

The First Church **FAMILY**

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

October 2018

WORSHIP:

- 7 **World Communion Sunday**
10:30 am Worship – Creation Sunday 3: God’s Longing
Post Service: SHARE Presentation in the Parlor
- 14 **Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 am Worship – Creation Sunday 4: Enough
 The Rev. Al Janssen, preaching
Post-service: Journey through the Psalms
 Coffee & Conversation
- 21 **Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 am Worship – Stewardship 1: Wanting Glory
Post Service: Journey through the Psalms
 First Church Readers
- 28 **Reformation Sunday**
10:30 am Worship – Stewardship 2: Wanting Restoration
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation

Dear pilgrim,

*As you go into the wilderness of the land and of your heart—
May you experience the ever-flowing grace of God's presence!*

*May you be immersed so fully in God's love
that you learn to let go and swim!*

*May you engage deeply and radically with the natural world,
as steward, co-creator, and friend!*

*May you drink anew from the divine source, the stream of living
water!*

*And may you be transformed,
may the stagnant waters of your spirit begin to flow,
and may all which is dead in you rise again!*

God is here.

The river awaits.

Let the adventure begin.

Amen.



FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Members and Friends,

This pilgrim's blessing prayer written by Lisa Hershey Kutolowski, and published in From The River of Life Prayer Book for the Connecticut River Pilgrimage 2017 is a good frame for the two seasons of worship and contemplation we will experience this month.

God comes to our world first as Creator, inviting us into relationship, into deepening of spirit, and into the adventures of faith. We celebrate this invitation as we deliberately spend time in Creation Season. And we take seriously God's call to us to be mindful stewards of the gifts and wonders of creation.

As we bask in the truth that God is here, we also take time this month to acknowledge the ways that God, through First Church, opens ways for us to experience the joys of grace, the opportunities for transformed lives, and the gift of fellow pilgrims on our journey of faith. First Church provides us worship in which God's glory is made known, education to open new vistas of thought and meditation, fellowship for encouragement and enjoyment, care in good times and hard ones, service opportunities to reach out in Jesus' name to those in need of comfort and aid.

We want much for ourselves and our world, and God is generous, challenging and enriching us body and soul, mind and heart. So we take seriously God's call to be generous with all we have received, as we contemplate our financial support of First Church's mission and ministry.

My prayer for you, First Church in Albany, is that you will engage "deeply and radically" during October with the natural world and with the Holy One – and that you will be led to deeper investment in your personal faith pilgrimage and the future of this church's life and ministry in Jesus' name.

God is here. Let the adventure begin!

Lynn

AT HOME WITH THE WORD

**Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary - www.rca.org/athome
October 1st – October 31st.**

1. Job 1:1, 2:1-10
2. Psalm 26
3. Genesis 2:18-24
4. Psalm 8
5. Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12
6. Mark 10:2-16
7. Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
8. Joel 2:21-27
9. Job 23:1-9
10. Amos 5:6-7,10-15
11. Psalm 90:12-17
12. Hebrews 4-12-16
13. Mark 10:17-31
14. Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost
15. Job 38:1-7
16. Isaiah 53:4-12
17. Psalm 91:9-16, 104:1-9, 24, 35
18. Job 38:1-7
19. Hebrews 5:1-10
20. Mark 10:35-45
21. Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost
22. Job 42:1-6, 10-17
23. Jeremiah 31:7-9
24. Psalm 34:1-8, 19-22
25. Psalm 126
26. Hebrew 7:23-28
27. Mark 10:46-52
28. Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost
29. Ruth 1:1-18
30. Deuteronomy 6:1-9
31. Psalm 119:1-8

SENIOR MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE - UPDATE

The search committee for a new senior minister is now preparing the church profile for First Church. The profile is the key document that will inform prospective candidates of who we are as a congregation, and what we do in worship, congregational life, and outreach ministries. The profile will state what talents and gifts in a senior minister will help lead us into the future filled with faith, hope, and love.

The church profile follows the format provided by the Reformed Church in America, and it will be a long document. It will include general information about First Church--our membership, leadership, and employees; our worship, education, and ministry; our physical facilities and financial situation; and also about the larger community of which we are a part. The profile states our expectations and requirements of a senior minister and the projected salary range and benefits package.

Most of the profile is now drafted, compiled by the search committee working together, and drawing very much on data assembled by the transition team in "cottage meetings" and other occasions. We expect that the church profile will be ready to share with the joint boards for information, comment, revision, and approval by mid-October. The profile will then be formatted with pictures and be ready to send to the RCA within weeks after that.

The search committee appreciates the interest many in the congregation have expressed in our activities. We welcome questions about our responsibilities and process, and we will continue to keep the First Church family informed.

Monica Marsh, Chair
Norma Jean Ballou
Imani Brewer
Janet Conti
James Folts
Jean Lamere
Andrew Mondore
Jay Reohr
Ross Westhuis



CLASSIS ASSESSMENT

Each year, RCA churches are assessed for the work of the General Synod, the local synod and the classis of which they are a covenant partner. Assessments are made per active confessing member. This year's Individual Assessment Amount is \$97.34, with the following break-down:

\$53.75 – General Synod

\$32.00 – Synod of Albany

\$ 9.40 – Albany Classis

\$ 2.19 – Benevolences

As you consider your pledge for 2019, please consider adding this amount to what you hope to give for local church mission and ministry.

JOINT BOARDS RETREAT

On September 22, eleven members of the Joint Boards, both pastors and one of our Classis supervisors gathered for a retreat at Delmar Reformed Church. The purpose of the retreat was:

1. To engage our joint work on God's behalf at First Church
2. To foster community among us for this next year of the transition
3. To explore together one of our transitional goals:

Does our current governance structure help us fulfill our mission?

- *Does the wider congregation, especially newcomers, understand how things work?*
- *Do those who accept roles have meaningful work to do?*
- *Are we right-sized for the current congregation?*

The Rev. David Jones, pastor of Greenbush Reformed Church, led us in an opening devotion. The group then spent time in group building exercises before delving into developing a common understanding of First Church's governance structure. We shared current perceptions, heard from Jim Folts about the way the structure is intended to work, as well as about religious corporation law, and from Pete Pagerey about how the Book of Church Order defines RCA church governance and how most other RCA churches work. Lynn Carman Bodden gave her take on the impact of the history behind our current Trustee Board and the Joint Boards. There was honest sharing about what works well and what has created some friction in the past.

After a tasty lunch, the group wrestled with how we want to function practically, looking at power dynamics, clarity of roles (Trustees, Consistory, Elders, Deacons, Joint Boards, pastors), communication, and the matching of gifts of members to the needs of the church. Several short-term goals were surfaced and responsibility for follow-up assigned. More on these later!

The Joint Boards will meet next to approve next year's budget as well as the church profile. Consistory will meet on October 3, and Trustees at the end of October.

JOINT BOARDS

<u>Deacons (5)</u>	<u>Elders (6)</u>	<u>Trustees (9)</u>	<u>Supervisors/Pastors</u>
Andy Mondore (Sr)	Norma Jean Ballou	Jim Folts (Pres)	Rev. David Jones
Theresa Brewer	Pete Pagerey	Ross Weshuis (VP)	Nancy Landrigan
Bill Kendall	Joeanna Brown	Shirley Bone	Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden
Bob Dorn (Asst. Sr)	Chip Welge	Ray Van Epps	Rev. Susan Vincent Cox
Richard Gardner	Becky Hudak	David Bradley	
	Becky Mondore	Joyce Recene	
		Ned Monthie	
		Wayne Sivaslian	
		Andy Mondore	

* Leaders to be elected in October

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 at 12:15pm and stay until you wish to leave. Each person pays for their own meal. Contact Donna E. Schultz at deschultz07@aol.com or (518) 429-1255.

JEFFREY CURRY UPDATE

Jeff Curry spent several days at his new home in Resselaer, receiving Occupational and Physical Therapy and visits from Visiting Nurses, as well as outpatient treatment. Recently, he had additional surgery at Albany Medical Center to improve the circulation in his leg. Jeff appreciates our prayers, and cards can be sent to him at 1311 Third St. Rensselaer, NY 12144.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

During the month of August, the First Church Food Pantry served eight new households and a total of thirteen new people, in addition to the 145 repeat households of 224 people. Each person was provided with 18 meals each. The Food Pantry was open for 9 days in August, thanks to the work of all our volunteers and staff.

Hotdogs from the Food Pantry were used at Thursday's Cleo's Hotdogs. Thank you again to all who provided rolls, chips, condiments, cookies and cupcakes as well as countless bottles of water for our Thursday luncheon guests!

Did you know that Food Pantry guests who come on Wednesdays are able to receive counselling from Ross Westhuis if they want it?

We thank God that the First Church Food Pantry has been serving our neighbors for fifty years!

FOCUS CHURCHES

After worship among the FOCUS churches in July, August and September, members of FOCUS churches and interested people were invited to share their experiences with FOCUS ministries and their ideas for where we might engage in Albany in the coming years. The Board is gathering this information to help in setting goals and in clarifying staffing needs as we look to hire a new Executive Director. Thank you to the handful of First Church people who took part in these conversations.

In September, FOCUS volunteers gathered at Henry Hudson Park in Bethlehem to receive thanks and celebration of their generosity of time and spirit. Over a shared meal and a beautiful cake, these sentiments were shared: "From our early morning risers that work the FOCUS Breakfast Programs and serve our guests with care and compassion, to the folks who help operate the FOCUS Food Pantry with smiles and open hearts, we treasure you and would not exist without you! From our dedicated FOCUS board members to the generous donors and community members who volunteer at our special events and fundraisers we thank you. YOU are the life and breath of FOCUS Churches of Albany."

FOCUS once again will be at IGNITE, Albany's Volunteer Festival, to help folks find their fit among opportunities from 30 nonprofits and be part of making Albany a stronger community. Join us at the Albany Capital Center on Thursday, November 8th!

FIRST CHURCH READERS MEETS OCTOBER 21st AFTER SERVICE



Like to read? First Church Readers are a group of people who love to read. Each month we read a different book and get together on a Sunday after worship to discuss it.

We will be meeting again on October 21 after service. Come join us. Books for the fall are:

- **October** *The Rosie Project: A Novel (Don Tillman Book 1)* by Graeme Simsion. A brilliant but socially inept professor decides he needs a wife. In the orderly, evidence-based manner he designs the Wife Project, a sixteen-page, scientific survey to find his perfect partner identifying and filtering out drinkers, smokers, and people who are not punctual. Rosie fits none of the criteria but, nonetheless, she keeps turning up in his life with hilarious consequences.
- **November** *Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II* Liza Mundy. More than 10,000 girls were recruited to do the secret work of breaking codes in WW II. Their work was forgotten and their sacrifices were unsung until this highly readable, well researched and documented story.

FUTURE BOOKS FOR 2019

- *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans* by Eve Laplante. - Expelled from 17th century Puritan Massachusetts for heresy, sedition and behaving in a manner “not comely for [her] sex,” Hutchison goes on to be the only woman to co-found a state - Rhode Island.
- *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown, noted preacher, theologian and author of many books on faith, doubt and re-visioning religion. In her new book she explores darkness and why light is associated with goodness and darkness with evil “teaching us how to find our footing in times of uncertainty and giving us strength and hope to face all of life’s challenging moments.”
- *Days of Awe and Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the Twenty-first Century* by Marcus J. Borg. The late Marcus Borg was a influential 20th century theologian and this collection of his writings explores what it means to be a Christian in the 21st century.



Embark on a Journey Through the Psalms

Find light for your path, wisdom for your way, and inspiration for your days

Bible Study and Conversation

Starting September 30, after worship

Will also meet October 14th & 21st, November 4th & 18th, and December 2nd & 16th.

Sign up for a study resource in the church lobby or call Valerie

Church office 518-463-4449

For more information contact Pastor Sue Cox

SHARE PRESENTATION

You may have been reading about the Sheridan Avenue Power Plant in the news lately. On October 7 after worship, representatives of SHARE, Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy, will join us after worship as part of our Creation Season. They will present their concerns, and invite attendees into conversation, about the hazards of the proposal to bring the Sheridan Avenue power plant back online using fossil fuels. Rather than using fracked gas, SHARE seeks to encourage a plan to run the power plant slated to heat and power Empire State Plaza and other buildings with clean renewable energy. Come to listen, to learn, and to ask questions about this project that lies 0.3 miles up the street from First Church.

CHILDREN & WORSHIP

We are excited about another year of Children & Worship which starts Oct 7th. Children & Worship is an amazing program that provides a worship service just for children.



As we enter another year of offering this great program to families we want to get the word out about it. We have just launched a Facebook page which can be found here at:

<http://www.facebook.com/ChildrenandWorshipatFC>.

We hope you will consider "liking" the page and sharing this with families and friends you know with young children. We offer a program for children 4-7 and 8-12 and we want the community to know about this amazing program right here at First Church!
Kim Gattie.

WEATHERVANES - NEPAL

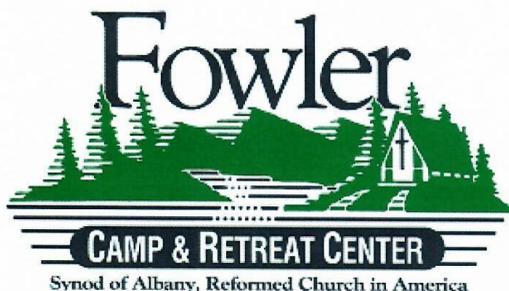


Join the Weathervanes on Wednesday, October 17th at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverages will be served. Sara Welge will share with us some of the things she saw and experienced on her recent hiking trip to Nepal.

Please contact Audrey Ming (518-456-5485) to let her know you are coming.

INTERGENERATIONAL WEEKEND AT CAMP FOWLER

October 26-28, 2018



Camp Fowler in the Adirondacks is the site for an inter-generational church retreat for singles, pairs, youth, and families. Autumn foliage at Fowler offers beautiful seasonal surroundings for walks, hikes, or outdoor exploration and activities. Join in a variety of group activities or reserve time for silence and solitude. Rooms are double occupancy and all meals are included.

Applications are due by October 1st

Cost: \$40.00 - \$160.00 per person

Please pay at the highest level you can afford.

Children under 5 years are free.

A minimum of 50% of your total cost is required with the application. Final payment must be received by Friday October 19th. If you have questions regarding fees, please call Pastor Susan Vincent-Cox at (518) 596-8793 or Joanna Hurston-Brown at (518) 244-5396. Applications are located on the display table in the lobby and may be given to Valerie Williams weekdays or mailed to:

2018 Intergenerational Retreat
First Church in Albany
110 No. Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12210

**\$1 DONATION TO FIRST CHURCH
WHEN YOU BUY A REUSABLE SHOPPING BAG**



*Wolf Road Hannaford
Through the end of October*

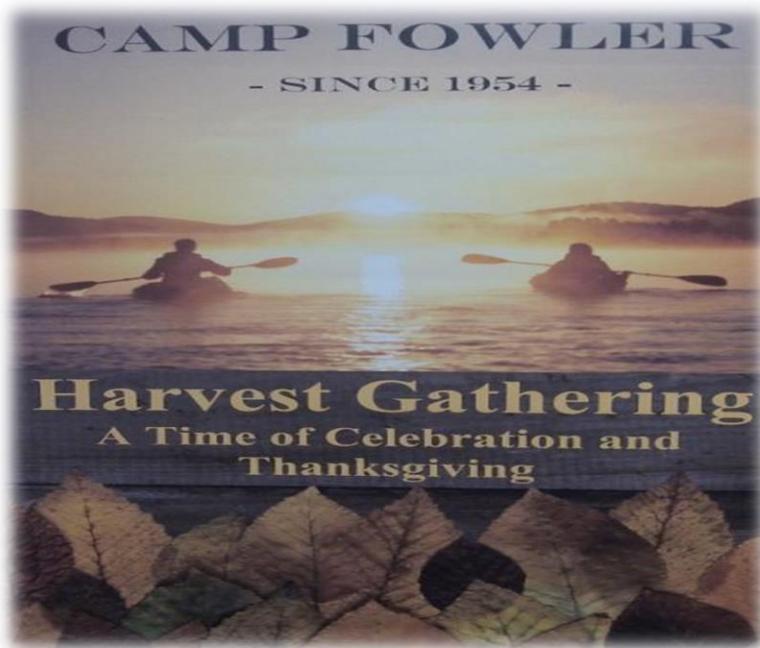
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

With today's busy schedules, October isn't too early to think about Christmas, and there is a special reason to do so this year. Our congregation and the folks at Emmanuel Baptist Church are joining together to produce a Christmas pageant. Two performances are planned, one on Saturday, December 14, at Emmanuel and one on Sunday, December 15, at First Church. Everyone from the youngest to the oldest can take part. We'll try to keep rehearsals and meetings to a minimum, but we will need planners and other participants and many other willing volunteers to handle all the details of the pageant.



Ian Leet will be coordinating for First Church, but if you want to help, please contact Ian at 518-482-6612 or by email ian.leet@outlook.com. Together, we can make this the best Christmas pageant ever!

10TH ANNUAL HARVEST GATHERING



**MONDAY,
NOVEMBER 5, 2018
@ 6PM
GLEN SANDERS
MANSION
SCOTIA, NY 12302**

Contact Jay Reohr if you would like to be apart of the First Church table.

Email: jayr3@aol.com

HELP FIRST CHURCH

PROVIDE OVERFLOW HOMELESS SHELTER MEALS!

For ten years First Church has been providing meals for the Overflow Homeless Shelter from November to April. **The Shelter opens in November and to continue the ministry we need people willing to provide a dish and help deliver the food.**

Sign-up on the Shelter sheet on the Hospitality Table or talk to Mary Bon at maryebon@verizon.net. or Patty Salsbury at gogold111@aol.com. It is an easy and rewarding way to serve!

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

FIRST CHURCH FACILITIES ARE USED AND AVAILABLE FOR USE

First Church has a large facility with various spaces that are convenient for groups of various sizes, with ample parking and a convenient location in downtown Albany. Each year several groups receive permission to use our facility. Such requests are approved by the Building Use Committee, composed of members of Leadership and the Treasurer. First Church charges fees to cover out-of-pocket expenses, though the fees are waived for an RCA or FOCUS-related event. A higher fee schedule applies to for-profit organizations. In addition, tours are offered to groups that are interested in First Church's history and architecture. And many individual visitors from places near and far come to First Church unscheduled, and are welcome to take a self-guided tour of our historic sanctuary.

Here is a list of significant building use during the year 2018 so far:

1. S.H.A.R.E - Sheridan Hollow Association for Renewable Energy - February 20, 2018.
2. National Preservation Trust - historical architecture tour - May 5, 2018.
3. Dutch Settlers Society - historical tour - April 12, 2018 (Society has met at First Church since its founding in 1924).
4. ABC Studios - television cast assembly point - July 17 thru July 20, 2018.
5. Swartwout Family Association - historical tour - September 1, 2018.
6. Albany County Board of Elections - polling place - September 13, 2018 and November 6, 2018.
7. Alcoholics Anonymous - Wednesdays at noon.
8. Taste of Troy Food Tours, LLC. - most Fridays 1:30 pm-1:50 pm - May thru October 2018.

If you know of a group that would like to use our facility, please refer them to Valerie Williams, Parish Administrator, for further information. Making our facilities available for varied uses and groups is part of good stewardship and our outreach to the community and city of Albany.

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 this fall. We'd love to welcome you officially!

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE
NOVEMBER ISSUE OF *FAMILY* IS THE OCTOBER 16TH.**

THANK YOU

- Monica Marsh and Andy Mondore for organizing and leading this summer's Youth Work Camp to Erie, PA. It was a pleasure to see pictures and hear stories after worship on September 16 over lunch. Thanks as well to all our workers, and those who hoped to go and were unable due to last minute obligations. Your ministry gives life to the faith of First Church! Thank-you for making our joint venture a huge success!
- Larry Underdue for cleaning the rugs.
- Tanya Hollie for cleaning the pews.

IN HONOR

- In honor of Shirly Bone's birthday a gift was received from Helen Goldenberg and Stephen Barr for the Clee Park

MEMORIALS

- In memory of the Rev. Lynn Joosten a gift has been received from the Joosten family for the Lynn T. Joosten Fund.
- In memory of Erma J. Nelson a gift has been received from the Rev. LeRoy Suess and Judith Utley-Suess.

IN SYMPATHY

- Our prayers and sympathy are with Clay, Adrienne and Clover on the death of Clay's father, Robert Butler, Jr. on September 12, 2018.
- Our prayers and sympathy are with Theresa Brewer on the death of her brother, Donald Emory.
- Our prayers and sympathy are with Bill Kendall on the death of his second cousin, John Siefert.
- Our prayer and sympathy are with Helen Otterness and family on the recent death of Helen's sister, Dorothy Brandon.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED