

The First Church

FAMILY

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

June 2018

WORSHIP:

3 Second Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship (Communion)
10:30 am Sanctuary Service (Communion)
11:45 am First Church Readers
12:00 pm Care Callers Meeting - Parlor
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation

10 Third Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service
Consistory Installation & Celebration of Leaders
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation

17 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service: Rev. Dr. Al Janssen, preaching
11:30 am Coffee & Conversation

24 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am Clee Park Outdoor Worship Service
Post Service: Picnic in the Park

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

*“To everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven.”
~ Ecclesiastes 3.1*

Dear Friends,

You may be familiar with the call-and-response saying that speaks the truth of our faith: “God is good – all the time! All the time, God is good!” In every season, God has been sharing goodness within the life of First Church.

On a rainy May Sunday, Drive-in worship kicked off another year of its inventive way to pray, preach and praise God. Our music and preaching pour out not only over the people in cars gathered in the parking lot, but also into the park and the streets surrounding the church, sharing the good news that God is good, all the time.

On Heritage Sunday, we welcomed members and visitors for a celebration of 376 years of ministry in the city of Albany. We sang hymns brought to this place from the Netherlands as well as the hymn commissioned for last year’s anniversary. With the children we learned about one of the precious silver chalices used in the 17th century by this church. We received three new members into the life of the congregation (see pages 5 & 6.) We departed charged by words adapted from St. Augustine to appreciate the foundation the past has laid for us, to receive who we are, and to be who we are called to be. All the time, God is good.

On Pentecost, the Spirit filled the sanctuary with language, word and song, then led us into a time of fellowship and meeting. New members were elected to Consistory. Together we continued to share our thoughts to help create the church profile. God is good!

Children and Worship has wrapped up another year of wondering and worship with the congregation’s children. We give thanks to all who have supported this program, as leaders and greeters, and for the children and families of the church. God is good!

A season of moral witness has begun and continues into June with the Poor People’s Campaign. First Church has offered, if needed, to host visitors from out of town who come to pray and sing and advocate for the gap to narrow between rich and poor, for our energy to be directed to lift up the vulnerable rather than blame them, for our efforts to focus on doing all we can to restore God’s creation. God is good. Will God’s people also be?

Cont.. p.3

As we head into the summer season, some of us will be in and out of church for vacation or summer camps. But here at the First Church in Albany, we will still gather as people of God: to worship in the park on June 24, and - come July and August - to grow the Drive-in community, hold worship in James Chapel (with air-conditioning!), host the FOCUS churches on July 1, and serve hotdogs on Thursdays. The Search Committee to be announced soon will embark on their important work. We'll be planning next year's program to support our faith journeys. And God will be wherever we are: supporting, encouraging, challenging, comforting, leading us forward. Because God is good, all the time.

All the time, God is good!

Lynn

AT HOME WITH THE WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary

May 1st - May 31st Now available online at: www.rca.org/resources/home-word

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. 2 Corinthians 4:5-12 | 16. Mark 4:26-34 |
| 2. Mark 2:23-3:6 | 17. Fourth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 3. Second Sunday after Pentecost | 18. 1 Samuel 17:32-49 |
| 4. 1 Samuel 8:4-20 | 19. 1 Samuel 17:57-18:5, 10-16 |
| 5. Genesis 3:8-15 | 20. Job 38:1-11 |
| 6. Psalm 138 | 21. Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32 |
| 7. Psalm 130 | 22. 2 Corinthians 6:1-13 |
| 8. 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 | 23. Mark 4:35-41 |
| 9. Mark 3:20-35 | 24. Fifth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 10. Third Sunday after Pentecost | 25. 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27 |
| 11. 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 | 26. Psalm 130 |
| 12. Psalm 20 | 27. Lamentations 3:22-33 |
| 13. Ezekiel 17:22-24 | 28. Psalm 30 |
| 14. Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15 | 29. 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 |
| 15. 2 Corinthians 5:6-17 | 30. Mark 5:21-43 |

CONSISTORY FOR 2018-2019

Board of Deacons

Theresa Brewer	2019	Robert Dorn	2020*
Bill Kendall	2019	Richard Gardner	2020
		Andy Mondore	2020

Board of Elders

Norma Jean Ballou	2019	Joeanna Brown	2020
Becky Hudak	2019*	Chip Welge	2020
Rebecca Mondore	2019		
Peter Pagerey	2019*		

Board of Trustees

Ned Monthie	2019	Shirley Bone	2020
Joyce Recene	2019	David Bradley	2020
Ray Van Epps	2019	Andy Mondore	2020
Ross Westhuis	2020	James Folts	2021
Wayne Sivaslian	2021	William Staats	(emeritus)

Many thanks to those completing terms of service:

Deacons:	Erica Bliss
Elders:	Tom Allison, Frances Carr Morton, Monica Marsh, Mary Wiejola
Trustees:	David Mortenson

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

On Sunday, May 6, the Board of Elders received Gayle Wlodkowski Hitchcock, Jean Lamere and Bryan Wilson into membership of the church. On Sunday, May 13, the congregation welcomed them as well. Here's some information about them. Please make sure to greet them when you see them next!

Gayle Hitchcock came to First Church at the invitation of Mary Wiejola and Tom Allison, who live in the same building that Gayle and her husband, Mark Hitchcock, do. A retired housekeeper at Samaritan Hospital, Gayle enjoys crafts, reading Christian fiction, sightseeing, the Yankees, baking, teas and all things Scottish and English. Gayle, who has attended a variety of churches, appreciates the welcome she has experienced at First Church.

Jean Lamere has been attending First Church for many years and was finally moved to join! Jean and her husband, Cliff, live in Loudonville. She enjoys gardening and flower arranging, reading, crocheting and singing. Jean sings alto in the First Church choir, is a stalwart volunteer on Mondays in the First Church Food Panty and serves on the Sound System Task Force. Jean has lots of experience in leadership in Presbyterian churches, most recently at Bethany Presbyterian in Menands, and we appreciate her sharing her gifts with us.

Bryan Wilson grew up at First Church. He fondly remembers gathering in James Chapel and playing in the third-floor gym, and has loved showing his son, Hayden, all the special nook and crannies. Bryan works at Albany Medical Center in IT. He enjoys making music with his family. He plays the violin, the piano, and sings. We're glad he's chosen to join the choir.

Welcome, Gayle, Jean and Bryan!

HISTORIC ALBANY FOUNDATION TOUR VISIT

Thirty-five visitors from several different states toured First Church on Saturday, May 5, the last stop on a three-hour walking tour of Albany's historic architecture. The tour was sponsored by the Historic Albany Foundation for members of the National Preservation Trust. Tom Allison, Ian Leet, Shirley Bone, and Jim Folts set up displays, including the contracts for the 1715 stone church and the 1796 building (still our church home), drawings by architect Philip Hooker, photographs showing changes to our church over the decades, and color images of the towers renovation in 2012-14. Also displayed were documents from the memorial services for President George Washington in 1800 and Alexander Hamilton in 1804.

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

During June, because of our Wednesday noon concert series, prayers for the church will be accompanied by music! In July and August, weather permitting, please feel free to offer prayers outside in the park.

REV. CAMERON MONTHLY BRUNCH

Rev. Bill Cameron began gathering a group for lunch on the first Thursday of the month. The group continues to meet each month at the Gateway Diner, 899 Central Avenue in Albany. Anyone can join us starting starting at 12:15 pm and stay until you wish to leave. We all pay for our own. Contact Donna E. Schultz at deschultz07@aol.com

DRIVE-IN

Drive-In worship services began at 9 a.m. on May 6th and will continue each Sunday through the first Sunday in September. Worshippers gather in the Sheridan Avenue parking lot and in Clee Park for a half hour worship service led from the outdoor pulpit. If you arrive before 9:30 a.m. for the Sanctuary Service, please park in the Orange Street Lot or in the large lot against the wall that borders North Pearl Street. The last Sunday in June both the Sanctuary and Drive-In will gather in Clee Park at 10:00 am for worship. There will be no separate Drive-In worship on that day.

DRIVE-IN OFFERING

The special offerings received at the Drive-In Worship this summer will be designated for Koinonia Primary Care/Compassion in Action, a ministry providing access to quality primary and mental health services for the underserved in West Hill and surrounding neighborhoods in Albany. Koinonia Primary Care, under the leadership of Dr. Robert Paeglow, has been serving people in Albany since 2002.

I've come to the realization that life is not designed for our comfort, or pleasure, but for us to discover our gifts and contribute what we can to make life better for others. Dr. Robert Paeglow

We thank the Drive-In Committee, its chair Marilyn Bradley, and the hard-working Drive-In volunteers who set up each Sunday morning and greet our Drive-In Worshippers with a cheerful hello - rain or shine.

Can you help supply music for our drive-in worship service?

We depend on the generosity of guest musicians who 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 praise band is appropriate. Contact Mary Bon if you are able to be part of this ministry at maryebon@verizon.net or 463-4449.

FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

First Church in Albany, Sunday July 1st @ 10:00 a.m.

Delmar Reformed, Sunday August 5th @ 9:30 a.m.

Westminster Presbyterian, Sunday September 2nd @ 9:30 a.m.

WEATHERVANES – SUMMER BREAK!



The Old Friends Luncheon which took place on May 16th was the last Weathervanes event until September. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 19th. Program to be announced. Mark your calendar!

Questions concerning the Weathervanes, please contact Audrey Ming (518) 456-5484.

FIRST CHURCH READERS GROUP WILL MEET JUNE 3RD



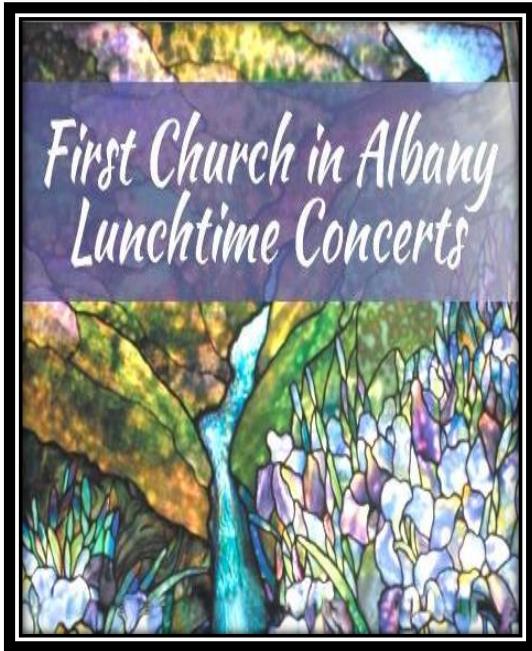
The First Church Readers's will meet June 3rd after worship to discuss – *Best to Laugh: A Novel* by Lorna Landvik.

Got a book you think would be a good summer reading? A book you think the book group would like to read? Pass it on to Mary Bon at Marybon@verizon.net or 463-4449.



SPRING FLING CONCERTS

Wednesdays in June at Noon



Join us for a series of noon-time concerts in our sanctuary Wednesdays in June from 12:00 PM to 12:30 PM. We'll have special music from our soloists as well as guest instrumentalists. Bring a sandwich, relax in our historic sanctuary and listen to a half hour of beautiful music.

- June 7 Mary Bon, Organist at First Church in Albany.
- June 13 David Bon-Keen, bassoon and Neil Keen, piano.
- June 20 Peter Subers, baritone soloist at First Church; Gene Marie Callahan, piano.
- June 28 Rose Hunsberger, soprano soloist at First Church in Albany.

Help us publicize the concerts!

Pick up a flyer at the Hospitality Table.

Post it at your local library, bar, supermarket or wherever!

CHOIR PICNIC JUNE 14TH AT THE LEETS

Our annual CHOIR PICNIC is Thursday, June 14th at 5:30 pm. Ian Leet has kindly offered to host the choir at 951 Myrtle Avenue, Albany.

A main dish will be provided

SIGN UP: in the choir room

BRING: a dish to pass (Appetizers, main dishes, sides, drinks and desserts);

BRING: spouses, friends, and potential choir members.

JOIN THE CHOIR FOR THE FOCUS SERVICE JULY 1 AT FIRST CHURCH

The Focus Service is coming to First Church on July 1 and we will have a Festival choir to enrich our worship together. You'll get a chance to meet singers from other Focus Churches who share a love of music. You don't need any previous choir experience. Just come at 9:00 AM on Sunday, July 1st to rehearse; then sing with the choir for the 10 AM service. The music will be easy and the fellowship fun! Talk to any choir member or Mary Bon for more information, or just join us on July 1. Pass the word and sing for the fun of it!

PRIDE 2018

The weekend of **June 9 and 10** will be the time of this year's Albany PRIDE celebrations. On Saturday, June 9 between noon and 5pm, In Our Own Voices – which serves the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People of Color, and their friends and families – will sponsor a health and wellness expo in Washington Park. On Sunday, June 10 between noon and 5pm, the Capital Pride Parade and Festival will take place. Peter Subers has agreed to gather members of First Church to carry the First Church Room for All banner and to march in the parade. We'll make our way to the park after worship. Please join us!



CLEEO'S HOTDOG THURSDAY'S IN CLEE PARK JULY AND AUGUST

Our sextons, Larry Underdue and Jeff Curry have hatched a plan to make Clee Park even more welcoming to those who pass by! Thanks Larry and Jeff!

With the approval of the consistory, First Church will be offering **free Chili dogs or plain hotdogs** each Thursday from 11 am – 1pm in Clee Park beginning July 12th.

COME MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS! Everyone is welcome!

First Churchers, Locals, Park visitors, Families, Neighbors, Downtown workers,
Food pantry guests.

HELP WITH THIS MINISTRY!

Distribute the dogs
Help with set up
Help with cleanup
Just sit and chat

PROVIDE SUPPLIES! We Need:

chili,
ketchup,
relish,
mustard,
pickles,
chips,
napkins,
cups,
water



Monica Marsh is soliciting Hot Dog Rolls from Stewarts. (Thanks Monica)

PASS THE WORD

Pick up a flyer at the hospitality table and post it.

Watch for signup sheets in June or talk to Jeff, Larry, or any of the staff if you would like to participate in this ministry.



CHILDREN AND WORSHIP

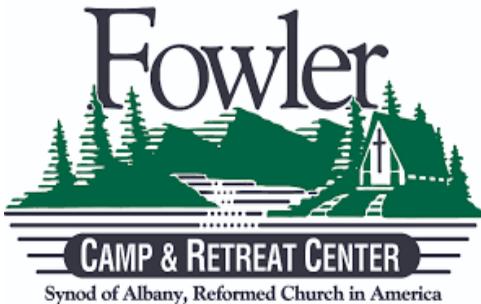
On Sunday May 13th we had our final worship together for this year since we do not meet during the summer months. We had a wonderful year and look forward to beginning children's worship again on September 23rd with our OPEN HOUSE. This will take place during adult worship, right after the Children's Moment.

At this OPEN HOUSE we invite friends to learn about Children and Worship. We welcome parents or other primary caretakers to attend, so they can learn and see how their children are worshipping. This is a very important and meaningful time for all involved.

This fall Sara Bonam Welge will be the leader for Children and Worship and Kathie Monthie will assist her. Rev. Sue had co-lead with Sara for the past year but in September 2018, Sue will move to co-lead some other groups. She will continue to attend the team meetings that take place quarterly.

Child safety trainings were required and completed for all team members this past February. Background checks were updated so we are glad to say we offer Safe Sanctuary. On June 10th we will celebrate Children and Worship (with other ministries at FC). This will take place during our adult worship. We invite our team and all the children who participated in Children and Worship to attend.

INTER-GENERATION WEEKEND AT CAMP FOWLER



First Church in Albany is planning an intergenerational long weekend at Camp Fowler. The dates are Friday October 26 and ending with Worship on Sunday, October 28, 2018. We will be staying in Chi Ro and food will be prepared by the staff.

We will have opportunities for community building, time for reflection, Bible study, hiking, and just rest and enjoy the splendor of the Adirondacks.

This would be a great opportunity to learn and share stories with other members of the Church. The cost of the weekend will be \$160 per person, which includes food and lodging. Scholarships are available.

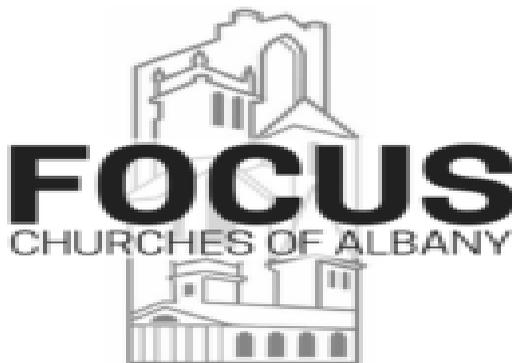
We need at least 15 committed people to make this a go! If you have questions, please see or call Jay Reohr at (518) 449-5283. You may also place your name and contact information on the signup sheet on the display table in the lounge.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE FOOD PANTRY?

In April, the First Church Food Pantry was open nine days, providing food for neighbors, members and friends. Each household is able to come to the pantry twice a month, and receives nine meals per household member based on HPNAP (Hunger Prevention & Nutrition Assistance Program) guidelines. Household members are categorized as Infants (age 0-3), Children (4-17), Adults (18-64) and Seniors (65+). This month our volunteers packed food for 156 households, which included one infant, 44 children, 156 adults and 31 seniors.

We are grateful to all our volunteers, our staff for offering food not only for the body, but for the spirit through their kindness. We are blessed by the food provided by the Food Bank and by members of Bethany Reformed Church – and by YOU.

To all who support the ministry of First Church through offerings, pledges and bequests that make our nearly 50 years of Food Pantry ministry possible – THANK YOU!



FOCUS UPDATES!

The FOCUS Board is pleased to announce the appointment of the Rev. Renee Hollinshed as the Interim Executive Director. In addition to her work with FOCUS, Rev. Hollingshed also serves as Pastor of the Sojourner Truth AME Zion Church in Catskill.

The Board is also pleased to announce that its Special Spring Appeal raised over \$12,721, including 13 gifts of \$250 or more which helped to meet a \$2500 matching grant. Thank you to all who support the guests and clients of FOCUS ministries.

FOCUS OPPORTUNITIES

Are You Called to Volunteer? Here are several VOLUNTEERS OPPORTUNITES AT FOCUS:

CURRENT: Sandwich Maker on Mondays 10-11 am. Contact Belinda for more information or to sign up now for any of these: belindaq@focuschurches.net

CURRENT: FOCUS is in great need of pro bono assistance with Microsoft Access/SQL programming to update and improve our MS Access data base. If you have deep knowledge of Access and think you can help, please contact Judy Henningson at 518-443-0460.

- **JUNE/GARDENING IN A BUCKET**

Volunteers sought for this fun community project for youth scheduled for weekdays throughout the month of June.

FOCUS summer mission project

[in your own community]



July 30th- August 9th

FOCUS is assembling a volunteer team to carry out a rehabilitation of the FOCUS Breakfast Program storage room located in Westminster Church.

Over the course of 10 days this team will empty out all supplies and equipment, clean the room, repair walls and floors, paint, and reorganize the supplies on new shelving.

We need **one volunteer project manager** and **7-10 volunteers** over the course of the 10 days to get this done.

Build fellowship and provide a much needed improvement to the FOCUS Breakfast program.

Lets do together what we can't do alone!

Lunch and snacks provided! Contact Belinda at FOCUS for details and to sign up: **518-443-0460!**

Thank You!

- **NOVEMBER/Two cooks for Wednesday Winter Breakfast starting the first week in November. Hours are 6:00-9:30 am.**

Thank you for your support!

2018 GRADUATES

If you know of a church member or friend who is graduating this Spring, please let us know in the office! Thank you.

Congratulations to Joshua Bliss, who graduates from Albany High School on June 24th. Josh will attend HVCC in the fall.

JOINING FIRST CHURCH

Does it feel like First Church could be your church home? Might you consider membership? If so, please talk with Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, Rev. Sue Vincent-Cox, or one of the Elders to find out more. We'll be holding our next new member class in the fall – but you are welcome to start the conversation now. We'd love to welcome you officially!

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER UPDATE

We plan to move to an online newsletter beginning September 2018. If we do not have your email address, please send it to Valerie Williams at vwilliams@firstchurchinalbany.org . If you do not have an email address we will mail you a paper copy of the monthly newsletter.



The deadline for the June issue of *FAMILY* is June 15.



CONGRATULATIONS

- To Denise Wright and family as they welcomed her new grandson, Raymond Williams, on Sunday, May 13th (Mother's Day).

IN HONOR

- In honor of Libby Standish graduating from Sheridan High School a gift was received from Shirley Bone for the Food Pantry.

MEMORIALS

- In memory of Leona Murray, a gift was received from Jane Ward for the Drive-in Fund.
- In memory of Leona Murray, a gift was received from Barbara Chidsey for the Drive-in Fund.

THANK YOU

- To Bethany Reformed Church for their donation of 11 bags of groceries to the Food Pantry.
- Thank you for all the prayers on behalf of my sister Gay Brady. She is doing much better.
Sally Reckner

WE HAVE RECEIVED THANK YOU'S FROM THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

Dear Friends of First Church in Albany Reformed: Thank you for your recent gift of \$500 to Church World Service. Your gift is helping young parents in Vietnam learn how to better care for their infants and is supporting girls' education in Kenya by building dormitories and new classrooms. Thank you! In peace, Erin Luchenbill

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Capital Area Council of Churches, I would like to thank you for your gift of \$500 to support the work of the Council for 2018....Gifts like yours enable us to shelter the homeless, organize the CROP Hunger Walk to feed the hungry, celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., provide opportunities for spiritual growth to students at the University of Albany through the Protestant Campus Ministry and participate in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue...May God bless you and yours! Gratefully, Deborah C. Ritano, Executive Director

Beloved Friends at First Church: Thank you for your recent gift to Room for All!... Here are a just a few of the efforts in support of our mission that your gift will help make possible in 2018: Individual, Congregational, Campus and Denominational support, education and advocacy in the from of listening and responding ...connection...suggesting resources...offering workshops...bringing speakers...sharing information...being present...engaging gracefully...representing.... In Gratitude, Marilyn Paarlberg "Thank you, dear friends!"

IN SYMPATHY: Please keep in your prayers Ray & Karen Van Epps and their family. Ray's niece Becky Newborn died on May 9, 2018.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED