

Bio of Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, Sr. Minister at the First Church in Albany

The Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston is a pastor, chaplain, speaker, veterans advocate and neurotheologian. She currently serves as the Senior Minister at the First Church in Albany (RCA). Her work at First Church has reignited a passion for urban ministry and community service through local partnerships. Rev. Walston says this about her ministry in Albany. “The wellness work of God is right outside the front doors of the church. In a city we do not have to go far physically to see need. However, we may be called to go further past our own prejudices to meet the need.”

Rev. Walston received a Bachelor of Arts, cum laude from Adelphi University, and a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degree from New Brunswick Theological Seminary. She has also earned five units of clinical pastoral education, including a chaplain residency at Westchester Medical Center (a Level I trauma center).

Rev. Walston served in the United States Army Reserves, completing basic training in Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and advanced training at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. She was a member of the chaplain candidacy corps.

A proponent of neuroscience and prayer as a means of fostering resilience, Rev. Walston's doctoral research combined psychology, brain science, and theology. One example of her approach is in teaching individuals how to use centering prayer as a source of healing and refuge. Dr. Walston feels called to collaborate with individuals, faith groups, and community partners for positive relationships on the local, national, and global scenes. Her vision for the First Church in Albany is to faithfully partner and lead with neighbors in the city to grow a strong and healthy community. She believes we are stronger together.

In her free time, Dr. Walston enjoys music, reading, and participating in local theater. She lives with her son, Chance and their dog, Wonder.