

The First Church **FAMILY**

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

June 2015

WORSHIP:

- 7 **Second Sunday after Pentecost**
9:00 am Drive-In Worship (Communion)
10:30 am Sanctuary Service (Communion)
Post-service: Coffee and Conversation
 Elder's Meeting
- 14 **Third Sunday after Pentecost**
9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service
 (Journeys of Faith Profession of Faith)
Post-service: Coffee and Conversation
- 21 **Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (Father's Day)**
9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service
 (Installation of New Elders & Deacons)
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation
- 28 **Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:00 am Outdoor Worship
 (Nat Phipps Jazz Trio)
Post-service: Coffee and Conversation
 First Church Readers

Our Sunday morning service may be found anytime at www.firstchurchinalbany.org.

FAMILY is published eleven times a year by First Church in Albany, 110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207-223

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

This past winter was long and cold in the Northeastern U.S., but that was not the case for most of the rest of the world. In fact, 2014 was the hottest year on record for the planet, since record keeping began in 1880. The global ocean temperature was also the highest on record, coming in at 1.09°F degrees above average. 13 of the 15 hottest years on record have all occurred since 2000. 2014 was the 38th consecutive year with global temperatures above average.

There is ample evidence and near universal scientific consensus that global warming is caused by human activities like deforestation and the burning of fossil fuels. There is also broad consensus that these activities are doing harm, perhaps irreparable harm, to the planet and to present and future generations.

Dale Jamieson, a professor of environmental studies and philosophy at New York University and author of *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle to Stop Climate Change Failed — and What It Means for Our Future*, says “we’re in for species extinctions, political and social instability, millions of avoidable deaths, and the loss of the world as we know it. We know this will happen globally, that the poorest people will be most vulnerable.” (from an interview posted May 18 in *The Stone*, an online “Opinionator” blog of the New York, <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/category/the-stone/>)

Global climate change is the most critical moral issue of our time, yet we seldom feel a sense of moral urgency about it. It’s harder for us to think ethically when the impacts of decisions we make today may be years in the future and affect people miles distant from us. We would not hesitate to take dramatic action to rescue a child locked in a car on a hot summer day and at risk of dying from heat exhaustion. But it’s harder for us to feel the same moral urgency about our actions which will lead to the deaths of thousands of children in Bangladesh twenty five years from now.

So we need to be thinking long-term. We need to develop a compassion that extends beyond our own generation or our own community. Christians, it seems me, ought to be well-suited to do that. Our theology and practice lead us in the direction of long-term, far-ranging compassion.

In fact, in the same interview cited above Jamieson points to the important role of groups and institutions such as the church in shaping political and societal change: “Most action on climate change will take place within regions, within countries, within communities, and in the hearts and minds of individuals. Once there has been enough change at these levels then effective agreements can be made. In a way the point is simple. When it comes to fundamental change law tends to follow politics and morality rather than leading them.”

Here is where I hear a note of hope —as well as a call for the church and other such groups to lead the way. Fundamental change will come not only through ‘big’ decisions in the halls of Congress or in corporate board rooms but in the ‘little’ decisions we make at kitchen tables and in church committee meetings. Decisions to turn down the thermostat, drive less, or heat our homes with energy produced by solar or wind power rather than coal. A growing number of individuals and institutions have made the decision not to invest in fossil fuel companies. The First Church in Schenectady recently adopted such a policy for their endowment funds.

We believe we have been placed on this garden planet to tend it and to keep it. That will mean thinking about the long-term consequences of our actions and cultivating a heart of compassion for generations yet to come and for people far way.

Sincerely,

John D. Paarlberg

At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary
June 1st – June 30^m

Available online at: www.rca.org/athome

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. 1 Samuel 8:4-20 | 16. 1 Samuel 17:57–18:5,10-16 |
| 2. Genesis 3:8-15 | 17. Job 38:1-11 |
| 3. Psalm 138 | 18. Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32 |
| 4. Psalm 130 | 19. 2 Corinthians 6:1-13 |
| 5. 2 Corinthians 4:13–5:1 | 20. Mark 4:35-41 |
| 6. Mark 3:20-35 | 21. <i>Fourth Sunday after Pentecost</i> |
| 7. <i>Second Sunday after Pentecost</i> | 22. 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27 |
| 8. 1 Samuel 15:34–16:13 | 23. Psalm 130 |
| 9. Psalm 20 | 24. Lamentations 3:22-33 |
| 10. Ezekiel 17:22-24 | 25. Psalm 30 |
| 11. Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15 | 26. 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 |
| 12. 2 Corinthians 5:6-17 | 27. Mark 5:21-43 |
| 13. Mark 4:26-34 | 28. <i>Fifth Sunday after Pentecost</i> |
| 14. <i>Third Sunday after Pentecost</i> | 29. 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10 |
| 15. 1 Samuel 17:32-49 | 30. Psalm 48 |

Summer Worship Schedule

Drive-in worship is held each Sunday this summer at 9 am through the first Sunday in September (except for June 28 when we worship at 10 in Clee Park.) The Lord's Supper will be celebrated at drive-in worship the first Sunday of each month.

In July and August the sanctuary worship will be at **10 am**. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated the second Sunday in July, August and September.

On the first Sunday in July, August and September all the congregations of the FOCUS churches will meet together for **combined worship services at 9:30 am**. On July 5 we will be at the First Presbyterian Church; August 2 at Emmanuel Baptist, and September 6 at Trinity United Methodist Church.

So there will be ample opportunities for worship this summer. It may just be a little challenging to remember when and where! Check the First Church website for the latest information.

Nat Phipps Jazz Trio to Play at June 28 Outdoor Worship Service



Each year on the last Sunday in June we gather for worship at 10 am in Clee Park, on the south side of the church building. This year the Nat Phipps Jazz Trio will offer their musical gifts in worship. Nat Phipps is a jazz pianist originally from Newark, New Jersey, where he spent most of his early professional years playing in New York City and New Jersey. Joining him will be drummer Joe Sorrentino and Pete Toigo on bass. The trio has played at the jazz vesper services at the First Reformed Church in Schenectady and we are delighted that they can join us in worship at First Albany.

Celebrating the Season of Creation

For the past few years for four weeks in the fall we have observed the *Season of Creation* in worship, celebrating God's gifts in creation and praying for their healing and restoration. This year the four themes are Earth (September 13) Humanity (September 20) Sky (September 27) and Mountain (October 4).

Your ideas and suggestions are welcome as we plan for those worship services. On Sunday, June 14, during the post-service time there will be opportunity to share ideas and brainstorm together. What scripture passages, hymns and songs and sounds come to mind? How can we as a congregation offer our prayers of thanks and intercession for

these gifts of creation? What visual images or symbolic actions will help us worship? How is God calling us to celebrate and care for these gifts? How will we join with the rest of God's creation in offering our praise?

*"Sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the field sing for joy." (from Psalm 96)*

Letter to FOCUS Congregations

*"to everything there is a season.
A time and place for everything under heaven..." Ecclesiastes 3*

To the FOCUS Congregations
Dear Friends,

Today I share with you my intention to bring my work with FOCUS Churches of Albany to a close. With God's help, I have determined it is now time for me to move on to the next step in my journey.

Since 1999 I have been blessed with the most meaningful and challenging work of my career so far. It has been a calling, my life's work in this time and place and I have been honored and privileged to have walked with you in this shared life called FOCUS.

I will leave fulfilled in the knowledge that together we have accomplished a significant piece in our common ministries. We received the mantle from ecumenical visionaries and created a faith based nonprofit organization that lives out of a mission of hospitality, mercy, advocacy and justice. It is a hybrid ministry that continues to be an ongoing experiment of living God's reign together.

There are many FOCUS chapters ahead and I truly believe God is with you and blesses you with all good things as you continue this gift called FOCUS.

I will be transitioning from FOCUS at the end of the year. The specifics of next steps are both nebulous and clear—I look forward to what God has for me next. I hope to see you around as I plan to stay put and work and play in the Capital Area.

We are on the journey together. Know that you have blessed me and have been to me a great community of support, challenge and care.

Sincerely, with gratitude and love,

Rev. Debra Jameson
Executive Director, FOCUS Churches of Albany

Children and Worship 2015



Being With God in Our Worship

What a wonderful year we had learning about God's love, listening to God's stories, singing praise to our God and being in fellowship with one another.

We thank our leaders who tell us the stories and bless us each Sunday: Lauren Casullo, Sara Bonam-Welge, and Deb Anderson. We also thank our greeters Imani Brewer, Sue Hunter and at times Deb Anderson, Marilyn Paarlberg, and Jen Long.

We pray with joy that other children will join us when we meet again in September. Blessings for a wonderful summer.

Elders, Deacons and Trustees Elected

At the May 17 congregational meeting the following were elected: To the office of Deacon: Andrew Mondore and Deborah Anderson (2nd terms), Richard Gardner and Sandra Scudder. To the office of elder: Joeanna Brown and Jay Roehr (2nd terms), Becky Hudak and Peter Pagerey. A service of ordination and installation is scheduled for Sunday, June 21.

James Folts, Wayne Sivaslian, and Diane Wuerstlin were each elected to serve another term on the Board of Trustees. David Mortenson was elected to his first term as a trustee.

Choir Picnic June 18th on Staats Island

Our annual CHOIR PICNIC is Thursday, June 18 at 6:00 pm. Bill Staats has kindly offered to host the choir again on beautiful Staats Island.

COME: for walks by the river, time to talk and visit, fun, and food;

SIGN UP: in the choir room to bring a dish to pass (Appetizers, main dishes, sides, drinks and desserts);

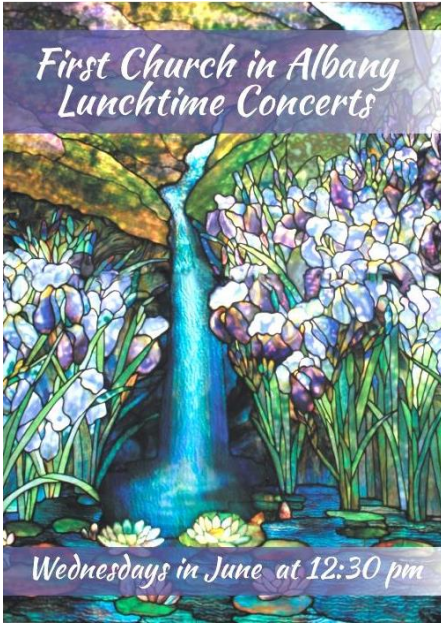
SEE: the Amazing 1693 Historic Staats Homestead, by the bucolic Hudson River;

BRING: spouses, friends, potential choir members, walking shoes, bug stuff, rain gear;

SING: add your voice for Bill's Famous "SING-ALONG"!

Its one of the ways we say thank you to our choir for the great job they do to enrich the life of our congregation throughout the year.

First Church Lunchtime Concerts



Join us in the sanctuary of First Church in Albany Wednesdays in June from 12:30 pm to 1 pm.

June 3

Harpichord and Organ Duets

• Mary Bon, organ • Neil Keen, harpsichord

June 10

Bassoon Samplings

• David Bon-Keen, bassoon

June 17

Once Upon a Time

• Peter Subers, baritone

June 24

Celebrate Summer: Nature, Flowers, and Love

• Rose Hunsberger, soprano



The Weathervanes: Program for June

REMINDER: Thursday, June 4—Enjoy dinner at lunchtime and then travel to The MacHaydn Theatre to see “The Drowsy Chaperone.” Our tickets are limited, so call Audrey Ming (456-5485) for details.

First Church Readers Meets June 28th

Join us June 28th after Worship to discuss *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown.

September’s book will be *Unbroken* by Laura Higgenbrand.

Other books we are considering for next fall are:

The Good Earth Pearl Buck

Clara and Mr. Tiffany Susan Vreeland

March Geraldine Brooks

Have a book you think would be an interesting read for the summer or next fall? Drop us a line at maryebon@verizon.net and we'll included in the summer *Family*.

Post Office Food Drive Totes for First Church Food Pantry



Photos of the food delivery from the Saturday, May 9th Post Office Food Drive.

The First Church Food Pantry received over 110 post office totes full of non-perishable food items thanks to the Albany County Post Office. Special thanks to the post offices for such a huge success. Our pantry guests will have plenty to choose from for many weeks.

The First Church Food Pantry provides a 5 day supply of food to around 100 neighborhood families. The Food Pantry is open Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00 to 11:30 am.

CROP Hunger Walk Sunday May 3



Thank you to all who participated in The 2015 Albany CROP Hunger Walk held on May 3, at the First Lutheran Church on Western Avenue in Albany. The CROP Hunger Walk is an annual community - wide event sponsored by Church World Service and organized by local volunteers to raise funds to help end hunger globally and locally.

Fowler Urban Day Camp



The First Church in Albany will collaborate with the Fowler Camp and Retreat Center to offer the tenth Annual Urban Day Camp for children ages 8-12. Camp will run June 29th-July 2nd Monday-Thursday.

The Urban Day Camp creates a “Fowler-like” camp experience—right here in the city. Camp Fowler College-age staff will lead programming in craft, worship, music and nature study. First Church and other

churches in the classis will provide adult and college-age counselors, kitchen staff and meals each day and help with program planning.

If you would like to volunteer to help with Day Camp or if you are unable to volunteer and would like to help with a financial donation to send a child to camp for a week, please speak to Monica Marsh or Rev. John Paarlberg. Registration form is available on the First Church Website home page: www.firstchurchinalbany.org

Congratulations



Zaquan West graduated on May 16 from the State University of New York at Fredonia with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a minor in Sociology. He is under consideration for a Peace Corps assignment in Thailand.

Rev. Ivins 70th Ordination Anniversary Celebration

This June marks the 70th anniversary of the ordination of the Reverend Wilbur Ivins to the Gospel ministry. We'll be celebrating this milestone with an informal gathering and time of fellowship on Saturday, June 6th at the Lawyersville Reformed Church Hall. You are invited to drop in at any time from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. If you are unable to attend the gathering but would like to send a card or a written remembrance, you can email Wil directly at: 4969 State Route 145, Cobleskill, NY 12043. (Rev. Ivins was a staff member of First Church from 1989-1999.)

We are in need of plastic gallon milk containers for our Sunday flowers to be distributed to our homebound/hospital.

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The deadline for the Summer issue of *FAMILY* is June 15.

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Thank You

Just a brief note to thank you for organizing and leading the memorial service last weekend for my aunt. Many of the people who attended said they were moved by it and that they thought my aunt would have liked it. I also wanted you to know that your staff was most helpful not only for the service but also for the luncheon. Best wishes for you and First Church,
Hugh Gardner

Congratulations

Congratulations to Noel Concepcion on the birth of his grandson, Benson Rivera born on 4/17/15.

In Honor

In honor of Pastor John Paarlberg, Pastor Susan Vincent-Cox, Mary Bon and the many members whose ministry has reached far and wide and reached me several times personally both in sickness and health. Helen Bryce

Memorials

In celebration of the life of **Gregory A. Staats** gifts have been received from Magge and David Jones, Mabel L. Schillaci, Betty Rooke, William and Mary Graham, Ian and Edith Leet, an anonymous donor, Mary K. Broderick and Kathryn S. Jones, Hudson Valley Community College, Dana Smith and Joe Clark, an anonymous donor, Judith U. and Rev. LeRoy Suess, Stacy Campbell and Bruce Campbell, Shirley M. Prior, Jean G and James Burns, Wilma Sheffer, Judith L. Waters and the Waters Family, Jane Rita Gerwin, the Rev. Carl and Lynne Hiemstra, George and Beverly Shuhart, Anne P. Story, Shirley J. Hart, Nancy E. Messercola, Robert and Carolyn Akland, Michael Antonio, Christine Antonio, Glenn and Joan Godell, B.J. Mangold and Harriet Sinclair for the **Music Fund**.

In celebration of the life of **Helen Gardner** gifts have been received from Wilma Sheffer William Staats, Sylvia Chipp Insall, Caroline and Carl Wirth, Shirley Wilde, Shirley L. Monahan, Colleen M. Paradis for the **Music Fund** from Shirley Bone for the **Twin Towers Fund** and from Harriet L. Sinclair for the **Lynn Joosten Scholarship Fund**.

In celebration of the life of **Kay McCann** a gift has been received from Women of Albany Classis for the **Music Fund**.

In Sympathy

Sympathy is extended to John Minerbrook on the death of his brother, Michael Minerbrook on April 22, 2015.

Sympathy is extended to Daryl and Daria Leibach, family and friends on the death of their son, Andrew Leibach on May 3, 2015.

Sympathy is extended to Karen Van Epps, family and friends on the recent death of her brother, Clyde Richardson.

Sympathy is extended to family and friends on the death of Donald Wilson on May 10, 2015.



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