

# The First Church at Advent

Advent & Christmas 2024



# What is ADVENT?

Advent marks the beginning of the liturgical calendar. It is the last four Sundays before Christmas. This time is dedicated to the anticipation of the arrival of Jesus Christ. Words often associated with the season are Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy. The first Advent came in the humble form of a baby born and placed in a manger. Today, we reflect on that birth and look forward to the return of our Savior as was promised.

At First Church, we have planned several events and activities that help usher us into this blessed season. Have your calendar handy as you enjoy this booklet. We look forward to celebrating this season with all of you—our Church Family.



## Advent in Narnia

REFLECTIONS FOR THE SEASON



### Advent Devotional Book & Discussion Times

This Advent (Dec. 1-24), join me in reading a daily devotional book or come to our special Second Hour discussions based on the book "Advent in Narnia: Reflections for the Season" by the Rev. Heidi Haverkamp. Drawing from the beloved, fictional world of Narnia, this devotional invites us to reflect on the powerful themes of hope, redemption, and transformation as we await the coming of Christ.

#### How to Participate:

Sign Up for Your Copy of the Book: Sign up to receive your copy of *Advent in Narnia*, and immerse yourself in daily reflections that link the magic and imagery of C.S. Lewis's Narnia with the themes of Advent.

#### Join the Discussions:

On December 1, 15, and 22, we will gather after worship for special **Second Hour** discussions in the Stephen James Chapel—there may even be a magical lamp post! Together, we will explore how Narnia's world, with its deep themes of winter waiting and the triumph of light over darkness, mirrors our own Advent journey as we prepare for the birth of Christ.

Let's grow together in hope, anticipation, and faith as we await the coming of Christ.

Rev. Trey

<https://www.amazon.com/Advent-Narnia-Reflections-Heidi-Haverkamp/dp/0664261795>



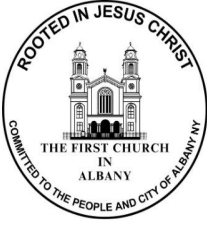
A longtime beloved tradition, join your church family and help us dress our church building for Advent & Christmas.

On Sunday, November 24, after worship, we will enjoy a potluck lunch in Zimmerman Hall. Please bring a dish to share if you are able.

After lunch, we will hang wreaths and greens throughout the building, as well as outside the church, marking the Advent season.

Everyone is welcome to join us for the Hanging of the Greens. This wonderful gathering invites the season in officially and bonds us as a community.

Let's travel Advent together starting with the Hanging of the Greens.



In partnership with 518 Albany SNUG and Toys for Tots, First Church will help provide toys and other gifts to area children this holiday season.

518 SNUG Albany is an anti-violence program aimed at reducing gun violence by using outreach workers to interrupt potentially violent situations; part of the Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region family of programs and services.



Please bring **NEW, UNWRAPPED** toys and gifts and place them beneath the tree in the Lobby outside of our Sanctuary. All gifts must be under the tree by **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**



Led by long-term member Audrey Ming, the Weathervanes are our group of senior members who meet monthly, with the exception of the summer months. They sometimes share dessert or occasionally a meal, enjoy a presentation or sing-a-long, participate in a craft activity, and reflect on the rich history of the church that they love.

On **Wednesday, December 4 at 12:30pm**, the Weathervanes will meet for their annual **Christmas Luncheon**. Catered by Carol's Place in Troy, the menu was chosen at a previous gathering when our friends participated in a tasting of various entrees from the caterer. In November, the Weathervanes worked on a festive Christmas Wreath to take home. Anyone who wants to learn more about the Weathervanes is urged to contact Audrey. If you email [office@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org), we will put you in touch with her.

Each holiday season, Pantry Director Lynne Furierer and her team set up what we call “The Boutique at First.” All year long, Lynne collects lovely gift items of every kind. Our pantry guests are invited on specific dates to shop the Boutique at no cost for Christmas Gifts for their friends & family.

The Boutique exemplifies the goal of our pantry ministry to treat our guests with dignity and kindness as we help them meet their needs. If you are interested in learning more about the Boutique, contact Lynne or one of the pantry volunteers. They will all happily share about the blessing they get to provide. It’s an amazing experience for all involved. We give thanks for God’s calling to serve our neighbors in our pantry ministry.



If this season presents a bit of  
challenge, we invite you to the

# Blue Christmas

SERVICE

WITH FCIA & FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY

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11 DECEMBER, 2024

WEDNESDAY, 7:00PM  
IN THE STEPHEN JAMES  
CHAPEL

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The First Church in Albany  
110 North Pearl St.  
Albany NY 12207  
518-463-4449

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





**The First Church in Albany**  
Invites you to join us for

*Christmas Eve Worship*

We also Live Stream on our YouTube Channel  
(The link is on our website)

**Tuesday**  
**December 24**

Brass Quartet 6:30pm



A Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols 7pm














2024

# December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>W 1</b> Communion Sunday	<b>2</b>	<b>P 3</b>  <b>NEW DAY</b> Prayer Shawls 11:30am	<b>S&amp;S 4 CP</b> <b>AA Z</b>  Weather vanes 12:30pm	<b>P 5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Downtown Hot Chocolate Stroll
<b>W 8 9up</b> Deadline for Toys for Tots 	<b>9</b>	<b>P 10</b> <b>Z</b>	Boutique at 1st <b>11</b>  Blue Christmas <b>CP S&amp;S AA</b>	<b>P 12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>W 15 9up</b> 	<b>16</b> Boutique at 1st	<b>P 17</b> <b>Z</b>	<b>S&amp;S 18 CP</b> <b>AA Z</b>	<b>P 19</b> Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>W 22 9up</b> 	<b>23</b>	<b>P 24</b>  Christmas Eve <b>Z</b>	<b>25</b> Office Closed Merry Christmas	<b>P 26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>W 29 9up</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>P 30</b> <b>Z</b>	<b>S&amp;S 31 CP</b> <b>AA</b> New Year's Eve	 Happy New Year! Pantry Closed Office Closed	 2025	

ZOOM Bible Studies: For the Tuesday 1pm & Wednesday 7:30pm mtgs, check with your leader for any schedule updates.

# A Way to Serve All Winter Long!



You may notice Cleo (our Nipper Dog) in the Lobby keeping a watchful eye on a basket of hats and gloves. These items, as well as scarves and heavy socks, are imperative to have on hand for our neighbors who may need this cold-weather gear.

**We accept any new, purchased or hand-made items.**

We will make these things available to our pantry guests, at Soup & Sandwiches on Wednesdays, and to anyone we may encounter who could benefit from a new hat or pair of gloves. Anyone who wants to participate can simply drop these items in the basket throughout the season. Can you help us bless our neighbors in need?



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