



JUNE  
2023

# THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

# THE FAMILY

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- June is PRIDE Month
- Seen at the Weathervanes' Luncheon in May
- Hotdog Thursdays are back!
- Women's Networking Event
- Elected Office Bearers
- Prayers, Blessings, & No Birthdays (we can explain)



#firstchurchinmotion



### Drive-In Worship is Back!

On May 21, we returned to the parking lot with our summer Drive-In worship service at 10am on Sundays. We follow the brief service with the Lemonade Lull in Clee Park.

Attendees are also encouraged, after worship, to enjoy the Albany Skyway, a nearby walk and park along the Hudson River. First Church - a part of the Albany community!

### Church Technology on the move

This summer, First Church continues to work to improve our WiFi and tech potential in the building. Since the pandemic, churches across the country have sunk their teeth into streaming of worship services and other online offerings. These improvements at First will allow us to reach more people for Jesus with our "online campus."

*(Some of you have inquired about The Family. We have not dropped anyone from the mailing list. It has just been challenging to create with our internet issues, so we have not sent one in a while. We expect to stay on schedule going forward and we appreciate your understanding!)*

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

## Pastor's Corner...



June is Pride Month, and as I reflect on it, I'm reminded of my most recent Schenectady Classis meeting where I expressed deep gratitude to the classis. It's not often that someone feels such profound appreciation for the work of a classis, but I did and it had to do with a new section on the usual meeting agenda entitled: "Far-Flung Clergy Report."

Some backstory: During my final year of my MDiv at Western Theological Seminary (which is no longer an official seminary of the Reformed Church in America, per their request), Western decided not to grant me a Certificate of Fitness for Ministry solely because I am gay. This certificate is needed for students under the care of a classis seeking ordination, as it allows them to sit for their exams and pursue a call to be ordained.

Not being granted a certificate had a devastating ripple effect on myself and other queer students. Our path to pursue our calling within the Reformed Church in America drastically narrowed. For some, the inevitable denial of a Certificate of Fitness for Ministry marked the end of their journey, causing them to leave seminary and abandon their future in ministry altogether. Is a Master of Divinity degree really worth it if you cannot serve in ministry?

To be honest, I thought I had run out of options. However, whispers started to circulate about Reformed folk "out east" who believed that the Holy Spirit calls all people. One by one, the Schenectady Classis began to offer sanctuary—a home—to us queer students in need, and thus the "Far-Flung Clergy" came into being.

Today, the queer "Far-Flung Clergy" of the Schenectady Classis minister amongst congregations and neighborhoods. Some of us provide pastoral care to families, children, and those in need as chaplains in hospitals in Michigan and Minnesota. Others coordinate spiritual retreats and provide spiritual guidance. Others continue their education at different seminaries. Certificate or not, this is undoubtedly a cause for deep gratitude.

Therefore, this June, I would like to express my deep gratitude to you, the First Church in Albany. You, too, have chosen to partner with the Spirit by joining with me and the Albany Synod Fellowship Program. Throughout my time here at First Church, who I am has never been cause for disruption for which I am deeply grateful. And so, let me encourage you to think of churches and classes and synods as places where gratitude might be made. This Pride, let's commit to the good work of justice and hospitality so we might make gratitude abundant for all queer people, both within the church and this country.

In gratitude, Rev. Trey







# Weathervanes

## The First Church in Albany

On May 17, the Weathervanes had their last gathering before their summer hiatus. After a turkey lunch, Iteke Prins gave a presentation about her homeland, the Netherlands, complete with some Dutch treats that she made. Here are some scenes from the event. The Weathervanes will return in the fall.







Diapers: Please note on May 23, FCIA hosted a powerful women of the Albany area networking event. We collected and donated diapers to MOM Starts Here. MOM Starts Here is a local non-profit helping parents and children. If you have purchased diapers of any brand, size and amount, please bring them to worship on Sunday or drop them off at the office during the week.



**CALENDAR NOTE:** Tuesday, June 27 is the Primary Election Day. The First Church in Albany is a polling place and Zimmerman Hall will be in use from 6am to 9pm that day.



# Thank You

TO ALL WHO SERVED WITH OUR  
SOUP & SANDWICH MINISTRY ON THURSDAYS  
IN CLEE PARK

YOU FOLLOWED CHRIST'S COMMAND TO FEED  
THE HUNGRY WITHOUT EXCEPTION  
EVERYONE WAS WELCOME



## Hot Dog THURSDAY IS BACK!

Join us each Thursday,  
from 11:30am-1:00pm  
in Clee Park  
for a free Hot Dog lunch

*Please Share and Come to Help Out!*



## FAMILY MINISTRIES

Summer is upon us and the living is easy! Lest we forget, we want to recognize the folks who serve throughout the year with our youngest followers. The Children & Worship and 9up Ministries are on hiatus for the summer and looking toward restarting in the fall. This year, both groups learned about the Bible, about the life of Jesus and about the seasons of the Church.

Children & Worship provides an age-appropriate way of being in worship for children ages 4 - 8 years. Based on Montessori principles, C&W continues to be one of the most effective ways to nurture children's faith and prepare them to worship with their entire congregation. We give thanks for our teachers, Miss Kathie, Miss Sara and Miss Kim. In this inaugural season, 9up, children 9 years and up, focused on Art in Worship and exploring the ways in which art can bring us closer to God, the ultimate creator. We give thanks for Miss Kathleen and our thoughtful and talented young artists.



**Children & Worship**



The prayer shawl ministry, that meets on the first Monday of the month, is on hiatus until fall. Prayer shawls are still available by contacting a pastor, deacon or the office.



## Prayers, Joys & Concerns

- For Sara Bonam-Welge and family as they mourn the passing of her mother Marilyn
- Deborah Paris, daughter of Betty Pierce, after a fall.
- For friends and family of George Kass as they mourn his passing
- Shekia, granddaughter of Joeanna Brown, with a health issue and family concerns
- Ian Leet, continuing to gain strength from illness
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews
- Sam, cousin of Barb Andrews
- For Barb and Dave Andrews as they take on the role of caretakers
- Joe Vasta and Albie, friends of the Persons
- Eula, friend of Joeanna Brown
- Sharnelle Jones
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Kokese Ballou
- Janie Unright, friend of the Andrews family
- Carol LaBatte
- Norma McClement
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- David Bradley
- For Jason Shahid
- 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 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.

*Call the office at (518)463-4449 or email [office@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org) to share your joys and concerns*

## Recently Elected First Church Office Bearers

### Elders

Norma Jean Ballou  
Tom Allison

### Deacons

Deb Anderson  
Becky Hudak  
Zak Morton  
Erica Zetterholm-Bliss

### Trustees

David Bradley  
Robert Dorn  
Becky Mondore  
Ross Westhuis

*Ordination/Installation of office bearers  
will be held on Sunday, June 25*



# WILLEM WESTMAN

Gifts were received for the FCIA Food Pantry in memory of Willem Westman. The family and The First Church is grateful for the life of Willem and for these generous gifts.



US Coast Guard  
Auxiliary

Trudy & Gerald Fisher

Scotch Presbyterian

Le Roy Suess

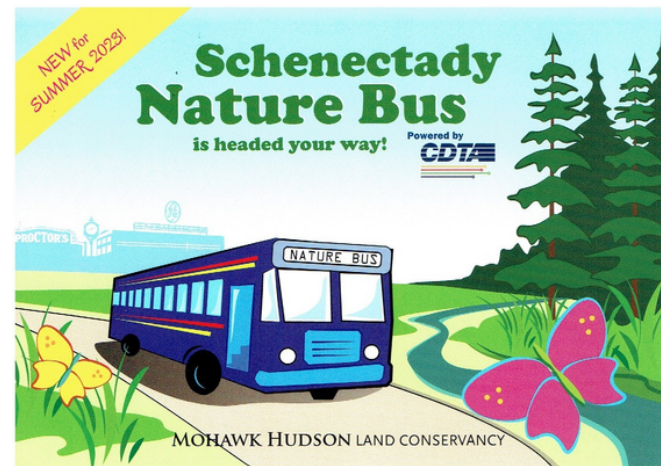
Wayne Freihofer

Judith Utley-Suess

Celebrate freedom

## JUNETEENTH

June 19, 2022



Connecting people to nature one stop at a time!

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse and Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHL) have teamed up with CDTA to bring a limited Nature Bus trolley service to Schenectady! During three weekends this summer, enjoy free bus service and free programming at natural spaces within Schenectady County.



### Saturday, June 24

- River Road Park - Town of Niskayuna
- Mabey Farm - Rotterdam Junction

### Saturday, July 22

- MHL's Fox Preserve & Mohawk Hudson Bike Path - Town of Colonie
- The Nature Conservancy's Lisha Kill Natural Area - Town of Niskayuna

### Saturday, August 26

- Collins Park - Village of Scotia
- Sanders Preserve - Town of Glenville



Visit our website for details on free programs, a link to the CDTA trolley schedule, and a list of sponsors who made this program possible!

[www.mohawkhudson.org/nature-bus](http://www.mohawkhudson.org/nature-bus)

## Lectionary Readings through July 2

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
Second Sunday after Pentecost June 11, 2023	Genesis 12:1-9 Psalm 33:1-12	Psalm 50:7-15	Romans 4:13-25	Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26
Third Sunday after Pentecost June 18, 2023	Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19	Psalm 100	Romans 5:1-8	Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost June 25, 2023	Genesis 21:8-21 Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17	Psalm 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18	Romans 6:1b-11	Matthew 10:24-39
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost July 2, 2023	Genesis 22:1-14 Psalm 13	Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18	Romans 6:12-23	Matthew 10:40-42

<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>





## Want to Learn about Refugee Experiences?

RISSE invites you to a documentary film about a refugee family's challenges/successes, community cooperation, and business partnership in upstate New York.

### Join us on June 20th for Utica: The Last Refuge

Where: Opalka Gallery, Sage College  
New Scotland Ave., Albany  
Film showings: 3PM and 6PM  
Reception: 5-9. Light Refreshments

Get to know RISSE and its community partners. Proceeds support RISSE's local adult classes, youth programs, employment assistance, immigration services, and more.

Register on [www.risse-albany.org](http://www.risse-albany.org) or [www.facebook.com/RISSE.Albany](https://www.facebook.com/RISSE.Albany)

Refugee and Immigrant Support Services  
715 Morris St., Albany, NY 12208  
518-621-1041



## RCA General Synod

Reformed Church in America is at Central College in Pella, IA. It's General Synod time! Synod meets June 8-13 in the lovely Pella, Iowa. Join us in prayer as we lift their work to our Lord.

Worship with the synod or watch plenary sessions on the videostream, or get daily news updates: [www.rca.org/synod](http://www.rca.org/synod).







# THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY SUMMER EVENTS CALENDAR

## JUNE

- **1** - (THURSDAY) START OF HOT DOGS IN CLEE PARK EVERY THURSDAY
- **4** - RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES SUNDAY
- **11** - PRIDE SUNDAY, GO TO CAPITAL PRIDE AFTER WORSHIP
- **18** - JUNETEENTH SUNDAY, FATHER'S DAY
- **19** - (MONDAY) OFFICE & PANTRY CLOSED FOR JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY
- **25** - SPECIAL COMMUNION IN CLEE PARK AFTER WORSHIP

## AUGUST

- **6** - FOCUS SUNDAY, TRINITY UNITED METHODIST, **NO WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH**
  - **13** - FIRST CHURCH BIRTHDAY BASH #381! ENJOY SOME SPECIAL REFRESHMENTS AFTER WORSHIP
  - **20** - ALOHA ATTIRE COMPETITION. COME DRESSED IN YOUR ALOHA BEST!
  - **27** - SPECIAL COMMUNION IN CLEE PARK AFTER WORSHIP
- 



## JULY

- **2** - FOCUS SUNDAY, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN IN ALBANY, **NO WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH**
- **4** - (TUESDAY) OFFICE CLOSED FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY
- **16** - BRING YOUR BIKE AND RIDE THE ALBANY SKYWAY AFTER WORSHIP! (WALKERS WELCOME!)
- **30** - SPECIAL COMMUNION IN CLEE PARK AFTER WORSHIP

## SEPTEMBER

- **3** - FOCUS SUNDAY, EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH, **NO WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH**
- **4** - (MONDAY) OFFICE CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY
- **17** - LAST DRIVE-IN SERVICE
- **24** - BACK TO **IN-DOOR SERVICE**, BLESSINGS OF THE PRAYER SHAWLS



REMINDER: THIS IS JUST THE CALENDAR OF SPECIAL SUNDAYS, HOLIDAYS, AND EVENTS. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ANY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SUMMER 2023



# The First Church in Albany

## JUNE 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  A Night of Worship	2	3  Garden Day
4 	5 	6 Zoom Study noon	7  AA	8 	9	10
11 	12 	13 Zoom Study noon	14  AA	15 	16	17
18  Father's Day	19  Juneteenth Office & Pantry Closed	20 Zoom Study noon	21  AA	22 	23	24
25 	26 	27 Zoom Study noon	28  AA	29 	30	
						

Key:





# FCIA Word Search



P G C W V Z B J O W G W E U O  
 L A S E N I N X H A C L D A O  
 N L Y A E M Q N E J M Q B C O  
 D B S T T M N P U L P I T Z H  
 P A W H H E H O M G B Q D R O  
 A N I E E R N R E F O R M E D  
 S Y L R R M S I N M N P A Y P  
 T P H V L A S C G Q B D H O A  
 U A E A A N T H X T Q U I C N  
 R R L N N Y U U O N A T L X T  
 E L M E D G L R O L E C U Q R  
 S O I A S K I C F W Z H E O Y  
 N R N G B T P H T I F F A N Y  
 C Y A X K K S Q U C H A P E L  
 Q V S P C Z K P R U R U M J D

ALBANY

PANTRY

TIFFANY

CHAPEL

PARLOR

TULIPS

CHURCH

PASTURES

WEATHERVANE

DUTCH

PULPIT

WILHELMINA

NETHERLANDS

REFORMED

ZIMMERMAN





## 2023 FOCUS SUMMER WORSHIP

July  
**02**

First Presbyterian  
Church at 9:30 a.m.

AUG  
**06**

Trinity Methodist  
Church at 10:00 a.m.

SEPT  
**03**

Emmanuel Baptist  
Church at 10:00 a.m.



## WHERE IS THE BIRTHDAY LIST?

We are currently formulating a year-long list of birthdays to be included in the promised directory. This project unfortunately was also delayed by the WIFI issues, but it is back on the office work schedule and should be available shortly. Again, we appreciate your understanding.

The benefit of having a year-long list means if for some reason the Family is late to the "presses", those folks who have a birthday early in the month do not have to settle for belated greetings and well-wishes. It will also be easy to update and can be emailed to you by the office at your request.



## May 2023 Statistics & Pantry Updates

Category	May 22	May 23	INCREASE
CHILDREN	22	195	786%!*
ADULTS	112	342	205%
SENIORS (65+)	24	49	104%
HOUSEHOLDS	112	231	106%

\*Lynne Fuierer, FCIA pantry director reports that we are serving more families with children. It is important to remember that school is out soon and needs will increase.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP?

**One of the most popular requests is for laundry detergent.** Many of our guests walk and use a cart, or take the bus to the pantry. It's difficult to give them one of those big bottles - it fills half the cart!

Please consider donating a container of **laundry detergent pods**. The pantry can break that down into bags of pods - much easier to pack in an order. **Insightful donations help our pantry to best serve our guests.**

We are thankful for your consistent, prayerful support of the pantry.



## THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

110 North Pearl Street

Albany NY 12207

518-463-4449