

The First Church **FAMILY**

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

October 2014

WORSHIP: THE SEASON OF CREATION SUNDAYS

- 5 **River Sunday**
“Everything will live where the river goes.” (Ezekiel 47:11)
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service
John Paarlberg preaching
Post-service: Rabbi Nomi Manon, Judaism’s understanding of creation
- 12 **Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service
John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service: Congregational Pot-luck Luncheon
- 19 **Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service
John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service:
First Church Readers
- 26 **Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service
Susan Vincent Cox preaching
Post-service:

Our Sunday morning service may be found anytime at www.firstchurchinalbany.org.

At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary

October 1st - October 31st

Now available online at: www.rca.org/athome

1. Judges 16:23-31
2. Colossians 2:16-23
3. Psalm 19
4. John 7:40-52
5. Matthew 21:33-46
6. 1 Peter 2:4-10
7. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
8. Song of Solomon 8:5-14
9. 1 Peter 5:1-5, 12-14
10. James 4:4-10
11. Mark 2:18-22
12. Matthew 2:1-14
13. Psalm 34
14. Philippians 3:13-14:1
15. John 6:25-35
16. Psalm 96:1-13
17. Psalm 99
18. Matthew 14:1-12
19. Matthew 22:15-22
20. Daniel 3:1-18
21. Daniel 3:19-30
22. Daniel 6:1-28
23. Psalm 1
24. Deuteronomy 9:25-10:5
25. Proverbs 24:23-34
26. Psalm 46
27. James 2:8-13
28. James 2:14-26
29. Proverbs 16:1-20
30. Psalm 43
31. Ezekiel 13:1-16

THE SEASON OF CREATION SUNDAYS

“River Offerings” for Sunday, October 5

“River” Sunday is October 5. Between now and then you are invited to collect small samples of water from a river or stream near your home and on your travels over the course of the next few weeks. On Sunday, October 5, we will bring those “river offerings” to worship and present them in a symbolic gesture as we offer our thanksgivings for God’s gift of rivers and pray for their health and safe-keeping.

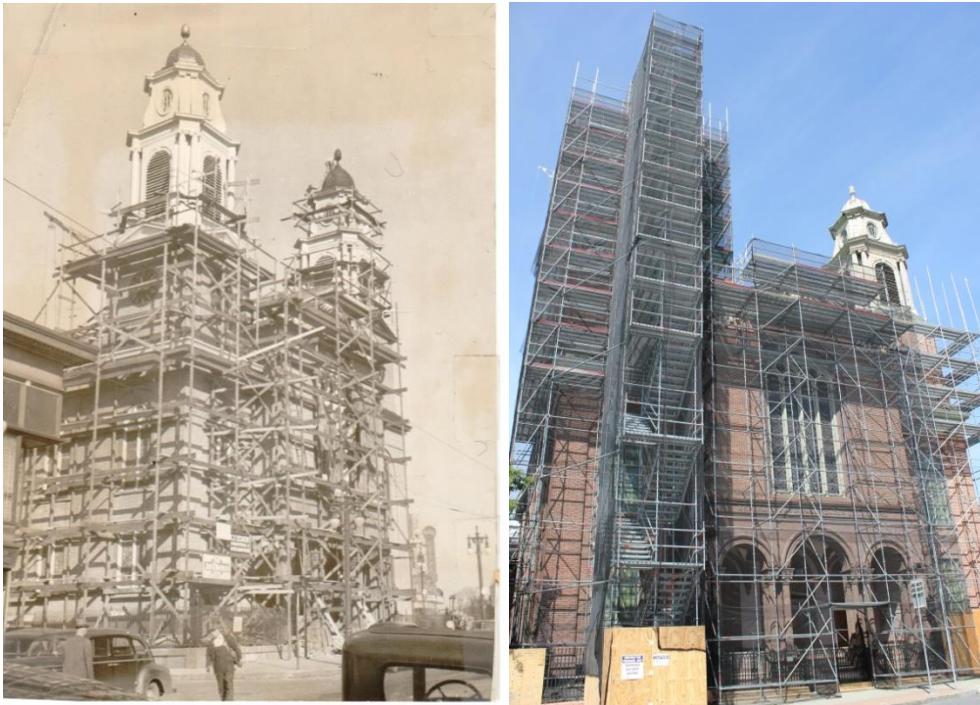
CD MINISTRY UPDATE

Our CD ministry supplies CDs and bulletins of our Sunday worship services each week to many of our home-bound members and friends. If you would like to receive a CD or know of someone who would like CDs of our Worship Services, contact the office at 463-4449.

FIRST CHURCH BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECT

Problems and Progress

From James Folts, President Board of Trustees



First Church is well into our two-year building renovation project. The parish house and church roofs will be replaced for the first time since 1939-40. The towers will be repaired and repainted, restoring them to their appearance as built in 1796. The iron fence along Pearl Street will be repaired and the long-dark lamp stands relit with gas. The towers will be illuminated with new, energy-efficient LED lighting. We all look forward to completion of this complex and long-awaited project. Here is an update, reporting some problems and delays, also encouraging progress.

Scaffolding one hundred feet tall now envelops the south tower up to the acorn-shaped finial. The north tower has scaffolding to its upper levels. The parish house too is surrounded by scaffolding. Much work is going on behind all the pipes and planks and netting. The slate roof is being removed from the parish house, and will soon be replaced by a rubberized membrane and new slates to match the old. The project foreman reports that the underlayment (sheathing) on the parish house is in "excellent" condition, and none of it uncovered so far needs to be replaced. A mason is preparing the main chimney for repairs, which he says are badly needed. (The mortar is failing, and is now little more than "wet sand.")



But work on the parish house has temporarily stopped. The architect and contractor had expected and planned for removal of hazardous materials. (The paint on the towers, 21 layers or more, contains up to 22 per cent lead; and small amounts of asbestos were located on tower roofs in early testing.) However the sealant (mastic) used in the original parish house roof has been unexpectedly found to contain non-friable asbestos. The contractor responded quickly once the test results came in. After the legally-mandated delay and posting, the mastic will be removed and work on the parish house roof will resume. The parish house roof project, including new dormer windows, should be completed this season. The renovation committee has asked the architect to prepare a plan for repairing and painting the woodwork on the lower levels of the parish house, possibly next year.

Significant delays have occurred in the towers renovation project. The contractor and architect decided that structural engineers should inspect the sanctuary attic where the roof trusses must support scaffolding around the inside edges of the towers. The engineers recommended adjustments to the interior shoring and braces as precautions, and those recommendations have been implemented. The architects have inspected the south tower woodwork close up and tagged elements that need repair or replacement. The 16 columns—two on each corner of the two towers—will be removed and taken to a woodworking shop offsite. They will be rebuilt, stripped, and repainted, then reinstalled in the spring. The architect has provided samples of paint colors for the towers and other woodwork, which are close to the original hues.

The original sheet-iron domes on the towers, dating from 1796, will remain in place. The deteriorated metal shells installed in 1856 will be replaced by tin-coated stainless steel, resembling the original metal. The clock faces and hands will be restored and repainted. Ian Leet has been in contact with clock experts, and the plan is to restore the clocks to

working order with new digital movements. A lighting expert has provided a new illumination scheme for the towers including the domes and acorn-shaped finials. The building renovation contract covers two construction seasons, with a final completion date of November 15, 2015. We now expect that much of the scaffolding on the towers will remain in place over the winter. That will avoid the major cost of rebuilding it from the ground up next spring, when work on the towers will resume and be completed. In the second season the deteriorating sanctuary roof will be removed, and replaced with a new copper standing-seam roof. The eaves troughs with built-in gutters will be repaired and repainted at the same time.

Work will conclude for this season by November 15, 2014. The trusty little pipe organ on the floor of the sanctuary will be given a winter vacation, and the great Austin organ will be unwrapped and tuned for use during the Advent and Christmas seasons and beyond. As the holiday season approaches, the Renovation Committee extends its thanks to the congregation, friends, and staff of First Church for their continuing patience, interest, and trust.

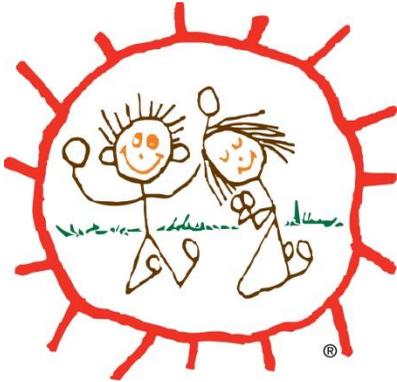


Organist and Minister of Music, Mary Bon at the Rosenberry organ.

THEOLOGY ON TAP - A THEOLOGY ROUND TABLE

Join Dr. Allan Janssen, First Church's theologian-in-residence, for a weekly discussion of theological issues at an open gathering every Tuesday afternoon at 5:00 p.m. at McGeary's (just north of the church). We will discuss current events, current theological issues, matters of concern within the church, and topics that participants bring to the table. For further information, you can contact Dr. Janssen at (201) 960.4828.

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP



We are happy to announce that we have begun our 3rd Children and Worship at First Church.

We invite all children ages 4-8 to come to Children & Worship every Sunday (except 2 Sundays at Christmas and Easter Sunday). Each Sunday, after the Children's Moment in our Sanctuary Worship Service, we walk together up to our own Worship Center. Here we hear stories, sing, pray, and respond to God's Word with "wondering" and artistic expression. Our worship team is so excited to see you again this year and to also meet new children who will join us.

Children and Worship Team: Deb Anderson, Sara Bonam Welge, Lauren Casullo, Sue Hunter, Marilyn Paarlberg, Amani Ballou and Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox.

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION (NVC) WORKSHOP: The Basics for Compassionate Living

Non-violence is a term that can confuse most of us. We see the word violence and we might think this is an anger management class or we might imagine ourselves learning some kind of verbal self-defense. But learning NVC actually teaches us to be more peace centered and compassionate in our day to day lives. It teaches us how to better understand and value the integrity of others and ourselves. It teaches us how to better walk in the footsteps of the greatest teacher of all, Jesus Christ.

Walter Wink says in his book *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, "...Jesus did not advocate non-violence merely as a technique for outwitting the enemy. (In his teachings) we are summoned to pray for our enemies' transformation, and to respond to ill-treatment with a love that is not only Godly, but also, I am convinced, can only be found in God."

As faithful people we believe in peace, loving others, and we want to live into God's justice. But how do we live these values in the world? And if we are loving people how do we handle conflict without hurting others or sweeping it under the rug and pretending it doesn't exist?

Join us this November to learn the "the Basics". This is a 3 week workshop for anyone who is learning NVC for the first time or for anyone who would like a "brush up" on the basic principles.

This workshop will meet Wednesdays November 5, 12, and 19th at 6pm-8:30pm in the First Church Parlor. Please sign up with Denise at 463-4449 and also let her know if you need to order a book. Required Book: ***Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Love by Marshall Rosenberg.***

PLANNING FOR ADVENT

On October 20 the Commission on Worship will be meeting to do some brainstorming and planning for the Advent worship services. You are invited to join us! As we look at the scripture texts for Advent, we will be considering such questions as: How can we as a congregation hear what God is saying to us? What in our Advent worship will help us pray? What other elements of worship—music, visuals, movement, will aid our congregation in prayer and praise? If you are thinking about joining this conversation please contact pastor John Paarlberg for some resources to help guide our thinking.

JOIN THE CHOIR

Choir rehearsals happen each Thursday at 7:00 pm. Like to sing? Come to a rehearsal, try out the choir and be a choir member for a night. The music is fun and the fellowship is great! Everyone's welcome. You don't need to read music or have any special talent - just a love of singing.

CHOIR NIGHT OUT

Thursday October 23rd

The choir is having dinner together on Thursday October 23rd at McGeary's at 5:30. Everyone is welcome - family, friends, spouses, partners, potential choir members! You don't need to be a choir member to come! It's a chance to meet the choir members in an informal setting. Stop by just for a drink or to join us for a meal! Contact Mary Bon if you have any questions at maryebon@verizon.net or 463-4449.

WEATHERVANES TO ENJOY

'AN ITALIAN INTERLUDE'



Join the Weathervanes for fellowship, lunch, and program on Wednesday, October 15th, at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be served. Then enjoy a slide show presented by Ron and Harriet Stockhoff of their Spring trip to Italy, where they explored major art venues and several major cathedrals in Florence, Venice, and Rome. Ron calls their travels "A Walking Seminar on Faith and Art." Please telephone Audrey Ming (456-5485) to let her know that you plan to attend.

FIRST CHURCH READERS MEETS October 19 - Join Us!



Like to read? First Church Readers are people who love to read. We get together once a month in the post-service hour to discuss a book we have read in the past month. Our next meeting is October 19th when we will be discussing *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein.

Upcoming books are:

November *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Harriet Beecher Stowe

December NO BOOK GROUP

January *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb

These books are all available through the Upper Hudson Library System in either hard copy or ebook format.

Future books we are considering include:

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings

The Book Thief

Unbroken

An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith

Help, Thanks, Wow

The Good Earth

Maya Angelou

Markus Zusak

Lauren Hillenbrand

Barbara Brown Taylor

Anne Lamott

Pearl S. Buck

Do you have an idea for a book for the reader's group? Want more information? Contact Mary Bon at maryebon@verizon.net or 463-4449.

We need your help with Delivering Shelter Meals!

Since 2008 First Church has been providing dinner for the Shelter two Fridays a month. **To continue the ministry we need people to deliver the food to the shelter.** Deliveries are made on Fridays during the day at the First Lutheran Church offices or at 6 pm at the Shelter door at First Lutheran Church, Albany. Talk to Mary Bon at 463-4449 or maryebon@verizon.net. The Shelter opens on November 15th and we need to have deliverers on hand before that date. **Please help!**

The Emergency Overflow Shelter, sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches, is a "shelter of last resort" when other shelters are full or for those not eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health issues. Located at First Lutheran Church in Albany it is open during the winter months and turns nobody away.

GROWING GREEN



This is part of an ongoing series on how we can “grow green.” Each month we’ll share a few tips on simple practices that we can do to increase our stewardship of God’s good earth.

- Turn down your heat. Each degree you turn down the heat saves 3 percent on heating costs.
 - Stay warm indoors by dressing in at least 3 layers; first, a lightweight fabric; then an insulation layer like a wool or fleece; lastly, an outer layer like a shawl or quilt to hold in the heat; Wear thin socks under wool or fleece socks and leggings, and finally a hat to keep you warm indoors, too.
- Make your own rice or bean bags for bed-warmers - fill an old sock with rice or beans, tie the top, heat it in the microwave for 2 minutes and it will stay warm for hours.
 - Recycle your leaves in a compost pile. (If you don’t have a compost pile Mary Bon is always looking for extra leaves for hers.)

KIBERA UPDATE

Our Kibera team has been hard at work selling crafts at several local fairs in September. We will soon be ordering more products in time for our largest sale of the year, Black Friday (the 2 days after Thanksgiving) at the Delmar Reformed Church.

We are awaiting an update on the future of the Kibera Sosep School which is being forced to relocate to make room for a railroad. We hope to have some news soon.

PARKING LOT: IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ANYONE PARKING IN FIRST CHURCH PARKING LOTS WITHOUT A DISPLAYED PERMIT MAY BE TOWED.

Maiden Lane no longer has an attendant full time. A towing company polices the Sheridan Avenue lot, and if there is no ticket or permit visible in the visor or dashboard you may be towed. There is a ticket booth in the lot right next to the attendant house for purchasing tickets. The charge will be \$140.00 per vehicle or higher if you are towed. Parking permits are ONLY available through Denise, phone: 463.4449. When using the Orange Street parking lot, you need to have and display a permit. In addition, if you have an event at church you MUST contact Denise.

David Bradley
Chair, Board of Trustees Parking Committee

ROOM FOR ALL

Room for All, an organization whose mission is the welcome and full affirmation of LGBTQ people in the Reformed Church in America, is seeking applicants for its second staff person. The Community Coordinator position is full time and may be carried out from a home office. Applications will be accepted until October 15. To download the job description go to <http://www.roomforall.com/news/rfa-is-hiring> or call Room for All Executive Director, Marilyn Paarlberg, [201-364-4538](tel:201-364-4538).

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you knit or crochet? Would you be interested in offering your gifts in a ministry to others?

In a prayer shawl ministry, the shawl maker begins with prayers and blessings for the recipient.

The intentions are continued throughout the creation of the shawl. Upon completion, a final blessing is offered before the shawl is sent on its way. Some recipients have continued the kindness by making a shawl and passing it onto someone in need. Shawls can be used during an illness and recovery, as a comfort after a loss or in times of stress; during prayer or meditation; to recognize commitment or marriage ceremonies; birthing, nursing a baby; bridal shower or wedding gift; graduation, birthday, anniversary, ordination, holiday gifts, or other occasions. Sometimes a blessing or prayer may be offered when the gift is presented. If you are interested in helping with this ministry please contact one of the pastors.

2014 ALBANY CROP WALK

The CROP Hunger Walk raised \$92,747 by 450 participants. First Church raised \$2,360 by 22 walkers and Baxter the Dog! Congratulations and thank you to all who participated.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA

Please send a note or call the church office by Friday, December 12th to order your Christmas Poinsettia. A minimum donation of \$10 per plant is requested. Make check payable to: First Church in Albany (marked:Poinsettias). After Christmas, the plants are shared with our homebound members.

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The deadline for the October issue of *FAMILY* is October 16.

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Memorials

In celebration of the life of **Patricia Merritt** a gift has been received from an anonymous donor for the **Music Fund**.

In celebration of the life of **Edward Mondore** a gift has been received from Betty Pierce for the **Capital Campaign Fund**.

In Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Bill Karchner on the death of his father, William D. Karchner on July 14, 2014.

Joeanna Brown requests prayers and support for her daughter, Deborah Anderson, grandson, Terrence and great-granddaughter Sha'Terra, on the loss of Sha'Terra's newborn Ah'Myah on September 23, 2014.

In Honor

In honor of **Shirley Bone's** birthday, September 9th a gift has been received for the Capital Campaign Fund from her dear friends, Helen Goldenberg and Stephen Barr.

Thank you

"Sue and Dan Clayton appreciate receiving calls, cards and notes from fellow members. They help raise our spirits and feel connected to the Church Family. Thank you"

We want to thank Norma Mc Clement for the office help she has given us over the years. Her ongoing faithfulness and expertise to help us maintain schedules, copying, folding, inserting, enlarging bulletins, and numerous other office duties has been a gift to us. Most of all we thank her for the cheer she continually gave us. Norma shared how much she loved her office duties and was glad she could be part of this ministry. Norma, we want you to know your help has been appreciated and we will miss you in the workroom. If your health permits we hope you will be able to continue to worship and attend First Church events.



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FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

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