

# The First Church **FAMILY**

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*The First Church in Albany · Founded in 1642  
Reformed Church in America*

**JUNE 2014**

## **WORSHIP:**

- 1   **Seventh Sunday of Easter (Communion)**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service John Paarlberg preaching
- 8   **Pentecost Sunday**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service John Paarlberg preaching
- 15   **Trinity Sunday**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Susan Vincent-Cox preaching  
Post Service: Strawberry Festival
- 22   **Second Sunday after Pentecost**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service John Paarlberg preaching  
Ordination and Installation of Elders & Deacons  
Post Service: "Room for Me?"
- 29   **Third Sunday after Pentecost**  
10:00 AM - One Worship Service  
"Sunday in the Park" John Paarlberg preaching

**Our Sunday morning service may be found anytime at  
[www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org).**

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## **FROM THE PASTOR**

Dear Friends,

At the congregational meeting on May 18, Charles Welge (2<sup>nd</sup> term) and Erica Bliss were elected to the office of deacon. Ian Leet, (2<sup>nd</sup> term), Tom Allison, Monica Marsh and Mary Weijola were elected to the office of elder. The service of ordination and installation is scheduled for Sunday, June 22. Re-elected to the Board of Trustees were Shirley Bone, David Bradley, Andy Mondore, Ross Westhuis.

The board of trustees is responsible for oversight of the property, management of the endowment fund and oversight of the church's financial matters. We can be grateful for the dedication and gifts of people who help us take care of the 'business' the church, which in a church like ours is considerable.

It has been said that the ministry of the elder is to welcome people to the Lord's Table. They hear professions of faith, act on requests for baptism, and encourage spiritual growth, guiding and nurturing God's people in the life of faith. The ministry of the deacon is to send God's people from the Table into the world in ministry. Deacons lead the congregation in ministries of mercy, service, and outreach. They are called to aid the victims of the world's abuse, express the church's concern for justice and the care of the poor and oppressed.

At the congregational meeting we also heard brief reports on some of the ministries and activities in the life of the church. Many people of the congregation are involved in elder-like ministries: participating in small groups for Bible study and prayer, serving as greeters and leaders in the Children and Worship program, care callers who visit those who are homebound, attending to spiritual growth in the later stages of life in a *Pilgrim's Walk* small group, assisting in drive-in and sanctuary worship, showing children the love of Jesus at an urban day camp.

And many in the congregation are involved in diaconal ministries: serving people who come to the food pantry, reading to children at Arbor Hill School, joining in the work of the FOCUS churches and the Albany Food and Justice Coalition, providing dinners for the men's overflow homeless shelter, supporting the school and artisan's cooperative in Kibera, leading youth in a summer work project in Scranton, Pennsylvania. How many lives are being touched for good through the ministries of this congregation!

Every time we celebrate a baptism, receive new members by profession of faith, or ordain and install elders and deacons, we hear these words from the liturgy:

*By the Holy Spirit all who believe and are baptized receive a ministry  
to witness to Jesus as Savior and Lord, and  
to love and serve those with whom they live and work.  
We are ambassadors for Christ  
who reconciles and makes whole.  
We are the salt of the earth;  
We are the light of the world.*

When I look out across the congregation on a Sunday morning and reflect on all the ways you are living out your calling as followers of Jesus Christ, I see a congregation who has taken those words to heart. And I am very grateful to be part of such a company of disciples.

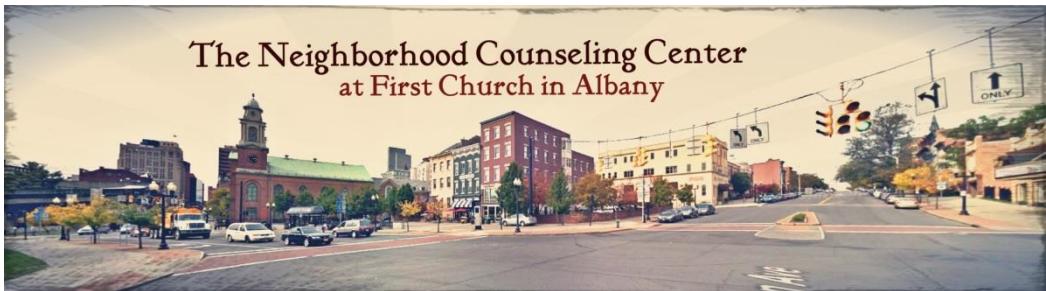
Sincerely,  
John Paarlberg

## **At Home with the WORD**

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary  
June 1<sup>st</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup>

**Now available online at:** [www.rca.org/athome](http://www.rca.org/athome)

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Acts 1:6-14 SUNDAY       | 16. 1 Corinthians 12:1-3  |
| 2. Psalm 99                 | 17. 1 Corinthians 12:4-13 |
| 3. 1 Peter 4:7-11           | 18. Psalm 29              |
| 4. 1 Kings 8:54-65          | 19. Hebrews 2:5-9         |
| 5. Exodus 19:1-9            | 20. Acts 5:17-26          |
| 6. Exodus 19:16-25          | 21. Luke 11:53-12:3       |
| 7. Exodus 20:1-21           | 22. Romans 6:1-11 SUNDAY  |
| 8. Acts 2:1-21 SUNDAY       | 23. Micah 7:1-7           |
| 9. Joel 2:18-29             | 24. Psalm 6               |
| 10. Psalm 104:24-34, 35     | 25. Matthew 10:5-23       |
| 11. Matthew 10:7-16         | 26. Galatians 5:2-6       |
| 12. 2 Timothy 1:8-12        | 27. Galatians 5:7-12      |
| 13. Job 38:12-21            | 28. Luke 17:1-4           |
| 14. Job 38:22-38            | 29. Romans 6:12-23 SUNDAY |
| 15. Matthew 28:16-20 SUNDAY | 30. Psalm 119:161-168     |



## **NEIGHBORHOOD COUNSELING CENTER AT FIRST CHURCH**

For many years the Samaritan Counseling Center has maintained an office at First Church. The Rev. Ross Westhuis, a member of our congregation, has served as one of the counselors. With Ross' recent retirement, the Samaritan Center has decided to close the site at First Church. The center still has several sites in the capital district, but no longer any within the city of Albany proper.

In order to continue to meet the needs of those who live in the neighborhood Ross has volunteered to offer free counseling to adults who live in the Arbor Hill area. He will be available for counseling at the church on Wednesday mornings from 9 to noon, during food pantry hours.

## **THANK YOU!**

We thank those who have recently completed terms of service on consistory. Deacons Stephen Reohr and Erma Nelson; and Elders Norma Jean Ballou, Sandra Scudder, and Peter Pagerey (who served as sr. elder and clerk of consistory).

## **CHOIR PICNIC JUNE 12<sup>TH</sup> ON STAATS ISLAND**

Our annual CHOIR PICNIC is Thursday, June 12 at 6:00 pm. Bill Staats has kindly offered to host the choir again on beautiful Staats Island.

**COME:** for walks by the river, time to talk and visit, fun, and food;

**SIGN UP:** in the choir room to bring a dish to pass: appetizers, main dishes, sides, drinks and desserts;

**SEE:** the amazing 1693 Historic Staats Homestead, by the bucolic Hudson River;

**BRING:** spouses, partners, significant others, friends, potential choir members, walking shoes, bug stuff, rain gear;

**SING:** add your voice for Bill's Famous "SING-ALONG"!

Its one of the ways we say thank you to our choir for the great job they do to enrich the life of our congregation throughout the year.

## **JOIN US JUNE 1ST AFTER WORSHIP TO DISCUSS *Twelve Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup**



Read the Book? Seen the movie? Come join us as The First Church Readers Group meets on Sunday, June 1st<sup>th</sup>, following the Sanctuary Worship to discuss Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* - the story of Solomon Northup, a free black man who was kidnapped from his home in Upstate New York and endured twelve years of bondage in the pre-civil war United States. It's a powerful and horrifying depiction of our national shame of slavery told through the eyes of a man who experienced its suffering and degradation first hand.

Among the books The First Church Readers Group are considering for next fall are:

*The Art of Racing in the Rain* Garth Stein  
*The Good Earth* Pearl Buck  
*The Grapes of Wrath* John Steinbeck  
*Clara and Mr. Tiffany* Susan Vreeland  
*March* Geraldine Brooks

If you have an idea of a future book or story for your fellow First Churchers to read over the summer, drop Mary Bon a line at [maryebon@verizon.net](mailto:maryebon@verizon.net) or give her a call at 463-4449. We'll include your recommendations in the summer *Family*.

## **CAN YOU OFFER YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS FOR OUR DRIVE-IN WORSHIP SERVICE?**

The Drive-in Worship services take place each Sunday at 9 am in our parking lot through Labor Day. We depend on a variety of guest musicians to supply music for our services. Do you play an instrument? sing in the shower? have a musical group that might be willing to provide the music for the Drive-in Worship Service? Anything from a simple hymn or sacred song, to an instrumental solo, to a group offering is appropriate. Contact Mary Bon if you would like to be part of this ministry at [maryebon@verizon.net](mailto:maryebon@verizon.net) or 463-4449.



## **WEATHERVANES Dinner and Matinee**

Thursday, June 19 – Enjoy dinner at lunch-time and then travel to The MacHaydn Theatre to see “Fiddler on the Roof.” Our tickets are limited, so please call Audrey Ming (456-5485) NOW for details and reservations.



## LATEST NEWS FROM KIBERA

Summer is a slow time for Kibera sales. There are no sales scheduled so far this summer. Raphael continues to look for a solution to moving the Sosep School, which will be demolished due to a train track expansion project. (Remember that all the residents in Kibera are squatters, and do not own the land that they are on.) The Kibera Committee is staying in communication with Raphael to offer whatever help that we can.

Steve Andersen

## FROM FINANCIAL SECRETARY

### **Wayne Sivaslian**

#### USING BILL PAY FOR CHURCH OFFERING:

Some members of our congregation have set up their offering on their bank's billpay system. This means that the church receives a check from the member's bank for their offering on whatever schedule they choose. This may be a helpful option for you. Simply log on to your banking website and set us up as a "Payee/Vendor" with a schedule according to the bank's website. You may also enter your name and include a note for your envelope number if you want, however, the checks I receive now do indicate the member's name and I can look up the envelope number easily. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me or call the church office at 463-4449.

## **ROOM FOR ALL**

### **Room for All Releases New Video Resources**

Room for All, the LGBTQ welcoming and affirming program in the Reformed Church in America (RCA), recently released two new resources, both of which are available for viewing at [www.roomforall.com](http://www.roomforall.com).

"Body & Soul: We Belong" is a 6-part series on core themes of Reformed identity as they pertain to the ministry of LGBTQ inclusion. Each 10-minute segment consists of a contemporary dramatic scenario followed by reflections on the theme by a group of people from a variety of RCA contexts. A discussion guide is included.

"Room for Me?" is a short film that invites 26 LGBTQ people in the RCA to respond to a series of four questions: *What's it like being you? How is the gospel of Jesus Christ good news to you? What do you wish the RCA understood about you? Complete this sentence: "I am \_\_\_\_\_."*

The result is a moving and transparent invitation to consider what it really means to love one's neighbor as oneself.

**Jeremy Bork, the producer of "Room for Me?" will be our guest during a post-service gathering on Sunday, June 22nd. Jeremy will share his experiences making the video and we'll have a chance to watch it and respond together.**

For information about these resources or about Room for All, contact Marilyn Paarlberg, RfA's Executive Director, at [mpaarlb erg@roomforall.com](mailto:mpaarlb erg@roomforall.com)

## **REFORMED CHURCH GENERAL SYNOD**

### **Meets June 12 – 17**

The 2014 RCA General Synod will meet on the campus of Central College in Pella, Iowa. Albany Classis delegates include Andrew Mondore and John Paarlberg. Copies of the reports and recommendations that the synod will be considering are posted on the Reformed Church in America website [www.rca.org](http://www.rca.org). The site will also feature regular updates on synod actions.

## **JULY FOCUS SERVICE**

First Church will be hosting the July FOCUS Service on July 6<sup>th</sup> at 10 am.

## **"PLAY ME, I'M YOURS" COMES TO CLEE PARK**

Last month we entered and were accepted to participate in the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District's Sculpture in the Street program, "Play Me, I'm Yours". Thirteen pianos will be placed outside at various locations around downtown Albany, ours being placed in Clee Park. We are calling it "Park & Play". The outdoor exhibit will run from June 13<sup>th</sup> to July 27<sup>th</sup>. This is part of an international tour where artists have decorated pianos over the past six years.

The piano has been delivered to Clee Park. We are in the midst of painting it with black chalkboard paint, white lines and maybe even a street sign with the intent of transforming the piano to look like a "parking space". Once the exhibit opens on June 13<sup>th</sup> we will have sidewalk chalk available so that anyone may add their own designs to it. Anyone may participate by playing the piano. It will be tuned every week and there is a cover available for when it rains.

This is a great way for First Church to be part of the downtown community. There will be a lot of local and international publicity with this, a dedicated web page with photos and videos uploaded, maps with First Church as one of the highlighted locations! We are anticipating this project will help further the conversation about Drive-In Worship as well as be a great activity and resource for the kids during the Urban Day Camp. If you would like to help with this project please contact Jeanne Bianchine by e-mail: [jeanne.thefirstchurch@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne.thefirstchurch@gmail.com)

## **FOWLER URBAN DAY CAMP RETURNS**

The First Church in Albany will collaborate with the Fowler Camp and Retreat Center to offer the ninth Annual Urban Day Camp for children ages 8-12. Camp will run June 30th-July 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday-Thursday. New this year is that children ages 8 -16 will spend a week at Camp Fowler July 6-12.

The Urban Day Camp creates a "Fowler-like" camp experience-right here in the city. Camp Fowler College-age staff will lead programming in craft, worship, music and nature study. First Church and other churches in the classis will provide adult and college-age counselors, kitchen staff and meals each day and help with program planning.

If you would like to Volunteer to help with Day Camp or if you are unable to volunteer and would like to help with a financial donation to send a child to camp for a week, please speak to Monica Marsh or Rev. John Paarlberg. Registration form is available on the First Church Website home page.

([www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org))

## **STRAWBERRY SUNDAES**

FUNDRAISER for the Youth Mission Trip

Sunday, June 15-Coffee Hour

## **JOIN US FOR THE URBAN DAY CAMP PICNIC**

**Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 5pm.**

Come meet the Children and hear about the fun they have had at Day Camp.

## **SEND A KID TO CAMP**

This year, as we have for the past several years, First Church is providing a week-long Day Camp for 8 -12 year old children from the church and the neighborhood. This year we also want to make it possible for any Day Camp child who wishes to spend the following week at Camp Fowler. July 6-12 is *Una Tierra: ONE World: ONE Camp*: Children of multiple ages will build and experience community together. Some of the activities will be shared by all the children and some will be in age related groups. Several trips are offered for the older campers and new activities available for the younger ones. The cost for a week at camp is \$390. If you would like to help send a kid to camp you can make a contribution to the Classis of Albany. Please include a note with your check designating it for "Camp Fowler Scholarship". Checks received at First Church will be forwarded to the classis treasurer.

## **THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!!!!!**

The Kate Allard Group & The Youth Group would like to thank all who donated items to the Rummage Sale and helped set-up and take down.

Special thanks to Larry and Noel for taking the leftover items to the Capital Rescue Mission. Because of your generous donations we were able to raise \$900.00.

## **YOUTH MISSION TRIP**

Please keep in your prayers the Youth Group (Imani Brewer, Joshua Bliss, Charnelle Jones and Janelle Robinson along with their advisors Andy Mondore, Stephen Reohr & Monica Marsh as they travel to Scranton, PA, 7/27-8/3, to help with home repairs. Our youth will be participating with approximately 400 other youth and advisors from many different churches and different denominations across the country. The youth and Advisors love to get mail. So please send your e-mails to [groupworkcamps.com](http://groupworkcamps.com), click on e-mail a camper.



King Hank and Queen Alberta at the Senior Spring Prom.

## Congratulations

Nicole Marsh-Sivaslian graduated from Suny Cobleskill on May 10, with a Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Development. Nicole will began work at the Center for Disabilities, while going back to school to get her Masters in Special Needs/Disabilities Education.

Friends of Hank and Alberta can see that they are enjoying their time together in New Hampshire. Here's a photo from their May newsletter.

Congratulations to Donald Hay Wilson on the birth of his great-grandson, Hayden Ryder Wilson born on 4/2/14.

## **Memorials**

In celebration of the life of **Edward Mondore** gifts have been received from Peter G. Ten Eyck, II, an anonymous donor, Steve, Patricia and Todd Messinger, Barbara A. Van Slyke, Doris L. Neese, Leona R Murray, Richard and Monique Cunningham, Sheila and Ray Stross, Maria Hartman, William S. Brownell, Mary Bennett, Robert Snyder, Farmers National Company, Ann and Mark Burek, Helen Otterness, Ella Campbell, Ruth and Peter Pagerey, William Staats, The Rev. Carl and Lynn Hiemstra, Cindy Gillespie, June Howe and Family, Kay McCann, Grogan and Stuffebeam CPAS, Christine V Torey, Jason and Johanne Petersen, Ann T. Hall, Larry and Janet Kaplan, Cynthia Barton, Richard W. and Nedra Perry, Rev. LeRoy and Judith Suess, Carleton Foster and Carol M. Brownell, Robert F and Carolyn H Akland for the **Capital Campaign Fund**, from Shirley Bone for the **Pew Plaque Dedication Fund**, from Shirley Joosten for the **Lynn Joosten Scholarship Fund**, from Wilma Sheffer for the **Music Fund** from The Rev. Bert and Birgit McCormick for the **Endowment Fund**.

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## **In Sympathy**

Sympathy is extended to Kay McCann on the death of her sister, Eleanor Wiedemann on May 24, 2014

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## **Thank you**

Sincere thanks to my friends at First Church for their kind words, calls and cards of sympathy on the recent passing of my sister, Eleanor Wiedemann. Kay McCann

The family of Edward Mondore would like to thank the congregation and staff for their loving care and support.



**The deadline for the Summer issue of FAMILY is June 13.**





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## **FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY**

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