



**The First Church in Albany  
(Reformed Church in America)**  
Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.  
**Sunday, October 22, 2023 10am**  
**Twenty-first Sunday After Pentecost**

*In response to God's unconditional love for all people made known to us in Jesus Christ, we are called to be a welcoming and affirming community. The First Church in Albany includes young and old, families, couples and singles, rich and poor, persons of various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identities, differing physical and mental abilities, believers and seekers. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where we are loved.*

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**Prelude Reflection** *a haiku for today's worship*

Isaiah's words ring,  
God's purpose, mighty, unseen,  
Darkness to light's spring.

**Prelude**                      *"Aria from the Goldberg Variations"*                      J.S. Bach

**Tolling of Bell:** *bell tolled by children of First Church*

**Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

Ordinary Time: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." **Amen.**

## **Call to Worship** *based on Psalm 96:1-13 (All read bold)*

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.  
**Amen.**

**O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.**

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

**For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.

**The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."**

**\*Opening Hymn**

*"Holy, Holy, Holy"*

*(see insert)*

**Prayer of Confession** *(from ministrymatters.com for 10/22)*

**We are so easily pulled this way and that way by those who would promise instant healing for all the world's woes. We want to have everything be whole and happy, and we don't know what to do, so we pay attention to those voices that cry the loudest, whether they are voices of blame or promise. In our fearfulness, we love to place blame for all our woes on the shoulders of a few people. In our anguish, we seek instant answers from sources that are very unreliable. Lord, help us. Turn us around. Help us know that you are our Lord and you have provided much for us. You have given to us abilities, and understanding, and ways in which we can be those who would bring peace and justice. You have blessed our lives. Heal and restore our spirits, Lord. Help us truly place our trust in you and to work in ministries that uplift people. This prayer we offer in Jesus' name. AMEN.**

*Time of silence*

**Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law** *(from ministrymatters.com, 10/22)*

**The Lord has given to us gifts and abilities to work for peace and justice. You are especially blessed by God. Go into this world in confidence of God's presence and love. AMEN.**

## **\*Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with a hand-sign of peace.



Touch your thumb to the tip of your ring finger, and wave to one another. This hand-sign makes Christ's gesture of blessing in a lot of iconography in the Orthodox Tradition.

## **Children's Message & Blessing**

### **Prayer for Illumination** *Please sing*

**Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me. Mold me. Fill me. Use me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me!**

### **Scripture Reading** Isaiah 45:1-7

Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him-- and the gates shall not be closed:

I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me.

I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me;

I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **Sermon Text** Matthew 22:15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax."

And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” They answered, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, O Christ!**

**Sermon**

*Who Is God?*

**A Prayer of Blessing on the Word**

**\*Hymn of Response**      *“In Imitation. Lord of Thee “*      (see insert)

**Profession of Faith** *Apostles’ Creed (contemporary version)*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church\*,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Tithes & Offerings:** *If you would like to connect more with the life and mission of First Church, please fill out a Welcome Card found in your pew and place it in the offering as it goes by.*

**Offertory**      *“Sarabande from English Suite No. 3 in g minor”*      J.S. Bach

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

## Prayers of the People

Leader: O Lord,

People: Hear our prayer.

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be  
done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,

as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the  
power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen.

**\*Sending Hymn**      *"Give Thanks, O Christian People"*      (see insert)

**\*Charge & Blessing**

**Postlude**      *"Quodibet from the Goldberg Variation"*      J.S. Bach

**Note:** Join us after worship downstairs in Zimmerman Hall for Coffee Hour  
& Fellowship.



**Minister(s):** Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston (preaching)

**Liturgist:**

**Consistory Chaplain of the Day:** Norma Jean Ballou

**Pianist:** Eugene Sit

**Audio/Visual:** Joshua Bliss, Stephen Reohr

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# Prayers, Joys & Concerns

If you have a concern or joy you would like to share with our church family, email [office@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org) or call the office at 518-463-4449

- Dave and Barb Andrews and Donna Jones, for the passing of close friend Barbara Walter. For Ms. Walter's other friends and family, especially partner Sam Yang.
- Avery Bradley, granddaughter of Marilyn and David, an athlete recovering from a leg injury that required surgery
- Norma McClement
- From our pantry family, Maureen Jackson and her brother Maurice, both dealing with health issues
- Family of Gillian Persons
- Jean Lamere
- Baby Dana in the NICU. Dana is the daughter of an acquaintance of the Andrews
- For Shirley Mockel, good friend of Marilyn Bradley, with health concerns.
- Kathleen Claydon
- Doug Plummer, friend of the Bradley family, as he begins treatment for health concerns
- For Barbara, friend of Barb Andrews and Donna Jones
- Becky Gardner
- Virginia Giguere and family as they mourn the passing of her brother Jason Miller in June.
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews, recovering
- Carol LaBatte
- Sharnelle Jones
- Joeanna Brown
- Family of Norma Jean Ballou
- Sam, cousin of Barb Andrews
- For Barb and Dave Andrews as they take on the role of caretakers
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Kokese Ballou
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- Ruth and Josue Torres
- For Jim, Rose Hunsberger's father
- Alexis Parry, niece of Cheryl Gowie
- Gail Santimaw, friend of Judith Utley-Suess
- John Utley, brother of Judith Utley- Suess
- Judith Utley-Suess, for strength
- Harold Bushnel
- Alex Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Cheryl Gowie
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Donna Schultz
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- Prayers for Ukraine, Israel and Palestine and all areas of conflict across the globe. May we all remember to lead with love.
- For an end to gun violence here in Albany, in the U.S., and around the world.

## Join Us for This Week's Events

SUN  
OCT  
22

- 10am: Sunday Worship (also on Zoom and YouTube). See our website for links to worship info.

MON  
23

- 9am: Food Pantry in original location

TUE  
24

- Noon: Adult Book Study on Zoom, Private meeting in the Parlor



Scan for  
full event  
calendar

WED

26

- 9am: Food Pantry in original location
- Noon: Centering Prayer (Powell), AA Mtg (Parlor)

Worship now streaming live on YouTube.





# 2023 OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1  Communion Sunday	2 Prayer Shawl Meeting	3 Book Study Consistory Meeting	4	5 A Night of Worship 	6	7
8 Joint Board Meeting  	9  Columbus Day Office Closed	10 Book Study	11  AA	12	13 Castle Island School Event	14
15  	16 	17 Book Study	18 Weathervanes  AA Dutch Settlers Meeting	19	20	21
22  	23 	24 Book Study	25  AA	26	27	28
29  	30 	31  <b>HALLOWEEN</b> Book Study				

Key:



Indoor  
Worship  
10am



Coffee  
Hour



Pantry  
9am



Centering  
Prayer 12pm



# FCIA DIRECTORY

Please take one per family initially.

We will print more.

Contact the office with any corrections or updates.



## Hey NEIGHBOR

I'M TRYING TO FIND A GOOD COFFEE SHOP



OH, YOU HAVE TO TRY MR. MAC-JAVA KING. IT'S THE ABSOLUTE BEST!!! YOU WILL LOVE IT!!!



WE WERE THINKING OF SEEING A MOVIE TONIGHT.



YOU SHOULD SEE WILD CROWS. I SAW IT AND IT'S GREAT!



I'M LOOKING FOR A CHURCH.



I'M NOT SURE.

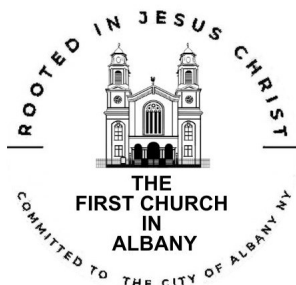
UH, UM...

GEE...



We easily share about our favorite book or a great new pizza place. Why is it sometimes hard for us to offer an invite to church? Imagine if you ask and they say yes...God's Kingdom continues to grow!

WHO WILL YOU INVITE TO FIRST THIS WEEK?



## First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St.

Albany NY 12207

518-463-4449

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



# Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Descant

4 Ho - - - ly,

1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!  
2 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! all the saints a - dore thee,  
3 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! though the dark - ness hide thee,  
4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

ho - - - ly,

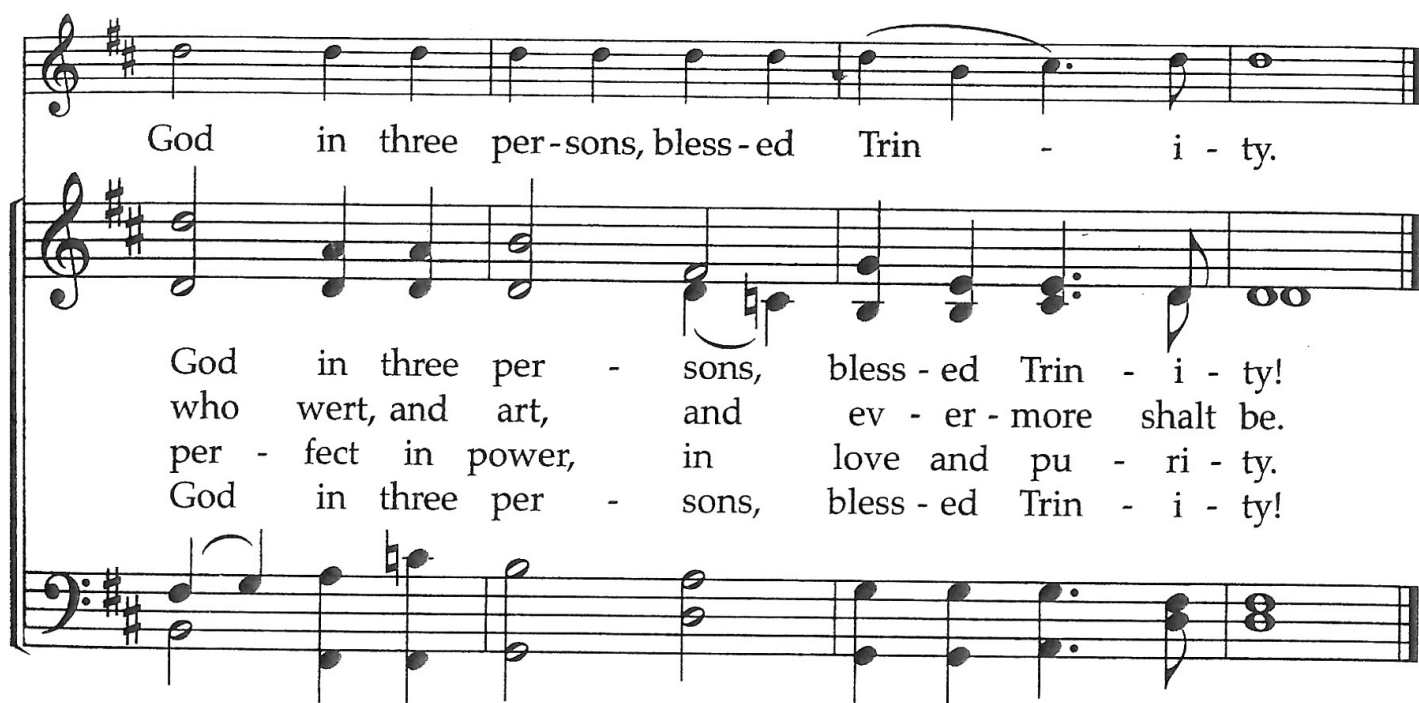
Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to thee.  
cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;  
though the eye of sin - ful - ness thy glo - ry may not see,  
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.

continued



ho - ly,

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!  
cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore thee,  
on - ly thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side thee,  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!



God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty.

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!  
who wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.  
per - fect in power, in love and pu - ri - ty.  
God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

## In Imitation, Lord of Thee

John 13:14

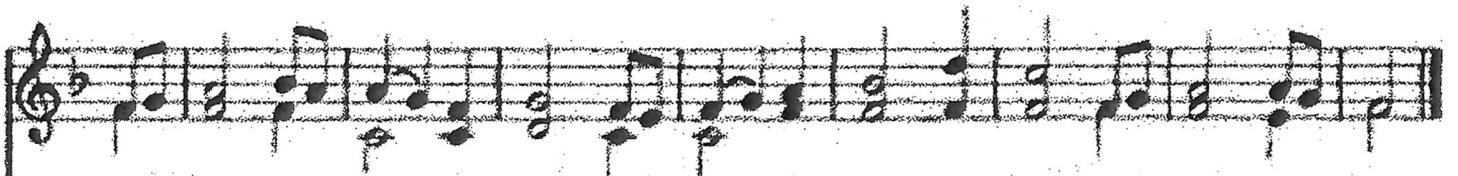
William Brickey, c. 1886

MCCABE L.M.

E. S. Widdemer



1. In im - i - ta - tion, Lord, of Thee, This sol - emn ser - vice we re - peat;
2. Re - new each sa - cred spark of love, And vit - a - lize the ho - ly flame;
3. Our great ex - am - ple Thou shalt be, In wash - ing Thy dis - ci - ples feet;



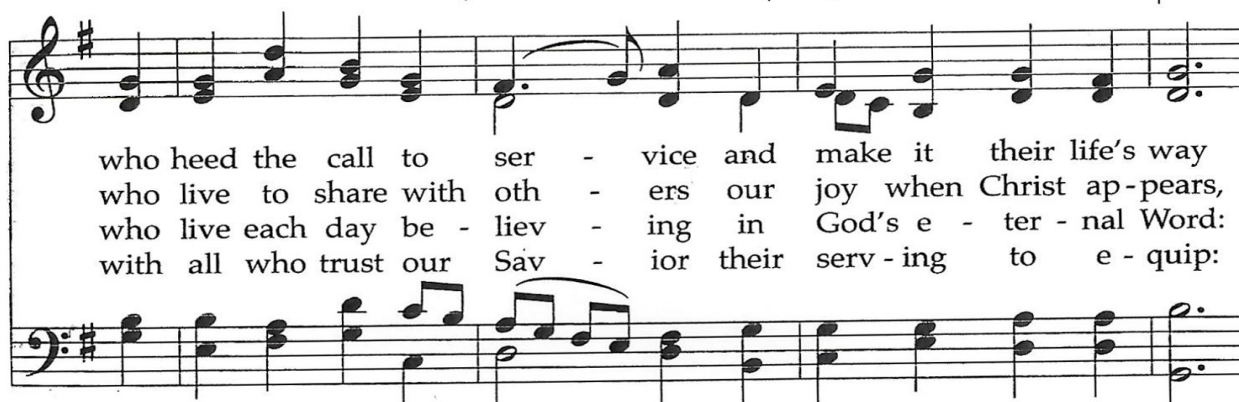
For Thine ex - am - ple, full of grace, Has made this hum - ble du - ty sweet.  
May un - ion strong our hearts u - nite While this we do in Je - sus' name.  
And as we fol - low Thy com - mand, Make Thou our fel - low - ship com - plete.



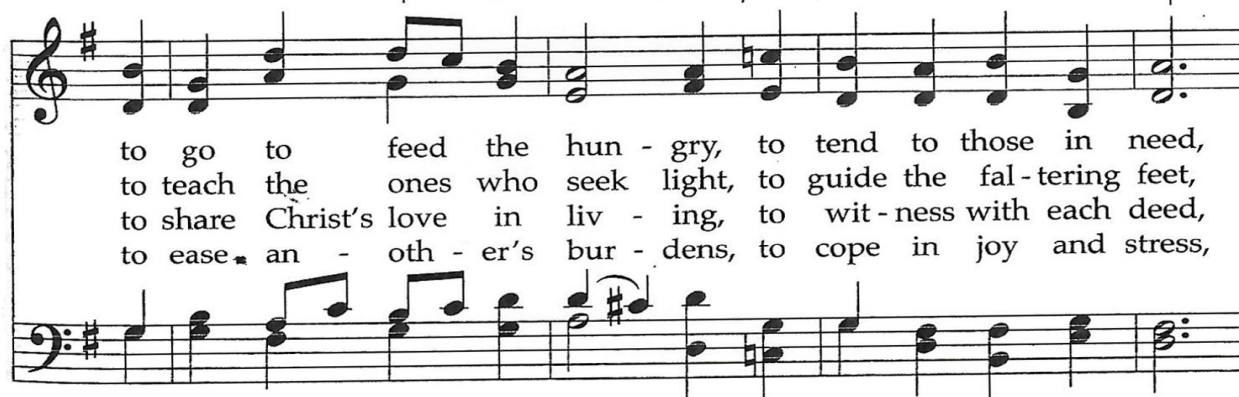
# Give Thanks, O Christian People



1 Give thanks, O Chris-tian peo - ple, for work-ers of our day  
 2 Give thanks, O Chris-tian peo - ple, for lead - ers of our years  
 3 Give thanks, O Chris-tian peo - ple, for all who love the Lord,  
 4 Give thanks, O Chris-tian peo - ple, for life in fel - low - ship



who heed the call to ser - vice and make it their life's way  
 who live to share with oth - ers our joy when Christ ap-pears,  
 who live each day be - liev - ing in God's e - ter - nal Word:  
 with all who trust our Sav - ior their serv - ing to e - quip:



to go to feed the hun - gry, to tend to those in need,  
 to teach the ones who seek light, to guide the fal-tering feet,  
 to share Christ's love in liv - ing, to wit-ness with each deed,  
 to ease an - oth - er's bur - dens, to cope in joy and stress,



to work for e - qual jus - tice, till all God's folk are freed.  
 to lead the fol - lowers for - ward our liv - ing Lord to meet.  
 to use the tal - ents giv - en to plant the gos - pel seed.  
 to mag - ni - fy God's mes - sage and Christ's great love con - fess.

This text was written by a Presbyterian director of Christian education in Washington, DC, to honor the ministry of a colleague who was leaving the area. It is an effective reminder that God's people serve in many vocations and ministries. The tune adapts a secular German song.