light lunch"; I don't think so! A multi-course meal of appetizers, sandwiches, chips, desserts, and beverages was served and enjoyed by all. Thanks to Rev. Donna Elia for the idea, the deacons for organizing, Thrivant Financial for a \$250 grant to fund it, and Bella Waldorf for obtaining the food for and making all those sandwiches! Pictured from left to right are Rev. Donna Elia, Christa Slater, Kathy Geddie, and Randy Ezinga.



St.

Why this photo on the left, you ask? Well, observe the circled staple affixed to the document diagonally. Everyone knows that is the proper way to staple pages together, right? Your St. Peter's Press editor did not. "You're never too old to learn something new" is a true statement! Marion Ulmer, ever the teacher, informed me that if you place the staple horizontally, a person can easily tear off pages of the document. Thank you, Marion.

Photo Album (*Continued*)



Another view of the UREC presentation. Paul and Mary Liz Stewart showed many slides to enhance their message. The listeners were all quite engaged and concentrating on the words. Perhaps we can get a group from St. Peter's together to visit the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence and learn even more.



If you attend a Deacons' Meeting and Kate Lippert is there, you are likely to get a beautiful drawing from the young, accomplished artist! Those of us at the June 13 meeting, held with a delicious dinner at Mary Anne Davis's home, were given art pieces. They are all together here, but we each took one home. Thank you so much, Kate!

July

Sunday (Service at 10 AM)	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Nina Nichols, MDiv. Communion Tea on the Green from Marion Ulmer	3 	4 <i>Happy 4th of July!</i> 	5	6	7	8
9 Rev. Donna Elia Council meeting after church service Tea on the Green by Nancy Ordman	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Rev. Beth Illingworth Tea on the Green by Shirley Newsome and Pat Meese	17 WU Book Club Meeting, 6 PM at Teresa's home. (Come earlier to swim!)	18	19	20 Deadline for submission of material for the August newsletter	21	22
23 Lay Leader Nancy Ordman Tea on the Green by Emma Jensen and Wendy Diskin	24	25	26 Combined Council-Deacons meeting/picnic; 6 PM at Mary Anne Davis's home	27	28	29
30 Rev. Donna Elia Tea on the Green by Rev. Donna Elia Austerlitz Blueberry Festival 	<i>It's Summertime, and the living is . . . ? Anyway there are no evening Choir Practices during July and August.</i>					