

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.



Second Sunday of Advent (Peace) December 4, 2022

* = rise in body or in spirit

Prelude Reflection (Advent candle of peace)

"The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Old Testament prophets called shalom. We call it peace, but it means far more than mere peace of mind or cease-fire among enemies. In the Bible shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights." - Rev. Dr. Cornelius Plantinga Jr., President Emeritus of Calvin Theological Seminary of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

Prelude

"Savior, of the Nations Come" Iteke Prins, organ setting M. Burkhardt

Tolling of Bell (will be tolled by children of First Church)

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." **Amen.**

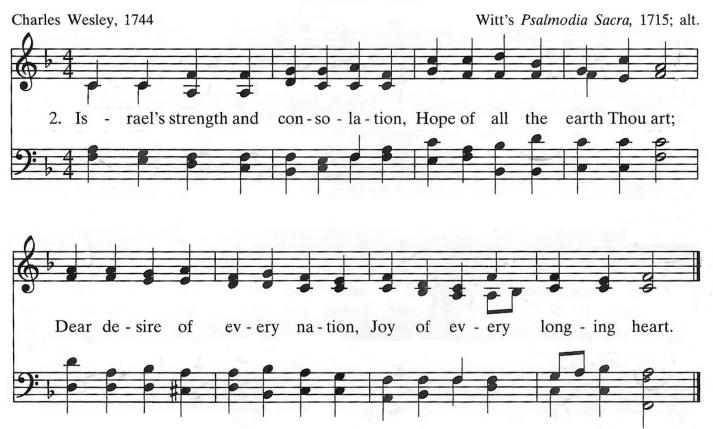
Advent Candle Lighting

The Candle of Peace

*Advent Anthem

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

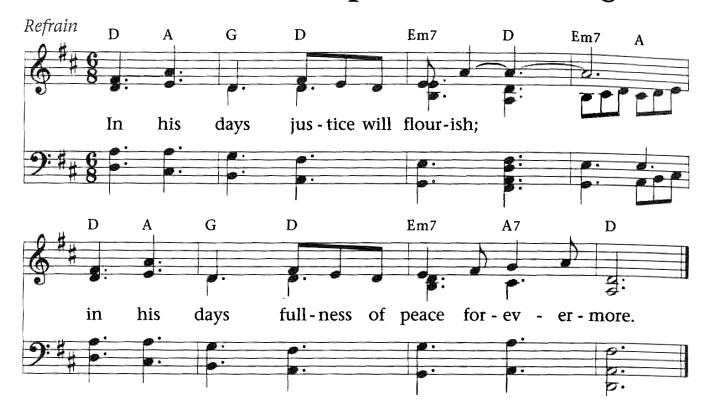
STUTTGART 8.7.8.7



Call to Worship & Opening Hymn

Each Sunday in Advent, our Call to Worship, which is usually based on the lectionary Psalm, will be a responsorial Advent Psalm. This will also serve as our Opening Hymn. Sing out!

Psalm 72 | A Responsorial Setting



Refrain

- ¹ Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;
- that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;
- ³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness. *Refrain*
- ⁴ Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.
- ⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.
- ⁶ Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.

- ⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more. Refrain
- ¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and the isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
- ¹¹ May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.
- ¹² For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress, the oppressed, and those who have no helper.
- ¹³ He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

Prayer of Confession Based on a prayer from Rev. Beth Merrill Neel of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon

Leader: Gracious and good Father, open our hearts so that we are able to admit to you the fullness of our lives – that which is beautiful and good, and that which is hurtful and hateful.

People: We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do. We love with condition. We judge and condemn. We cast the first stone, and keep the logs in our own eyes. Instead of being peacemakers, we work against your shalom. Forgive us, we pray, and send your Spirit to empower us to be imitators of Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

Time of Silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law

Friends in Christ by the Holy Spirit, know this: the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting, and I remind you of this surpassing grace – in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia!

*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

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!

Sermon Text

Romans 15:4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: The Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God!**

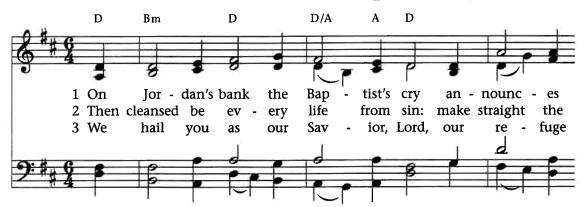
Sermon

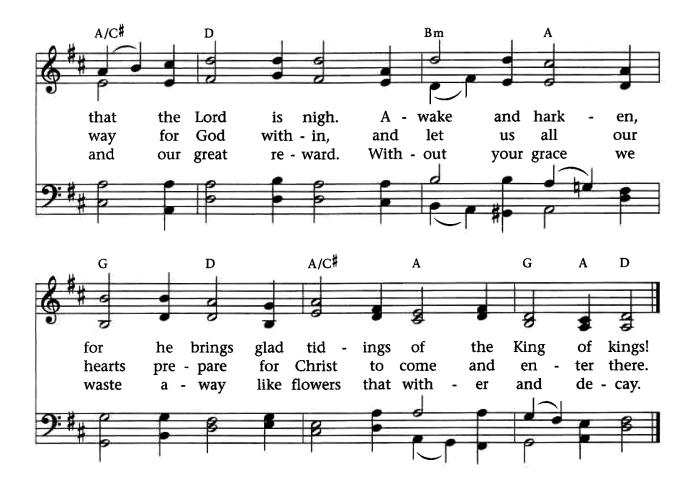
Why?

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

*Hymn of Response

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry





For an alternate arrangement see 900

Words: Charles Coffin, 1736; tr. composite, P.D.

Music (PUER NOBIS 8.8.8.8): Trier manuscript, 15th c.; adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1609; harm. George Ratcliffe Woodward, 1910, P.D.

Profession of Faith Question and Answers 105-107 of the Heidelberg Catechism regarding the 10 commandments, specifically the sixth commandment, "Thou shall not murder."

Q. What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor—not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds—and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

Q. Does this commandment refer only to murder?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness. In God's sight all such are disguised forms of murder.

Q. Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way? A. No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly toward them, to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.

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 "But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming?" G.F. Handel David Allen, bass soloist

*Doxology #592 in pew hymnal

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.

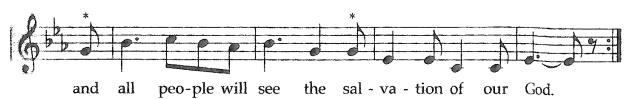
Eucharistic Anthem

(Sing 3X - 1. Choir, 2. Congregation, 3. Canon)

Prepare the Way of the Lord



Pre-pare the way of the Lord. Pre-pare the way of the Lord,



^{*}May be sung as a canon.

All three synoptic gospels identify John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah (Matthew 3:3/Mark 1:2-3/Luke 3:4) in accord with Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 40:3b). Because the latter part of the text (Isaiah 52:10b) has yet to be accomplished, this is still our mission today.

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Communion Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you. **People: And also with you.** Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Sanctus

Holy, holy, Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Mystery of the Faith

Christ has died! Christ has risen! Christ will come again!

Celebration of Communion:

Intercession

We, indeed, praise and thank you, O Lord, that you have fed us at your Table. Grateful for this gift and mindful of the communion of your saints, here and in all places,

we offer to you our prayers for all people:

Prayers offered

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



5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth. Set every peak and valley humming

With the word, the Lord is coming. People, look east and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

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Music: Harmonization © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude "Wachet Auf" Iteke Prins, organist

CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689

Note: Please enjoy 10–15 minutes of coffee and refreshments in Zimmerman Hall after the service. After that time, we will be holding a Meeting of the Joint Boards in Zimmerman Hall.

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

Liturgist: Rev. Trey Tirpak

Organist: Iteke Prins

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

Prayer Concerns

- The Reohr Family
- Gert Dorn
- Baby Anderson and family (see insert)
- Elaine Jenks, Rose Hunsberger's mother, Rose and family
- Deborah Paris, daughter of Betty Pierce
- Becky Hudak
- Alexis Parry, niece of Cheryl Gowie
- Gail Santimaw, friend of Judith Utley -Suess
- John Utley, brother of Judith Utley-
- Judith Utley-Suess, for strength
- Brian Brooks, Gayle W's brother
- Lloyd, father of Nikki Ballou
- Joe Vasta and wife Albie, friends of the
- Persons family
- Brian Zapel, friend of Dave Andrews
- Jason Shahid
- Ronald Stockhoff.
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- For Mia and Wim Westman

For Barbara W., dear friend of Barb
 & Dave Andrews and Donna Jones

J. Rinck

- Harold Bushnel
- Alex Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Cheryl Gowie
- Norma McClement
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Mary Ann Selmer
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Donna Schultz
- Elaine and Jim Jenks, Rose Hunsberger's parents
- Jeff Curry
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- Prayers for this burden of gun violence and its aftermath.
- An end to the war in Ukraine and peaceful resolution to protests in Iran and China.

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.

This Week at the First Church in Albany

•	Sunday	12.4	10am	Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom Meeting of Joint Boards (after coffee)*
•	Monday	12.5	9am	Food Pantry & Boutique at First Reminder - Office closed today
•	Tuesday	12.6	10 am	Caring for the Caregiver Program (Catholic Charities sponsored event)
•	Wednesday	12.7	12pm 9am 12pm	Adult Scripture Study Food Pantry & Boutique at First AA Meeting
•	Thursday	12.8	12pm 11:30am	Centering Prayer Free Soup in the Park
Upcoming Events				
•	Tuesday Wednesday Tuesday	12.13 12.14 12.20	6pm 6:30pm 6pm	Leadership Meeting* Blue Christmas Service Consistory Meeting*

*Meeting Schedules are subject to change. Watch your email for updates if you are a part of these gatherings.

GROUP & MINISTRY LEADERS, SEND US YOUR

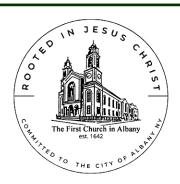
CALENDAR UPDATES

ONE-TIME EVENTS
OR RECURRING MEETINGS

PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE WITH YOUR
SCHEDULED GATHERINGS SO THAT WE CAN PUT
THEM ON THE CHURCH EVENT AND
OPERATIONAL CALENDARS.



EMAIL OFFICE@FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG OR CALL 518-463-4449



First Church in Albany

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www.firstchurchinalbany.org





