

The background of the entire image is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, distant stars. A single, exceptionally bright star with a prominent yellow and orange glow and radiating light beams is positioned in the upper center. The dark, intricate silhouettes of bare trees are visible along the left and bottom edges of the frame.

*hope*



**The First Church in Albany**

**The First Week of Advent  
November 28, 2021, 10am**

# **The First Church in Albany** (Reformed Church in America)

**Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today**

*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.*

## **First Sunday of Advent** November 28, 2021

### **We Gather in the Presence of God**

#### **Prelude**

*"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*  
*Margaret Randall, organist*

E.K. Beals

### **Welcome, Announcements & Blessing**

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."  
Romans 15:13

**Advent Candle Lighting** *The Candle of Hope is lit by Erica Bliss and family.*  
*Litany inspired by the United Church of Christ, Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles*

Leader: First Church, during this Advent season, remember that "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Please respond in the bold:

Leader: We light the first candle of Advent, and kindle it with our hope.

**People: Our hope that Jesus Christ, the child who brought hope to the world, might fully bring about love, joy, and true peace in our neighborhood.**

Leader: As this candle of hope steadily burns, let it remind us of our advent longing for the light of Christ to shine in new ways in our neighborhood.

**People: Shine Lord Jesus, shine!**

Leader: \*Lights the Hope Candle\*

## Advent Anthem

## Wait for the Lord *(sing twice)*

Em C Am6 B

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Em D G Am7 B Em

Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart!

To use with Psalm 37: sing the above, read vv. 1-5, sing, read vv. 6-9, sing, read vv. 10-11, 39-40, sing.

For another setting of Ps. 37 see 850

Words and Music (WAIT FOR THE LORD 8.8): Jacques Berthier, from *Songs and Prayers* from Taizé © 1991

Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, Taizé Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc., exclusive North American agent

## **Call to Worship:** *Adapted from The Worship Source Book of the Christian Reformed Church in North America*

Leader: We gather in preparation.

**People: For good news will be proclaimed by angels in the heavens!**

Leader: We gather in expectation.

**People: For joy will appear in our world, like stars in the night!**

Leader: We gather in hope.

**People: For God has promised to make all that's wrong in the world right.**

Leader: In this advent longing, let us worship the Lord!



# \*Opening Hymn Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy  
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;  
yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -  
Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of  
Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

Alternate tune: STUTTGART, 1

## **Prayer of Confession** *Based on the hymn Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

**Lord, we confess that in the busyness of this holiday season, we neglect to slow down, quiet our hearts, and ponder our long expected hope, Jesus Christ. He is our hope because he was born to set us thy people free from our fears, sins, and misery. Send your Holy Spirit to kindle a quiet spirit within us, so might find our rest in Thee.**

## **Assurance of Pardon**

First Church, Jesus says: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” Let the light of Christ be your life this season, and be your peace.

## **\*Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: This Advent season we are having a longer time to pass the peace to one another. You will know when to head back to your seats when the organ starts to play. So, please rise and greet one another by name; introduce yourself and reintroduce yourself; learn the names of our kids; catch up on a few things; share Christ’s peace.

## **Children’s Message & Blessing**

## **Prayer of Illumination**

**God of the universe, reveal yourself to us today, lead us to Christ, and empower us to serve him and one another with joy. Amen.**

## **Sermon Text**

Matthew 2:1-12

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**Sermon**

*Hope Across the Stars*

Rev. Trey Tirpak

## **A Prayer of Blessing on the Word**

### **Sermon Notes**

Trouble in the text:

Trouble in our world:

God in the text:

God in our world:

Ways that God is moving in me:

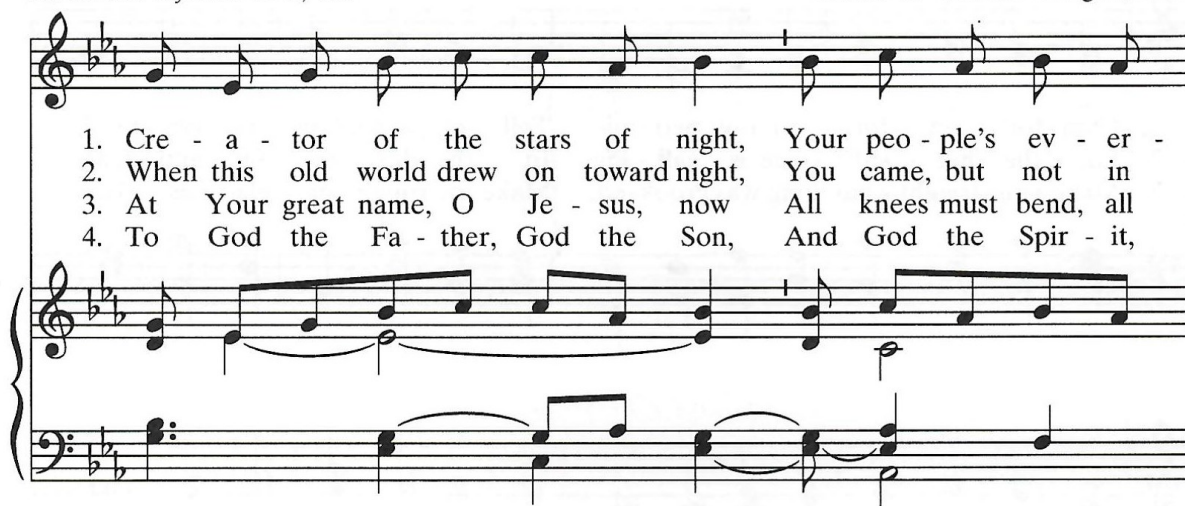


# \*Hymn of Response Creator of the Stars of Night v. 1-3

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM LM

Latin hymn, 9th century  
Trans. John Mason Neale, 1851  
As in *The Hymnal* 1940; alt.

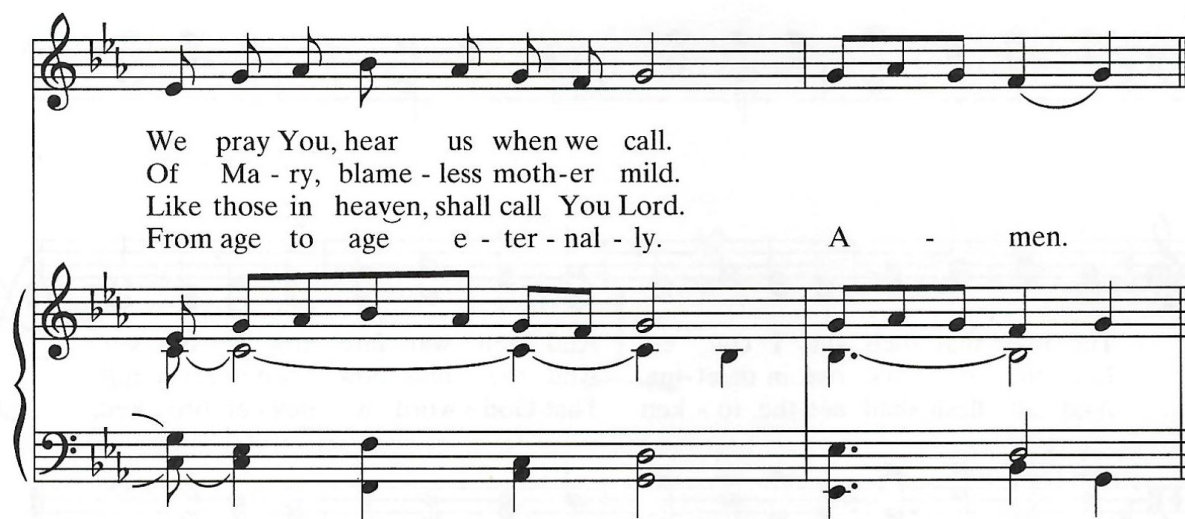
Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th century  
Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1943



1. Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, Your peo - ple's ev - er -  
2. When this old world drew on toward night, You came, but not in  
3. At Your great name, O Je - sus, now All knees must bend, all  
4. To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, And God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,  
splen - dor bright, Not as a mon - arch, but the child  
hearts must bow: All things on earth with one ac - cord,  
Three in One, Praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



We pray You, hear us when we call.  
Of Ma - ry, blame - less moth - er mild.  
Like those in heaven, shall call You Lord.  
From age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Alteration © Church Pension Fund. Used by permission.  
Music: Harmonization © 1943, 1961 Church Pension Fund. Used by permission.

**Offering & Offertory**

*“Andante”  
Margaret Randall, Organist*

G.F. Handel

**\*Doxology #592**

**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*

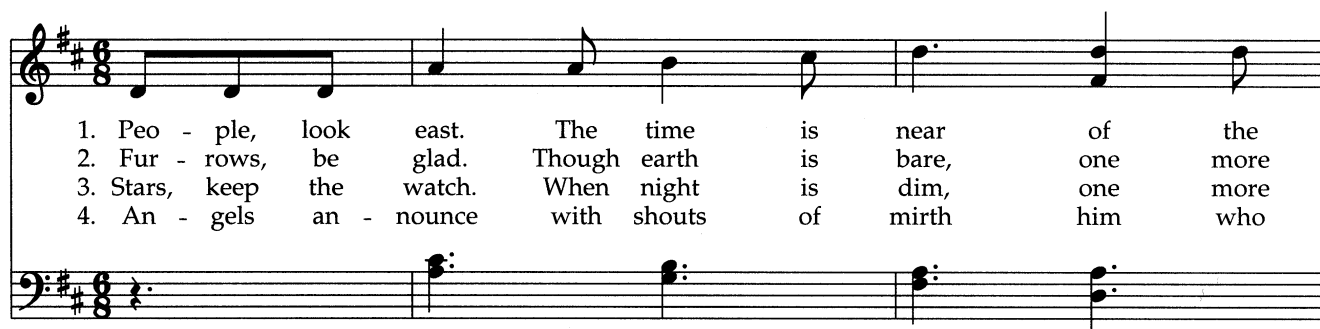
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.  
Amen.**



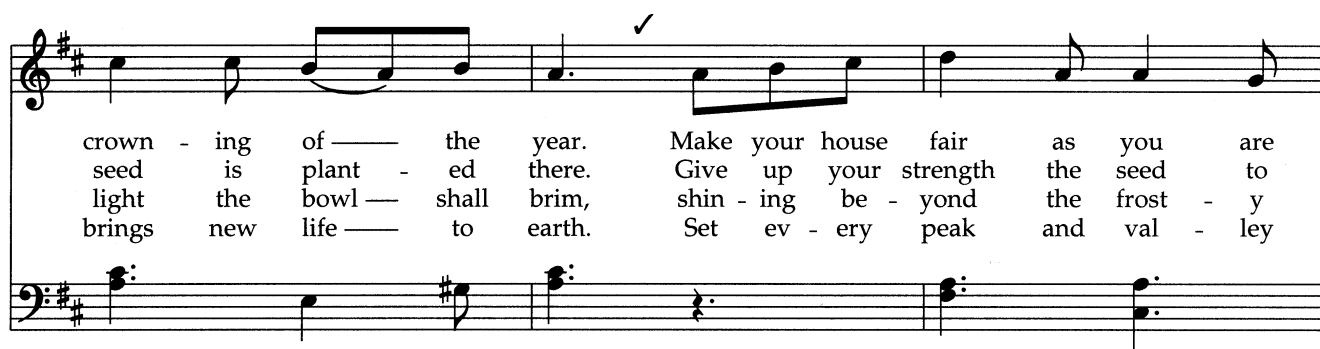
# \*Sending Hymn

## People, Look East v. 1, 3, & 4

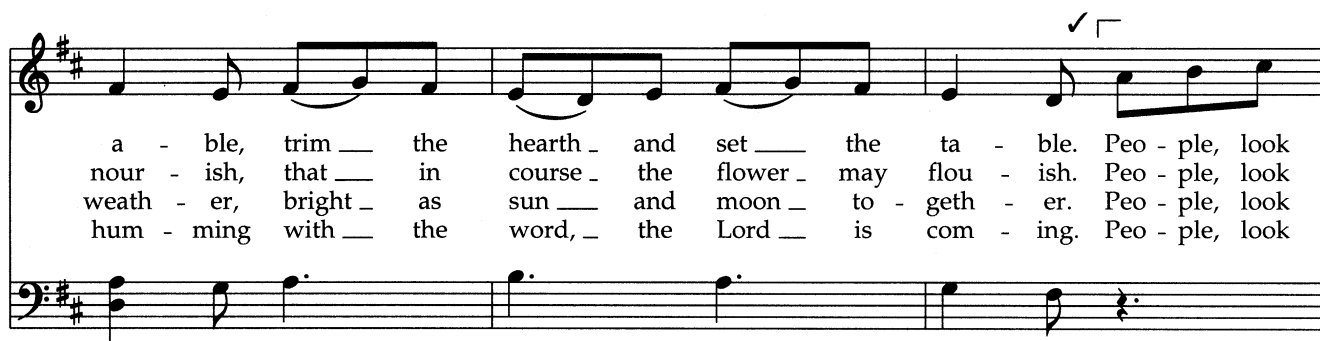
BESANÇON



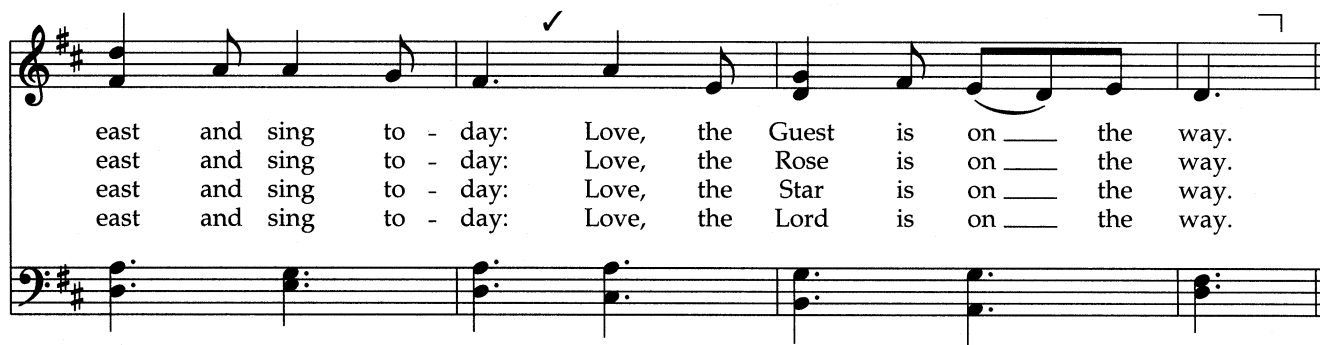
1. Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the  
 2. Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more  
 3. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more  
 4. An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who



crown - ing of — the year. Make your house fair as you are  
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to  
 light the bowl — shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y  
 brings new life — to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley



a - ble, trim — the hearth — and set — the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look  
 nour - ish, that — in course — the flower — may flou - ish. Peo - ple, look  
 weath - er, bright — as sun — and moon — to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look  
 hum - ming with — the word, — the Lord — is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east and sing to - day: Love, the Guest is on — the way.  
 east and sing to - day: Love, the Rose is on — the way.  
 east and sing to - day: Love, the Star is on — the way.  
 east and sing to - day: Love, the Lord is on — the way.

WORDS: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928

MUSIC: Trad. French carol

## \*Charge & Blessing

### Postlude

*“Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying”  
Margaret Randall, organist*

J.G. Walther

### Worship Leadership:

**Preacher:** Rev. Trey Tirpak

**Liturgist:** Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

**Guest Organist:** Margaret Randall

**Technical Team:** Joshua Bliss, and Stephen Reohr

*CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689*



- Jane, sister of Donna Schultz
- Elaine and Jim Jenks, Rose Hunsberger's parents
- Carol, Keith Curry's mother
- Marian, Colleen Lais' mother
- Peter, Karen Van Epps' brother
- Charnelle Jones
- Jeff Curry
- Barb Andrews
- Samuel, Barb Andrew's son
- Haleigh Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Neil Keen
- Ian and Edi Leet
- Fran Carr Morton
- Harriet Stockhoff
- Kathy Stallmer (Monthie family)
- Cheryl Gowie
- Steve Hoffman
- Ada Harris
- Ginger
- Charles Welge
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Staff and Leaders of The First Church in Albany
- The homeless in our community as we enter this time of colder weather, and for outreach groups who seek to help the homeless.

*Prayer Concerns? If you would like your church family to join you in prayer, please share your concerns and joys with us.*

*Call the office at 518-463-4449 or email [office@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org)*

The First Church in Albany  
along with  
FOCUS CHURCHES  
invite you to



# A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

## **What is a Blue Christmas Service?**

This purpose of this service is to comfort those among us who are approaching the holidays with heavy hearts due to loss or other difficulties. You are not alone and we want you to know that you are cared for in this season.

**Thursday, December 16  
6:30pm**

Join us for this  
candlelight service  
in  
the First Church  
Stephen James Chapel



## This Week at the First Church in Albany

- |             |       |        |                                          |
|-------------|-------|--------|------------------------------------------|
| • Sunday    | 11.28 | 10am   | Sanctuary Worship & Children and Worship |
| • Monday    | 11.29 | 9am    | Food Pantry                              |
| • Tuesday   | 11.30 | 12pm   | Adult Book Study                         |
|             |       | 5:30pm | Meeting of the Joint Boards              |
| • Wednesday | 12.1  | 9am    | Food Pantry                              |
|             |       | 12pm   | AA Meeting                               |
|             |       | 12pm   | Centering Prayer                         |
| • Thursday  | 12.2  | 11am   | Soup Lunch in Clee Park                  |
|             |       | 7pm    | Worship Service in the James Chapel      |

### Upcoming Events

- |            |       |        |                                                 |
|------------|-------|--------|-------------------------------------------------|
| • Thursday | 12.16 | 6:30pm | Blue Christmas Service FCIA with Focus Churches |
|------------|-------|--------|-------------------------------------------------|



Information will be available soon about poinsettias for Christmas Eve.

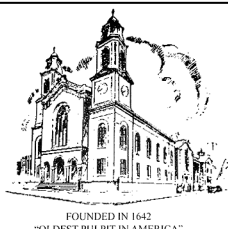
Christmas Eve Worship at The First Church in Albany, Friday, December 24, at 7pm.



THE  
STEPHEN JAMES  
CHAPEL

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 7PM  
ADVENT SERVICE WITH MUSIC BY GLENN CLAYDON

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 7PM  
EPIPHANY SERVICE



FOUNDED IN 1642  
"OLDEST PULPIT IN AMERICA"

## First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St., Albany NY 12207

518-463-4449 [www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)