

The First Church FAMILY

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

June 2016

WORSHIP:

5 Third Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship (Communion)
10:30 am Sanctuary Service (Communion)
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation

12 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service
11:30 am Coffee & Conversation
Post-service: Jason and Maggie White, Romania Mission

19 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Drive-In Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Service
(Installation of Deacons and Elders)
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation

26 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am Clee Park Outdoor Worship Service
Post-service: Coffee & Conversation

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

From the Pastor:

Dear Friends,

There are several things to call to your attention this month.

On **Sunday, June 12**, Jason and Maggie White will be with us to talk about their plans for ministry in Romania. Jason is a recent graduate of Western Theological Seminary and has served as the Director of Educational Ministries at the Lynwood Reformed Church. Both Maggie and Jason have served on the Camp Fowler staff. In September they will be leaving for Romania for a year of mission work. They will be working most of the year in Targu Mures, in an in-residence youth home. Most of the youth are abandoned, orphaned, or from unstable home environments. They will be helping them with life skills, guidance, and providing them a stable, caring environment. Then, during the summer they will be working at a summer camp, a Romanian version of Camp Fowler.

On **Sunday, June 26**, worship will be held at 10 am in Clee Park, weather permitting. The Nat Phipps jazz trio will also be joining us for that worship service.

First Church is once again hosting a **Day Camp, June 27-30**, for children from the church and neighborhood. On **Thursday evening, June 30**, we will host a picnic in Clee Park for Day Camp families and people in the neighborhood. Come and meet your First Church neighbors and share food, fellowship with games for children. Rumor has it that there will also be a dunk tank. Some of the church leadership has been 'volunteered' to sit in the dunking seat, so warm up your pitching arm.

On the **first Sundays in July, August and September** we join with the other **FOCUS** congregations in combined worship services. First Church will host the 10 am worship service on **July 3**.

For several Sundays this summer we will be following the Old Testament lectionary texts, from 1 and 2 Kings, reading the stories of the prophet Elijah and his successor Elisha. Elijah insisted on faithfulness to God alone in a time of rival gods and challenged (and was challenged by) the oppressive powers of his time. Some of these ancient tales seem strange and myth-like, but we trust that through these stories God is still speaking. Walter Brueggemann, in his book, *Testimony to Otherwise: The Witness of Elijah and Elisha* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001), writes that these stories "endlessly insist that there are choices to be made (either/or) that hold the option of otherwise.... Elijah just keeps at his dangerous, God-given imagination, making all things new. He enacts otherwise, showing that the world could be and would be different, concretely, decisively different."

What are some of the either/or choices that you face? How is God calling us testify to "otherwise" and showing us how our world can be concretely, decisively different? Elijah can help us find some answers.

Sincerely,
John D. Paarlberg

From the Congregational Meeting

At the congregational meeting on May 22 Robert Dorn and Wesley Coates were elected to office of deacon; Frances Carr-Morton was elected to the office elder. Erica Bliss was elected to a second term as deacon; Tom Allison, Mary Weijola, and Monica Marsh were elected to second terms as elders. Joyce Recene was elected to serve on the board of trustees; Ned Monthie and Ray VanEpps were elected to another 3 year term on the board of trustees. We thank all those who serve the church in positions of leadership, especially those who are completing their terms of service this year: Elder Ian Leet, Deacon Chip Welge, and trustee Ann Burek.

On Sunday, June 19, there will be a service of ordination and installation of elders and deacons and commissioning of trustees.

Drive-In Offering

The special offerings received at the Drive-In Worship this summer will be designated for Koinonia Primary Care/Compassion in Action, a ministry providing access to quality primary and mental health services for the underserved in West Hill and surrounding neighborhoods in Albany. Koinonia Primary Care, under the leadership of Dr. Robert Paeglow, has been serving people in Albany since 2002.

At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary
June 1st - June 30th

Now available online at: www.rca.org/resources/home-word

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| 1. 1 Kings 17:17-24 | 16. Psalm 22:19-28 |
| 2. Psalm 30 | 17. Galatians 3:23-29 |
| 3. Galatians 1:11-24 | 18. Luke 8:26-39 |
| 4. Luke 7:11-17 | 19. Fifth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 5. Third Sunday after Pentecost | 20. 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14 |
| 6. 1 Kings 21:1-21 | 21. Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20 |
| 7. Psalm 5:1-8 | 22. 1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21 |
| 8. 2 Samuel 11:26–12:10, 13-15 | 23. Psalm 16 |
| 9. Psalm 32 | 24. Galatians 5:1, 13-25 |
| 10. Galatians 2:15-21 | 25. Luke 9:51-62 |
| 11. Luke 7:36–8:3 | 26. Sixth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 12. Fourth Sunday after Pentecost | 27. 2 Kings 5:1-14 |
| 13. 1 Kings 19:1-15 | 28. Psalm 30 |
| 14. Psalms 42-43 | 29. Isaiah 66:10-14 |
| 15. Isaiah 65:1-9 | 30. Psalm 66:1-9 |

Children and Worship



We have had quite a year!! In October 2015 Geania Lasda, a trainer in C&W from RCA, came to our church and trained some of our new members. We all learned more about telling stories, doing sign language and leading new songs (see picture). We also had 3 new members join our team: Adrienne Pagerey, Norma McClement and Dorey Foster. And we were so pleased to have Kim Gattie return to our team as well.

This past fall Deb Anderson, with the help of myself and John Paarlberg, also led the way for a new Worship Center for older children ages 8-12. We ordered new stories and designed a new program using the foundational principles and order of worship from the C&W book, "Following Jesus". This took some creative initiative.

Sara Bonam Welge also stepped into a role as the Director of the Younger Children's Program and we thank her for her leadership at the end of this year and for the months to come.

I would like to represent our congregation in thanking our Children and Worship Team for all they have done this past year. We all thank you for your flexibility, patience, and commitment to God, the children, one another and our congregation. We are all very

grateful to Sara Bonam Welge, Lauren Causullo, Sue Hunter, Deb Anderson, Kim Gattie, Imani Brewer, Norma McClement, Dorey Foster, Adrienne Pagerey, and Marilyn Paarlberg. Thank you all for taking part in being the inspired, patient, loving hands and hearts of the Holy Spirit.

As many of you know we have had fewer children in our worship programs this winter and spring. I believe this is a reflection of our challenging times where fewer families are attending church. We also had one faithful family move from our area. However, I want to stress it is important **we all invite** children and their families to come to our church. ***We need to let others know*** that we have a WONDERFUL worship program for children. It is unique and praise filled. This means it is important to illustrate to others what we do at First Church and what it is we love about our worship here for both adults and children. It means walking at a friend or colleague's side helping them to come and to feel welcome. We all represent the Holy Spirit in this inviting.

Thank you for your prayers in this important ministry to children.

We look forward to worshipping again with children in our Centers in September.

In Peace
Sue Vincent Cox

Youth Group Mission Trip to West Virginia

The First Church Youth Group will be traveling to Pocahontas, West Virginia to repair homes with 200 other youth from July 16 through July 24th.

The population of Pocahontas is 8,719, the average household income is \$32,000. The youth will be sleeping in a school gym on air mattresses for the week, working during the day and worshipping in the evening. Those participating are: Andy Mondore, Monica Marsh, Stephen Reohr, Kenny Jackson, Whitney Ballou, Imani Ballou, Mackenzie Ballou, Caleb Ballou, Saniyah Ballou, Joshua Bliss & Kaitlyn Bliss.

We have been asked to bring non perishable items of food to our mission in Pocahontas. Please help us fill the donation box located in the First Church lobby.

Urban Day Camp

Monica Marsh and Nancy Landrigan will be organizing this year's Urban Day Camp. It will run Monday June 27th through Thursday, June 30. 8:30am to 3:30pm.

The children will be at First Church on Monday with daily trips the successive days. The congregation is invited to attend the picnic on Thursday at 5:30, dunkin' booth optional for some!

Choir Picnic June 2nd on Staats Island

Our annual CHOIR PICNIC is Thursday, June 2 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 UP: join voice for Bill's Famous "SING-ALONG"!

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

Thank you Bill and Vicki Staats!

Mendelssohn's *Elijah* during worship May 29 through June 19th

Beginning on May 29th and continuing into July, Rev. Paarlberg will be preaching on several of the Old Testament stories from the Books of I Kings and II Kings.

Complimenting these texts, the choir will be singing parts of Felix Mendelssohn's great oratorio *Elijah* which is based on the story of Elijah found in those passages from Kings.

An early romantic composer, Mendelssohn loved Bach and modeled *Elijah* on the great *St. Matthew Passion* of Bach, telling the story of the prophet, Elijah, through passionate, romantic and uplifting music. *Elijah* includes such favorite choruses as *He Watching over Israel*, *Lift Thine Eyes*, and *Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord*.

This oratorio is considered to be among the greatest oratorios ever written, keeping august company with works such as Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Creation*.

Spring Fling Concerts

Wednesdays in June at 12:30



Join us for a series of noon-time concerts in our sanctuary each Wednesday in June from 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm. We'll have special music from our soloists as well as guest instrumentalists.

- ◆ **June 1** Mary Bon and the organ
- ◆ **June 8** Neil Keen at the organ
- ◆ **June 15** Pianist Malcolm Moran
- ◆ **June 22** Soprano Rose Hunsberger accompanied by Mary Bon

First Church Readers Group



We are a group of First Church readers. Each month we read a different book and get together on a Sunday after the worship to discuss it.

This fall our book group will have a new format. The group has already chosen books for the fall and each month a different member of the group will be helping to facilitate the discussion. Come join us.

Upcoming books are:

- **September:** *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck
The Pulitzer Prize winning story of a family in 1920s China under the last emperor.
- **October:** *The Nightingale* by Kristen Hannah
How two sisters in World War II France find different ways to endure life in occupied France.
- **November:** *Girl Waits with Gun* by Amy Stewart
A novel based on the true story of one of the country's first female deputy sheriffs.

Other books you might consider reading this summer:

- "*The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*" by Elizabeth Kolbert
The New York Times says "Ms. Kolbert shows in these pages that she can write with legiac poetry about the vanishing creatures of this planet, but the real power of her book resides in the hard science and historical context she delivers here, documenting the mounting losses that human beings are leaving in their wake."
- *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* by Helen Simonson
The endearing romance between a convention-bound English ex-military widower and a widowed Pakistani shop-keeper.

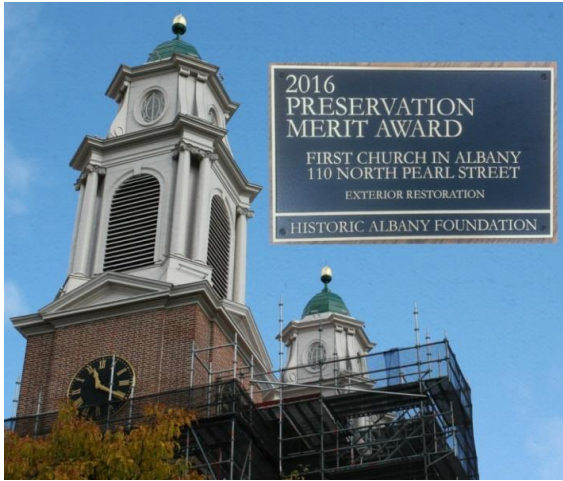
Got a book you think would be an interesting read? Drop us a line at maryebon@verizon.net and we'll included in the summer *Family*.

Growing Green

Making things greener

Grow your own garden. If you don't have space, make a garden in a large pot; a 5 gallon pail will support a tomato and lettuce plant. (Be sure to put a drainage hole in the bottom.) Support Local Farmers; shop at a Farmer's Market or join a CSA; our food travels an average of 1600 miles to get to our tables.

First Church Receives Historic Preservation Award



First Church in Albany received a Preservation Merit Award for Exterior Preservation at the annual meeting of the Historic Albany Foundation on May 19. Ian Leet and Jim Folts represented First Church. Ian accepted the bronze plaque and expressed our thanks for the award. He acknowledged the support of the congregation and the services of the architect and the contractors. Ian remarked that the tower clocks have been guiding the city for about 200 years, and are on time again.

Here are excerpts from the citation: "The exterior restoration of First Church in Albany, the oldest church in Albany

and a direct tie to Albany's rich Dutch heritage . . . [is] impressive and important. After over 200 years of exposure to the elements and inappropriate modifications . . . , the iconic [architect Philip] Hooker towers suffered greatly and the roofs on the sanctuary and parish house required considerable repairs. The scope of work included removing and reinstalling the slate roof on the parish house, asbestos abatement . . . , shoring a truss for the sanctuary roof, replacing the clock components . . . , installing a membrane roof on the bell tower, repairing and refinishing the greatly deteriorated columns along with their capitals and bases, removal of metal cladding and restoration of original wooden elements beneath, replacement of the sheet metal domes, and illumination of the towers."

The bronze plaque will be installed in a suitable location, joining many other plaques that commemorate various aspects of First Church's long history.

Drive-In Worship



Drive-In Worship is well under way. We worship every Sunday at 9 am. Rain or Shine!

AmeriCorps Guests Staying at First Church While Working on Habitat for Humanity Homes in the Neighborhood



The Weathervanes: Mac-Haydn Theatre



Wednesday June 15 – Enjoy dinner at lunchtime and then travel to the Mac-Haydn Theater to see “Nice Work if You Can Get It.” Our tickets are limited, so call Audrey Ming (456-5485) for details .

See the Impact of Your Generosity Today

IRA Charitable Rollover Now Permanent

A recently reinstated law allows you to make a tax-free gift from your individual retirement account (IRA). This law no longer has an expiration date, so you are free to make annual gifts to qualified charitable organizations from your IRA this year and well into the future.

How it works:

- You must be 70 ½ or older at the time of your gift.
- The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your tax deductions.
- If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for the year, your IRA charitable gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement.
- You may transfer up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to a qualified charitable organization such as First Church.

First Church Now on Facebook

First Church is now on Facebook. Please take a look. And, as they say: “like” us and “share” us with your friends. <https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchinAlbany>
We have been posting a few times each week so check us out!

375th Anniversary Committee

2017 will mark the 375th 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. A committee is being set up to coordinate these events, and we would like three members from the congregation to join in the planning. If you are interested in the history of the church or in just helping to plan the events of what will be a festive year, contact Ian Leet at 482-6612 or at ian.leet@outlook.com.

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. We all pay for our own. Contact Donna E. Schultz at deschultz07@aol.com or 518.429.1255.



The deadline for the June issue of *FAMILY* is June 14.



Thank You

Thank you to Norma McClement for volunteering in the office on Thursday's doing copying, folding and inserting, enlarging bulletins, and numerous other office duties. It has been a gift to us. Norma loved her office duties and was glad she could be part of this ministry. We will all miss her and the cheerfulness she brought to us.

Memorial

In celebration of the life of **Natalie Parry** gifts has been received from the Mint Springs Fellowship Group for the **Community Ministries** and from Betty Pierce, Marilyn Fink, Floris Willemse, and Mary and Richard Bennett for the **Clee Park Fund**

In celebration of the life of **Natalie and George Parry** a gift has been received from Donna and Arthur Schultz for the **Clee Park Fund**.

In celebration of the life of **Dan and Suzanne Clayton** gifts has been received from The Rev. Carl and Lynne Hiemstra for the **Endowment Fund** and Betty Pierce for the **Music Fund**.

In Sympathy

Sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Charles Gridley who passed away recently.

Sympathy is extended to Ian and Edith Leet, family and friends in the death of Ian's mother, Mildred C. Leet on May 4th.

Sympathy is extended Charles and Sara Welge, III in the death of their friend, John Hotaling, on May 8th.



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FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

110 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207-2231
518.463.4449

www.firstchurchinalbany.org

email: firstchurch@verizon.net

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