

# The First Church FAMILY

---

*The First Church in Albany · Founded in 1642  
Reformed Church in America*

**February 2017**

## **WORSHIP:**

- 5     **Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**  
10:00 am     FOCUS Combined Worship Service  
                  @ First Presbyterian Church
- 12     **Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany**  
10:30 am     Sanctuary Service  
                  (During Worship: Children & Worship)  
Post-service:     What is God's Purpose for First Church?  
1:00-3:00 pm     Empty Bowls, FOCUS Fundraiser @ Elks Club
- 19     **Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany**  
10:30 am     Sanctuary Service  
                  Craig Hoffman, guest preacher  
                  (During Worship: Children & Worship)  
Post-service:
- 26     **Transfiguration Sunday**  
10:30 am     Sanctuary Service  
                  Rand Peabody, guest preacher  
                  (During Worship: Children & Worship)  
Post-service:     First Church Readers

**Our Sunday morning service may be found anytime at [www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org).**

---

*FAMILY is published eleven times a year by First Church in Albany, 110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207-2231*

## **From the Pastor**

Dear Friends,

On Sunday, February 5, we will join with the other FOCUS covenant congregations in a combined worship service at the First Presbyterian Church of Albany at 10 a.m. FOCUS is a coalition of congregations working together to provide nutritious food and generous hospitality to people need in our community. FOCUS is also working with others in seeking long term solutions to end hunger and poverty. The year 2017 is an anniversary year for FOCUS, too. FOCUS will be celebrating 50 years of ministry in the city of Albany.

The Rev. Craig Hoffman, will be the guest preacher at First Church on February 19. Craig and his wife, the Rev. Jan Luben Hoffman are the recently retired pastors of the Scotia Reformed Church. The following Sunday, February 26, we will welcome the Rev. Rand Peabody to our pulpit. Rand grew up at First Church and is a graduate of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, and Andover Newton Theological School. Throughout the course of his ministry he has served some twenty different congregations, many of them as an interim or consultative pastor. We welcome him as part of the church's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

During the latter half of February I and some other members of our congregation will be part of an interfaith travel seminar to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. A group of Jews, Christians and Muslims, most of us from the capital region, will be visiting biblical and historic sites important to the three Abrahamic faith traditions. We will be in Nazareth, Nablus, Bethlehem, Hebron and Jerusalem. By traveling together we hope to learn from each other's faiths and to witness together to our hope for justice and peace in the region

We welcome your prayers—for us and for the people of Palestine and Israel—and we look forward to sharing some of our experiences when we return.

Sincerely,

John D. Paarlberg

## **At Home with the WORD**

**Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary**

**February 1<sup>st</sup> - February 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Now available online at:** [www.rca.org/resources/home-word](http://www.rca.org/resources/home-word)

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Psalm 112:1-9 (10)               | 15. Psalm 119:33-40                   |
| 2. 1 Corinthians 2:1-12             | 16. 1 Corinthians 3:10-11             |
| 3. 1 Corinthians 2:13-16            | 17. 1 Corinthians 3:16-23             |
| 4. Matthew 5:13-20                  | 18. Matthew 5:38-48                   |
| 5. Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany  | 19. Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany |
| 6. Deuteronomy 30:15-20             | 20. Exodus 24:12-18                   |
| 7. Psalm 119:1-8                    | 21. Psalm 2:1-6                       |
| 8. 1 Corinthians 3:1-4              | 22. Psalm 2:7-12                      |
| 9. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9              | 23. Psalm 99                          |
| 10. Matthew 5:21-30                 | 24. 2 Peter 1:16-21                   |
| 11. Matthew 5:31-37                 | 25. Matthew 17:1-9                    |
| 12. Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany | 26. Transfiguration Sunday            |
| 13. Leviticus 19:1-2                | 27. Genesis 2:15-17                   |
| 14. Leviticus 19:9-18               | 28. Genesis 3:1-7                     |

## **Nonviolent Communications at First Church**

**Save these dates!! Wednesday, March 8 & 15 6:00-8:30 pm**

**Non-Violent Communication: The Basics**

Are you yearning to find ways to communicate compassionately, especially in situations where conflict or tension arises? Nonviolent communication is a way of looking at the world differently, a way to increase compassion, and it gives us a set of highly useful communication skills.

See Sue Cox Susan Vincent-Cox [coxwave2@gmail.com](mailto:coxwave2@gmail.com) or Becky Hudak for more information. Look for a sign up sheet in the church lobby or visit the First Church Website to register: [www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)

***We hope you will join us!***

**The Basics of Compassionate Communication**

**Wednesdays March 8 and March 15**

**6-8:30pm**

**First Church Parlor**

**Led by Sue Vincent Cox and Becky Hudak**





## Non-Violent Communication: The Basics

- How do I live the values of love, understanding, peace or justice in my community, in my family, in my workplace, in my world?
- How do I put into practice loving my neighbor as myself?
- How can I find ways through conflict that are caring and connecting and feel authentic to who I am?



**Wednesdays: March 8, 15**  
**6:00—8:30 pm**

Facilitators: Rev. Susan Vincent Cox & Becky Hudak

First Church in Albany, Parlor  
110 North Pearl Street Parking available

This event is for everyone (space limited to 20 participants)  
Sign up : [www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org) or call Valerie : 463-4449  
This workshop is supported by FOCUS Churches of Albany

# Upcoming Overflow Shelter Dinners

**Scheduled for February 3rd and February 24th**

We are grateful to all the people in our First Church Family who have been providing food and doing deliveries for the Overflow Shelter Dinners at First Lutheran Church.

THANK YOU!

Our next dinners will be:

- February 3rd Chicken and Chicken Dishes
- February 24th Casseroles and Comfort Food

Sign up at the Hospitality Table to bring a dish or to help deliver. You can also sign up by emailing Mary Bon at [maryebon@verizon.net](mailto:maryebon@verizon.net). Remember many of the shelter guests have dental problems so soft foods and foods that are easy to chew are a good idea. Also since some of the guests don't eat pork, label all dishes containing pork.

Bring your dishes Sunday after church, weekdays between 9 am and 1:00 pm or Thursday night between 6:30 and 7:30. We now have RECYCLABLE containers available at the hospitality table to make it extra-easy to contribute a dish. TAKE ONE EMPTY BRING IT BACK FULL. For more info contact Mary Bon at 463-4449.

Thank you for your generosity.

You can learn more about the shelter at <http://www.capareacc.org/emergency-overflow-homeless-shelter/>

## First Church Readers Group Meets February 26<sup>th</sup>

The First Church Readers will meet February 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss February's book, *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. It is loosely based on the real-life story of Sarah Grimke, a Southern aristocrat in pre-civil war South Carolina. Sarah is forced to accept a slave (Handful) for her 11th birthday. The story follows the two women as they struggle for a common goal: freedom.



- March 26<sup>th</sup> book is:  
*A Man Called Ove*  
by Fredrik Backman

- April's book is:  
*Evicted* by Matthew Desmond

- May's book is:  
*Lady Copy Makes Trouble* by Amy Stewart

Do you have an idea for a book for the reader's group? Contact Mary Bon at [maryebon@verizon.net](mailto:maryebon@verizon.net) or 463-4449

## Church Library

I am in the process of trying to set up and organize a library for First Church. I do believe this would be a wonderful addition to our church. What I need right now are some volunteers who would be willing to give me an hour or so of your time to help me get the books organized and on the shelves.

If you feel called to serve in this project and help me, please call me at [518 – 463-2547](tel:518-463-2547) or email me at [mew@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mew@nycap.rr.com) or you may speak to me at church.

Your help will be very much appreciated. Yours in Christ, Mary Weijola

## Rev. Cameron Monthly Brunch

Rev. Bill Cameron began gathering a group for lunch on the first Thursday of the month. The group continues to meet each month at the Gateway Diner, 899 Central Ave. in Albany. Anyone can join us starting at 12:15 and stay until you wish to leave. Each person pays for their own meal. Contact Donna E. Schultz at [deschultz07@aol.com](mailto:deschultz07@aol.com) or 518.429.1255.

## **The Weathervanes**

*Our 375th Anniversary Tour*



Join the Weathervanes on Wednesday, February 15th, at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall for fellowship, lunch, and program. Bring a sandwich. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be served. After lunch, Tom Allison will take us on an armchair tour of our church and tell us something of its past about which you may not know. From the lore of our two historic pulpits and beloved weathervane to some things that were hidden until 1931, you will find it is an interesting story.

Please telephone Audrey Ming (456-5485) to let her know that you plan to attend.

## **375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Calendar**

2017 will mark the 375<sup>th</sup> year that First Church has been doing the work of God in this community and we will be planning special worship, artistic and historical events to celebrate. Whether you are near or far you have the opportunity to commemorate this festive year. We have created a beautiful 2017 First Church wall calendar that highlights important dates in the history of First Church. Additional calendars are available for a suggested donation of \$10 each. Please contact Valerie Williams at the church office 518.463.4449 or [vwilliams@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:vwilliams@firstchurchinalbany.org).

## **Thank You!**

A special thank you to all who helped in so many ways to make the Wassail Hour such a wonderful experience on Christmas Eve. We have been able to enjoy cookies throughout January at coffee hour to extend the wonderful gifts of Christmas.

## **A Reminder:**

If you haven't made a contribution for your Christmas plant you may make your check payable to **"First Church in Albany"** (marked poinsettias) in the amount of \$10 or more a plant.

## **Parking Lots: Important Information-Snow-tow warning**

If you are parked in either First Church parking lot when the church offices are closed (after 5 or weekends), and the plowing company comes to clear the snow, you will be TOWED whether you display a First Church permit or not.

# **What is the Denominational Assessment?**

## **How much are the assessments this year?**

\$93.59/each Active Confessing Member of the First Church.

## **Where does the money go?**

Most of the money is for the support of the work of the General Synod (\$52.23), and the Synod of Albany (\$30.00), upstate NY. The remaining money (\$11.36) goes to Albany classis.

## **What is the money used for?**

Programs sponsored by Albany Synod include youth retreats, pastors' retreats, and continuing education opportunities for all. The General Synod assessment supports structure for the ministry of RCA congregations and helps support theological education. The Classis, like the Regional Synod, uses assessments for administrative and program costs.

## **Why are we assessed?**

We are part of a covenant community and as such, we share what we have with each other. Our delegates to classis, regional and general synod meetings prayerfully discern God's call to us and try to equally distribute the cost of our ministry.

## **How can we help?**

Included in our box of offering envelopes are three green envelopes inviting you to contribute toward the annual assessment. A contribution of \$30 per member three times over the course of the year will help cover the cost of the assessment. Assessment contributions are included in your giving statement but are 'above and beyond' your annual pledge.

## FOCUS Combined Worship on February 5



**FOCUS**  
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

First Presbyterian Church of Albany  
362 State Street  
Sunday, February 5  
@ 10:00 am

**FOCUS Churches Combined Worship:** On Sunday, February 5, FOCUS will kick off its 50th Anniversary with a special worship service at First Presbyterian Church, 10 am. Rev. Rick Spalding former Associate Pastor at Westminster Presbyterian will be preaching. A reception will follow, with recognition of special volunteers, a slide show and a time line. Parking is either on the street; in Washington Park or the lot beside Mamouns on Washington Ave. The lot beside the church is for visitors or handicapped folks.

## FOCUS Empty Bowls Fundraiser on February 12



HUNGER ACTION NETWORK OF NEW YORK STATE  
& FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY

WORKING TOGETHER TO END HUNGER

**Sunday, February 12, 2017 from 1 to 3 pm**

Reservations Requested: Call FOCUS 443-0460 or HANNYS 434-7371  
or sign up on February 5 at the FOCUS Joint Worship  
(10 am at First Presbyterian)



**FOCUS**  
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

Empty Bowls event location:  
The ELKS Club  
25 S. Allen Street in Albany (free parking)



**Empty Bowls, a fundraiser for both FOCUS Churches and our ally, the Hunger Action Network of New York State, will be on Sunday, February 12 from 1 to 3 pm** at the Elks Lodge, 25 S. Allen Street in Albany. We are seeking honorary hosts (those who donate at least \$100) as well as volunteers to set up, serve and clean up. For only \$25, you can pick out a beautiful hand-crafted ceramic bowl donated by area artists, and enjoy all the wonderful soup and bread you like. You can pre-register by calling FOCUS at 443-0460 or HANNYS at 434-7371. Prefer to sign-up online?: [https://hungeractionnys.givezooks.com/embedded\\_events/empty-bowl-2016](https://hungeractionnys.givezooks.com/embedded_events/empty-bowl-2016)  
All proceeds will go to feed the hungry and fight against the conditions that cause hunger. Free parking will be available.

◆ ◆ ◆  
The deadline for the March issue of *FAMILY* is February 15.  
◆ ◆ ◆

---

## Memorial

- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Bob & Carolyn Akland for the Music Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Elizabeth Raczkowski for the Music Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Marian & Garry Tribley for the Music Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Kathleen Gregory for the Clee Park Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Jo Anne Siracusa for the Clee Park Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Shirley Joosten for the Lynn T. Joosten Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Richard & Mary Bennett for the Clee Park Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from a **friend** for the Lynn T. Joosten Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Lois A. Williams & Susan Martin for the Clee Park Fund
- In celebration of the life of Harriet Sinclair a gift has been received from Eileen Grant for the Clee Park Fund

## In Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Harriet Sinclair on her death on January 3, 2017. Harriet would have been 100 this month.



Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 67  
Albany, NY

## **FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY**

110 North Pearl Street  
Albany, NY 12207-2231  
518.463.4449

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

email: [firstchurch@verizon.net](mailto:firstchurch@verizon.net)

RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED