

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207 ~ (518) 463-4449

Email: info@firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Website: www.firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Sunday Worship: 10:30 am

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 all are loved.

Second Sunday after Christmas Day

January 5, 2020

Prelude *Shepherd Pippings; God's Son Has Come* Helmut Walcha; Helmut Schroeder

Announcements

Call to Worship

A holy people and blameless race, Wisdom delivered from a nation of oppressors.

Wisdom entered the soul of the servant of the Lord.

She gave to holy people the reward of their labors. Wisdom guided them along a marvelous way, and became a shelter to them by day, and a starry flame through the night.

Wisdom brought them over the Red Sea, and led them through deep waters

Let us worship the source of Wisdom!

*Hymn 302

I Danced in the Morning

SIMPLE GIFTS

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, who does freely pardon all who repent and turn to Him, now fulfill in every contrite heart the promise of redeeming grace; forgiving all our sins, and cleansing us from an evil conscience; through the perfect sacrifice of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The Book of Common Worship, 1946

The prayer may continue in silence.

Assurance of Pardon

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

From the PCUSA Book of Common Worship
Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993; p. 88

The Peace

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

*Response Hymn 23

Angels we have heard on high

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: *Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

A Word with Children

THE WORD OF GOD

The Prayer for Illumination

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scripture, may your word be heard; in the meditation of our hearts, may your word be known; and in the faithfulness of our lives, may your word be shown. Amen.

The Gospel Lesson

John 1:(1-9), 10-18

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

How to Begin Again

The Prayer for Blessing on the Word

THE RESPONSE TO GOD

*Hymn *Alpha and Omega* (insert) Erasmus Mutanbira

Offering

Offertory *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy*
West Indian Traditional arranged Walter Ehret

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, And they say that his name is Jesus
Refrain: He come from the Glory, He come from the Glorious Kingdom,
Oh yes, believer, oh, yes, believer. He come from the Glory,
He come from the Glorious Kingdom.

The angels sang when the baby born, And they say.... Refrain
The shepherds came where the baby born, And they say Refrain
The wise men saw when the baby born And they said that Refrain

*Doxology (Tune 36 CRANHAM)

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise one, I would bring my heart.
Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Meaning of the Sacrament and the Invitation

*Hymn *A Great Mighty Wonder* ES IST EIN' ROS'

The Communion Prayer and the Prayers of the People

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You are worthy of our thanks and praise.

It is right and meet, beautiful and holy

We glorify you, joining this unending song:

Sanctus (sung to #22 REGENT SQUARE)

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God,
God of power, God of might,
Heaven and earth full of Thy glory
Their hosannas gladly cry.
Blessed is the one who comes now
In your name, O Lord Most High.
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God,**

Life's greatest feast before is us,
We excitedly proclaim:

**Christ has died
Christ is risen
Christ will come again.**

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.

The Words of Institution and Communion

Communion Anthem *Verbum Caro Factum Est (Word Made Flesh, We Welcome You)*
English Carol arr. Richard Proulx

*Verbum caro factum est; Habitavit in nobis Alleluia
Word-made-flesh, we welcome you; come to dwell among us here. Alleluia.
Thus has God made known to us His salvation for us all. Alleluia.
Close to me, He called my name; you my Father, I your Son. Alleluia.*

Prayer after Communion

*Hymn 40 *Joy to the World* ANTIOCH

*Charge and Blessing

Postlude *The First Noel* English Carol Arranged John Leavitt

ΑΩ

*Those who are able, please stand

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS: Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston; Liturgist: The Rev. Susan Vincent Cox; Minister of Music: Mary Bon; The First Church Choir

We welcome all who gather to worship God this morning, especially visitors and friends from near and far. Please sign our guest book or complete a visitor's card (found in the pew rack) and place it in the offering plate. Please join us for refreshments and conversation after worship.

Hearing assist devices are available for your use. Please ask an usher.

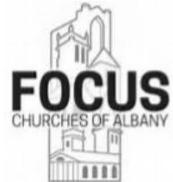
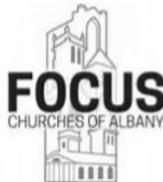
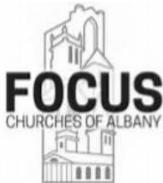
First Church is an accessible building. We have an elevator so you can reach every floor.



An Automated External Defibrillator “**AED**” is located in the lobby attached to the wall outside of the **workroom**.

Pocket Prayer Shawls are available at today's Worship. Please ask one of our greeters and they can provide a basket of pocket prayer shawls to choose from. Pocket Prayer Shawls are made and filled with prayers and can be given to someone in need of comfort, healing, or a reminder of the closeness of God.

Copies of our newsletter “**The Family**” and information about First Church are available at the Hospitality table in the lobby.



FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY – Winter Breakfast Club Program is open November through April, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday from 7-9 AM at the Westminster Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall.

**CENTERING PRAYER
WITH PASTOR MASHONA WEDNESDAY'S AT NOON
JAMES CHAPEL**



Centering prayer is a receptive method of silent prayer that is contemplative. We experience God presence within us, closer than breathing, thinking, or consciousness itself. This form of prayer of is about relationship with God. Centering prayer is not meant to replace other forms of prayer, but be practiced alongside with them.

**HERE ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR PLEDGES & DONATIONS
AS WE NEAR THE END OF 2019:**

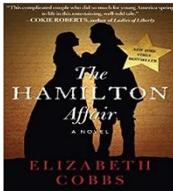
ALL contributions for **2019** must be received by [Sunday, January 12, 2020](https://www.sunday.com) and must be dated **2019**. All contributions received after January 14th, 2020 will be posted to 2020. If you any questions regarding this reminder or for any matters concerning your donations, you can reach me at wsivaslian@nycap.rr.com or 518-495-6353. Wayne Sivaslian, Financial Secretary."

JANUARY 19th: Potluck lunch, Congregational Meeting after worship, please come to share a potluck meal and to receive the 2020 church budget.

REMINDER!!

The First Church office will be **closed Monday, January 20, 2020** in observation of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday.

FIRST CHURCH READERS will meet January 29th after worship to discuss *The Hamilton Affair* by Elizabeth Cobbs. Everyone is welcome.



THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday	1/5	Second Sunday after Christmas Day 10:30 am Worship Service - Sanctuary The Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, preaching Post Service: Coffee & Conversation 11:45 am Deacon's Meeting 12:00 pm Music Task Force 1:00 pm Mother's Group Meeting
Monday	1/6	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open 10:00 am Staff Meeting – Parlor 12:00 pm Adult Bible Study
Wednesday	1/8	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open 12:00 pm AA Meeting 12:00 pm Centering Prayer 6:30 pm Consistory Meeting – Parlor followed by a brief Elders Meeting
Thursday	1/9	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	1/12	First Sunday after the Epiphany 10:30 am Worship Service - Sanctuary The Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, preaching Children & Worship (during worship) Post Service: Coffee & Conversation 11:45 am Congregational Conversation on Music

Valerie Williams, parish administrator will be away from the church office, Friday, January 10, 2020. Rose Hunsberger will be providing door and phone coverage.

