

The First Church **FAMILY**

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

March 2019

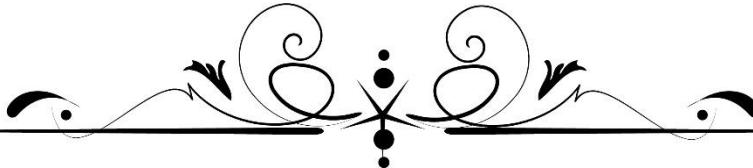
WORSHIP:

- 3 **Transfiguration Sunday (Communion)**
10:30 am Sanctuary Service Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden preaching
 Children & Worship (During Worship)
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation
12:00 pm Lenten Worship Planning – Room 204
1:00 pm Mother's Group
- 6 **Ash Wednesday**
12:00 pm Prayer for the church – ashes available
7:30 pm Sanctuary Service
- 10 **First Sunday in Lent – Time Springs Forward**
10:30 am Sanctuary Service Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden preaching
 Children & Worship (During Worship)
Post Service: Coffee and Conversation
12:00 pm Confirmation Class – Parlor
3:00 pm Memorial Concert: Collective Brass
- 17 **Second Sunday in Lent**
10:30 am Sanctuary Service Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden preaching
 Children & Worship (During Worship)
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation
- 24 **Third Sunday in Lent**
10:30 am Sanctuary Service Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden preaching
 Children & Worship (During Worship)
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation
12:00 pm Confirmation Class – Parlor
11:45 am First Church Readers – Powell Room

Continued on page 2.

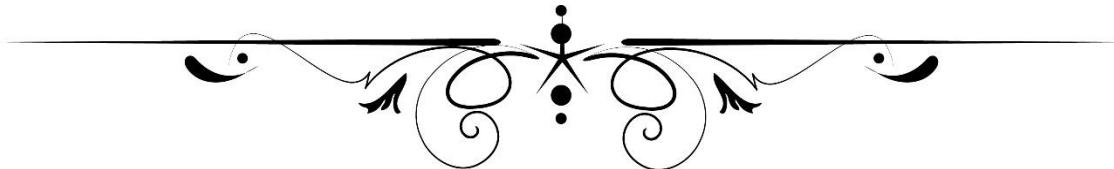
31 **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

10:30 am Sanctuary Service Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden preaching
Children & Worship (During Worship)
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday	April 14	10:30am – Sanctuary Worship
Maundy Thursday	April 18	7:30 pm – Communion and Tenebrae
Good Friday	April 19	12:00 pm – St. Francis of Assisi, 391 Delaware Ave, Albany, NY 12209 Sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches
		1:15 pm – St. Peter's Episcopal Good Friday Music St Peter's Episcopal 107 State Street, Albany, NY.
Easter Sunday	April 21	FOCUS Sunrise Service 6:30am at West Capital Park Easter Breakfast at Emmanuel Baptist Church 10:30am – Festival Service in the sanctuary



FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Members and Friends,

The first Ash Wednesday service I ever attended was when I was in divinity school. The chaplain, who led the service, was an Episcopalian, and it was clear to me that the whole thing with the ashes was very familiar to him in a way it had never been to me. One of his (many) gifts was that he was able to make the use of ashes and the meaning of the somber season of Lent clear by placing them into the context of the liturgical year: between the unfolding revelations of God's presence in revelation, in baptism, in calling, in ministry during Epiphany and the bright promises of reconciliation and new life at Easter. I have turned to that service often in my Lenten planning.

Lent is traditionally a season of exploration for Christians. In light of what we have learned about God at Christmas and in Epiphany, during the six weeks of Lent we are given time for self-examination, for confession, for deep, hard question of God and ourselves. We open ourselves to testing not just about what we know or do not know about holiness or faith or discipleship, but also to testing of spirit. Why might a journey with Jesus make sense, and how do the miracles and mystery, the delights and sorrows, the truth of this one life and death shape our lives so many years later? Why does it make a difference to follow Jesus?

Self-examination, confession, questions, testing....all place us squarely in community with countless seekers who have used the days of Lent to determine their place in the life of the Body of Christ. Dedicating a season to the possibilities of discovery, of grace, of transformation is a gift the church offers, one we can give ourselves.

In worship this Lent, we'll be pondering how the life of Jesus shapes us, how his questions probe our spirits, how his relationship with God challenges us, how his love and courage comfort and confront us, how his resurrection makes a difference. Whether you join us in worship (and I hope you will) or your Sundays find you elsewhere, I hope you'll make time this season to open yourself to look for where God may be present and at work in the world around you. I pray you will listen for a sacred whisper or a holy shout of invitation to follow Christ in a community of fellow seekers that will give your life new meaning.

Peace,

Lynn



At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary www.rca.org/athome
March 1st – March 31st.

1. Luke 9:28-36
2. Luke 9:37-43
3. Transfiguration Sunday
4. Deuteronomy 26:1-11
5. Psalm 91:1-2, 9-13
6. Ash Wednesday; Psalm 51:1-17
7. Psalm 91:14-16
8. Romans 10:8b-13
9. Luke 4:1-13
10. First Sunday in Lent
11. Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
12. Psalm 27:1-6
13. Psalm 27:7-14
14. Philippians 3:17-4:1
15. Luke 13:31-35
16. Luke 9:28-43
17. Second Sunday in Lent
18. Isaiah 55:1-5
19. Isaiah 55:6-9
20. Psalm 63:1-8
21. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
22. Luke 13:1-5
23. Luke 13:6-9
24. Third Sunday in Lent
25. Joshua 5:9-12
26. Psalm 32:1-5
27. Psalm 32:6-11
28. 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
29. Luke 15:1-3
30. Luke 15:25-32
31. Fourth Sunday in Lent

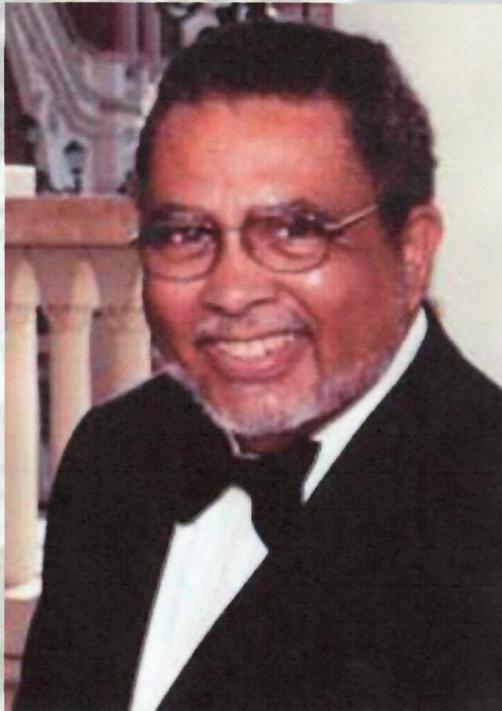
PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

On Wednesdays at noon for a half hour, the sanctuary is open for a weekly time of unstructured prayer for the life and future of First Church. You are welcome to stay as long or as little as you have time for. If you are unable to be present physically, then join us by praying for the church wherever you are.

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.

Organ Concert to Honor Dr. Adolphus Hailstork



Saturday, March 2, 3:00 PM
Snow date: Sunday, March 3, 3:00PM

Cathedral of All Saints
62 S Swan St, Albany, NY

Dr. Adolphus Hailstork is a distinguished composer and educator. He grew up in Albany and was a chorister at All Saints in his youth. Several of his works for organ will be performed in his honor by:

Mary Bon

William Douglas

Alfred Fedak

Brian Gurley

Trevor Kahlbaugh

Admission: Adults \$10, Children under 18 and students with ID free
Sponsored by the Eastern NY Chapter, American Guild of Organists

MOTHER'S GROUP AT FIRST CHURCH

First
Church
Powell
Room



Mother's Group

Time to
relax, share,
support one
another

For those parenting
children up to 21 yrs. old



Sunday
4/7
1 pm

Being a mom is hard. It's not an easy thing to say because as moms we think we can do it all: running our kids to soccer games, dance, or gymnastics, helping with homework until bedtime, being up in the morning when your kids get up and up in the evening when they go to bed, cooking, cleaning, laundry ... The list goes on and on and on. When was the last time you took time for yourself?

To completely be there for your kids you need that time for you. Time to do what you want, time away from the kids, time with other moms. That's why we have created the Mother's Group.

This is a group that is meeting at First Church once a month for the next six months or so. We are still exploring what we want to get out of this group, but right now we are getting to know each other and what we, as moms, need.

This group is intended for those that are "active moms", parenting kids up to 21 yrs. of age.

We hope you'll join us at our next meeting on **Sunday, March 3rd @ 1:00 pm**. In April we will meet on the 7th. Just ring the doorbell at the entrance off the big parking lot. We will be there. Childcare provided.

Kim Gattie



COLLECTIVE BRASS QUINTET

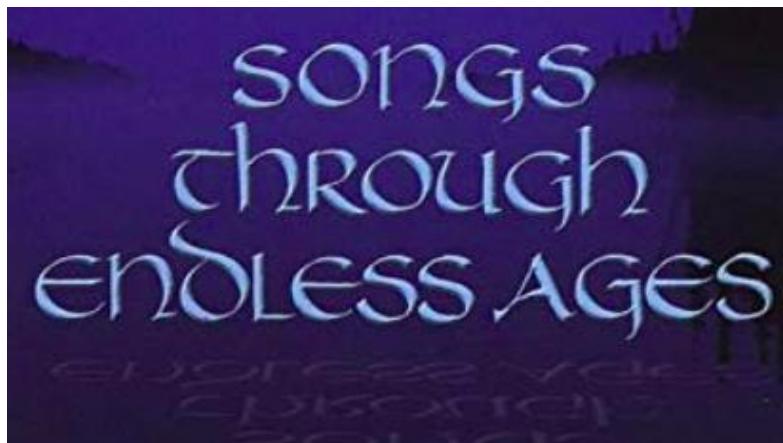
FREE CONCERT SUNDAY MARCH 10TH: 3 PM

@ THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

A YOUNG, HIGH ENERGY BRASS QUINTET
PERFORMING A BROAD RANGE OF EXCITING AND
VIRTUOSIC BRASS MUSIC. ITS MEMBERS COME FROM
THE FINEST PROFESSIONAL PERFORMING ENSEMBLES
INCLUDING THE WEST POINT BAND. JOIN US FOR A
WONDERFUL HOUR OF MUSIC FROM EARLY MUSIC
TO CONTEMPORARY FAVORITES.

110 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NY WWW.FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG

TIME TO SPRING FORWARD MARCH 10TH



Join us Each Sunday in Lent beginning March 10th for
Preludes and Postlude on the
Great Hymns and Songs of our faith

Hear familiar favorites like:

In the Cross of Christ I Glory; O Sacred Head Now Wounded; Blessed Assurance;
Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah; Ah Holy Jesus; Deep River; Kum Ba Yah,
and a few new songs to spark your interest.

Come early to relax, pray, meditate or just listen to some beautiful music
as you travel on your Lenten pilgrimage.

WEATHERVANES – CAPE COD BASEBALL



Join the Weathervanes on Wednesday, March 21st at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverages will be served. Ned Monthie, General Manager of the Brewster White Caps of the Cape Cod Baseball League, will talk about that league and his experiences with it.

Please contact Audrey Ming ([518-456-5485](tel:518-456-5485)) to let her know you are coming.

FOCUS REPORT

As you may recall from an early February e-blast, FOCUS Churches together with Hunger Action Network of NYS celebrated the collection of \$15,000 at this year's Empty Bowls luncheon at Delmar Reformed Church on February 3. At least a dozen kinds of soup were served along with wonderful breads and desserts, and each attendee went home with a hand-thrown bowl! Thank you to all who supported this time of fundraising and fellowship. Mark your calendars NOW for next year's event, on the first Sunday in February. You don't want to miss it!

FOOD PANTRY

During January, our volunteers and staff provided food from the First Church Food Pantry to 136 individuals comprising 115 households. The Pantry was open 8 days, and packed bags to make up to 18 meals for each person in need. Numbers were down somewhat from January 2018, but it is possible that Governor Cuomo's early payment of February SNAP benefits offset people's needs for January and will impact numbers for February. We are grateful to Lorraine Houk and all our volunteers, who welcome, do intake, assist in food choices and pack food for our neighbors in need.

Our Food Bank is the recipient of \$2,098 from the Food Pantries of the Capital District through the Food Resource Funding program. These monies will be spent on milk coupons from Stewart's Shops, grocery gift cards for our Thanksgiving give-away, and to offset a small fraction of our purchases at the Regional Food Bank. Thanks to Lorraine Houk for applying for this grant.

We received more good news at the end of February. Shoprite has awarded the Food Pantry \$1,000 to our account at the Food Bank through the "Partners in Caring" grant.

Donations of personal hygiene items which cannot be purchased with SNAP (food stamps) are always welcome.

- March – Feminine Products
- April – Toilet Paper
- May – Tooth Paste



OUR NEXT SHELTER DINNER IS MARCH 22nd

Casseroles and Comfort Food

CAN YOU contribute a main dish, side, bread or dessert for 6-8 people?

Sign-up at the Hospitality Table or drop Mary an email. Bring your dishes to church any day from 8:30-1:00 pm, Thursday evening from 6:30 - 7:30 pm or Friday before noon. We'll deliver them to the shelter on Friday afternoon. USE NON-RETURNABLE DISHES, label food "Shelter Dinner," and clearly mark all pork dishes. AND THANKS!

Questions? Contact Mary Bon 518-463-4449 (church,) 518-339-5460 (cell), or
maryebon@verizon.net

The Emergency Overflow Shelter at First Lutheran Church in Albany, sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches, is a "shelter of last resort" when other shelters are full or for those not eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health issues. It is open during the winter months and turns nobody away. First Church has been providing meals each month for the Shelter since 2008.

FIRST CHURCH READERS MEETS MARCH 24TH



First Church Readers is a group of people who love to read. We meet once a month to discuss a book we have read that month. Everyone is welcome. Come join us.

Our next meeting is March 24th when we will discuss - *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman. It's a simultaneously hilarious and heartbreaking story of a young woman learning to find herself and make peace with her roots.

April - Learning to Walk in the Dark by Barbara Brown, noted preacher, theologian and author explores darkness and light. Why is light associated with goodness and darkness with evil? "How to find our footing in times of uncertainty and giving us strength and hope to face all of life's challenging moments."

May - My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry by Fredrik Backman –a tale of the touching relationship between a grandmother and the granddaughter for whom she cares - by turns heartwarming and heartrending.

Questions? Contact Mary Bon at firstchurchmeb@gmail.com or 518-463-4449.

GOOD FRIDAY MUSIC AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH AT 1:15 PM

George Friedrich Handel's – *Brockes Passion*

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Cantata 12 (Weeping, Wailing, Moaning, Fearing)*

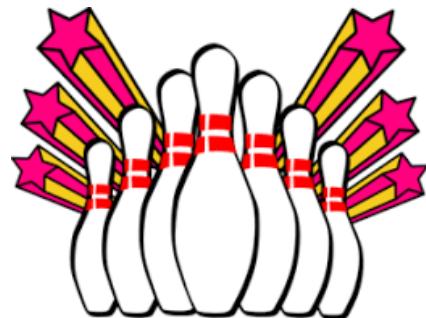
Sung by the Choir of St Peter's Episcopal Church, Albany, with orchestra

Good Friday, April 19th, at 1:15 pm following the Noon service at St Peter's Episcopal, 107 State Street, Albany, NY. There is no charge for admission.

BOWLING FOR BEDS BOWL-A-THON



The 13th Annual Bowling for Beds Bowl-A-Thon raised money for the Emergency Overflow Shelter.



On February 9, 2019, the First Church Youth Group helped raise \$12,500 for the homeless. Stephen Reohr and Saniya Bell joined Monica Marsh and Andy Mondore at this years bowling event.

CAMP FOWLER: REGISTRATION AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Registration for Summer Camp opened in January, but spots are still available. Please check at campfowler.org for information.

Scholarships for campers are established through some of our restricted funds for First Church campers. If someone in your family needs financial assistance, please speak with Pastor Lynn.

Volunteer opportunities are also available. Camp Fowler needs you!! Please go to the website for details on how you might be involved as a cabin counselor, kitchen helper or in some other way.

FAREWELL TO LARRY UNDERDUE

On Sunday, February 24th, we offered thanks to God for the ministry since 1995 of Larry Underdue as Sexton, and released him into God's care for his retirement, effective March 1, 2019. Then we had a lovely lunch arranged by Ray Van Epps and the Trustees, regaled Larry and his wife, Dolly, and son Antoine, with stories of appreciation, and enjoyed a celebratory cake. It was a fine party for a fine man, whom we will miss!



CROP WALK 2019: Sunday, May 5

Save the date and watch for more information!

COMPUTER SAFETY

Recently, some of you received an email that looked as if it was from Lynn Carman Bodden asking for assistance with gift cards. This was SPAM, and the email was not connected to Lynn in any way. This has also happened to other religious leaders in Albany recently.

If you are ever asked by email for financial help in any way from any member of the First Church staff, please CALL THE OFFICE. No staff member should be asking you in this way for financial assistance, so please check to see what may be going on. There are people who will use your connection to people you trust to prey on your generosity and good nature. Be smart and stay safe!

Pastor Lynn Carman Bodden



PARKING LOT REPAIRS – SHERIDAN AVE



Please be advised that there will be repair work being done under the main parking lot over the course of the next two-three weeks beginning on Wednesday, February 27, 2019. This should only involve a few parking spaces and will not block your entrance to the church or inhibit the use of handicap spaces on Sunday.

The Albany Water Board is repairing a hole in the top of the Fox Creek sewer pipe (built around the same time as the church and still used today), and removing debris from inside it.

Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Pastor Lynn Carman Bodden

THANK YOU

- To Rev. Peggy and the Bethany Reformed Church for their donation of 11 bag of groceries to the Food Pantry.



*To the pastor and congregation
of First Reformed Church of Albany*

*You made such a difference,
and it is so deeply appreciated.*



*My heart felt thanks for
all your prayers for my
daughter, Sheila and myself.*

J. Downey

Ms. Jo Downey

MEMORIALS

- In celebration of the life of **Shirley Mae Farrell** a gift has been received from Shirley Bone for the Clee Park Memorial Fund.
- In celebration of the life of **Shirley Mae Farrell** a gift has been received from The Rev. LeRoy & Judith Suess for the Sunday School and Food Pantry Fund.
- In celebration of the life of **Shirley Mae Farrell** a gift has been received from Wilma Sheffer for the Weathervanes.
- In celebration of the life of **Shirley Mae Farrell** a gift has been received from Mary Catherine Tighe for the General Fund.



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





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RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED