

# The First Church **FAMILY**

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

**MAY 2014**

## **WORSHIP:**

- 4    **Third Sunday of Easter (Communion)**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service  
John Paarlberg preaching  
Post Service: CROP Walk
  
- 11   **Fourth Sunday of Easter (Mother's Day)**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service  
John Paarlberg preaching
  
- 18   **Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service  
John Paarlberg preaching  
Post Service: Congregational Meeting & Pot-luck Luncheon
  
- 25   **Sixth Sunday of Easter**  
9:00 AM - Drive-In Worship  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service  
Susan Vincent-Cox preaching

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

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# **FIRST CHURCH TOWERS RENOVATION & PARISH HOUSE ROOF REPLACEMENT TO START IN A FEW WEEKS**

## **CHURCH ROOF REPLACEMENT AND OTHER RESTORATION WORK SCHEDULED FOR 2014-2015**

From Jim Folts, President Board of Trustees

The First Church Board of Trustees voted on April 27 to contract with Turner Construction Company for renovation of the church towers, replacement of the church and parish house roofs and related structural systems, and other building restoration work. After city building permits are obtained, within a few weeks scaffolding will rise around the towers and the parish house for the first phase of a two-year renovation project. In the first construction season (May-November 2014) the landmark towers, designed and constructed in 1796 by Albany architect Philip Hooker, will be repaired and restored to their original appearance. Also in the first year, the 1939 roof on the parish house will be replaced with similar multi-color slates.

In the second season (April-September 2015), scaffolding will be raised on the north and south sides of the church so that the deteriorating copper roof, installed in 1940, can be replaced with new metal roofing. The structurally failing cornice and built-in gutters along the north and south sides of the church will be repaired and restored during this phase. The roof projects are designed to prevent future leakage in the towers, church, and parish house, where water penetration has increased in recent years and caused serious interior damage. Also in the second year, the Pearl Street iron fence, gates, and lampstands will be repaired and restored. The lamps, dark for decades, will be relit with natural gas.

The primary contractor, Turner Construction Company, is a nationwide firm with an office in Albany and a history of successful projects in the Capital Region. Turner has designated Jeffery Lino as project manager and Edward Kaczynski as field superintendent for the First Church building renovation. Both had the same responsibilities in the recently-completed restoration of the interior of Albany's Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Both men have decades of experience in the construction industry. Turner Construction has been the lead contractor for other historic preservation projects in the Capital Region, including the Emma Willard School in Troy and the First Presbyterian Church in Schenectady.

Turner Construction Company will manage and supervise the renovation project and self-perform significant portions of the work. Turner will also supervise twelve sub-contractors performing specialized work, including:

- erecting and dismantling scaffolding
- restoring and reattaching 200-year old wood trim
- removing old paint and refinishing with primer and industrial-quality paint

- installing new lighting on the towers
- repairing and re-gilding the ornamental acorn-shaped ornaments atop the towers
- removing old roofing materials and re-roofing the towers, church, and parish house
- restoring masonry adjacent to the roofs and gutters
- removing and reinstalling lightning protection system (temporary system in interval)
- repairing and restoring cast iron railings
- installing new energy-efficient LED lighting on the towers

Architectural design and oversight for the First Church renovation project are provided by the Albany firm of John G. Waite Associates. The firm has a long roster of historic preservation projects in the Albany area and elsewhere. The project architects are William Brandow and Shannon Brown. Back in 2001 Jack Waite met with a group at First Church to discuss the possibility of renovating the Pearl Street entrance. In 2008 the firm conducted a comprehensive condition assessment of the exterior of the church and parish house. The findings and recommendations in the resulting report prompted the First Church joint boards to approve a capital campaign to help support building renovation as well as enhanced community outreach and mission.

A special concern is protection of First Church's magnificent pipe organ during the two construction seasons. Dust and dirt are unavoidable in any construction project. Delicate organ components will be sealed off during the construction periods, and alternate keyboard instruments will be available. Ian Leet, chairman of the Worship Commission, and Mary Bon, Minister of Music, are leading in this important effort.

Turner Construction Company submitted the lowest of three bids that were solicited by First Church. Their base bid is \$2,027,042. The other two bids were somewhat higher, though the bids were within the expected range. An additional \$82,000 is allowed for lighting of the towers, including the domes which are now lit by the 1970s lighting system. Possible sub-projects are restoration of the iron fencing on the north and south sides of the church and repair and painting of windows and trim on the parish house.

A financing plan has been developed, discussed and approved by the Board of Trustees, and shared with the Joint Boards. The substantial cost of this building restoration project is being supported by the congregation's generous gifts to the Capital Campaign which commenced in 2010; by withdrawals from the church's Special Fund for Replacements (leaving a sufficient balance for other building needs); and by a low-interest (1.67%) loan obtained through Merrill Lynch and secured by the church's general endowment fund.

The financing plan should permit the church to continue withdrawals from the endowment fund at approximately the current rate and amount, supporting a portion of annual budget. Treasurer Ray Van Epps has developed and refined the financing plan, and he has consulted as needed with John Petersen, the church's financial advisor, affiliated with Merrill Lynch. The Classis of Albany will need to approve the building loan, and the required information has been provided to that body.

The Board of Trustees and the Renovation Committee extend their thanks to the Consistory of First Church and to the congregation and friends for their generous support of the building renovation project and for their ongoing interest. Yet as much as we admire and invest in our historic structure, our church home, we also remember that of our spiritual home *“Jesus Christ himself is the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God”* (Ephesians 2:20-22).

## **At Home with the WORD**

**Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary**

**May 1<sup>st</sup> - May 31<sup>th</sup>**

**Now available online at:** [www.rca.org/athome](http://www.rca.org/athome)

1. Isaiah 25:1-5
2. 1 Peter 1:13-16
3. Luke 14:12-14
4. SUNDAY Luke 24:13-35
5. Genesis 18:1-14
6. Proverbs 8:32–9:6
7. John 21:1-14
8. 1 Peter 2:9-12
9. 1 Peter 2:13-17
10. Luke 15:1-7
11. SUNDAY Acts 2:42-47
12. 1 Peter 5:1-5
13. Ezekiel 34:23-31
14. Acts 1:15-26
15. Acts 6:8-15
16. Exodus 3:1-12
17. John 8:48-59
18. SUNDAY John 14:1-14
19. Psalm 102:1-17
20. Proverbs 3:5-12
21. John 8:31-38
22. Genesis 6:5-22
23. Genesis 7:1-24
24. John 14:27-29
25. SUNDAY John 14:15-21
26. Psalm 93
27. Deuteronomy 5:22-33
28. Deuteronomy 31:1-13
29. Acts 1:1-11
30. Ephesians 2:1-7
31. Luke 1:39-57



## Children and Worship

Every Sunday at First Church, right after our children's sermon, our younger children (ages 4-7) join our Children and Worship Greeter and quietly go up to their own worship center. Before they enter the Children and Worship Center each child puts a sticker by their name to show their attendance. Then the greeter quietly shows the children the title of the story they will hear. These titles are always visible for them on the bulletin board.

The kids enjoy putting this sticker next to their name each week because it is a quiet activity that gives the children time to begin to slow down and prepare to enter their worship. Entering their worship center is just like entering the larger church sanctuary. All enter silently and prepare themselves to be attentive so that we may hear the Word of God.

This is the second year of Children & Worship here at First Church. Each week between 3-5 children attend and each week we see their growing awareness of God's presence in their daily experience. We also continue to see growing friendships among the children as they worship together week after week.

In the picture here you see some of the children creatively expressing themselves after hearing one of the biblical stories. They use various mediums such as painting, drawing, collage, and more. Our Stories for May will be: 4<sup>th</sup> Ascension; 11<sup>th</sup> Pentecost; 18<sup>th</sup> Baptism.

Our Worship Team members (storytellers) include Deb Anderson, Sara Bonam Welge, Kim Dunne, and Lauren Casullo. Our greeters include Shirley Joosten, Sue Hunter, Donna Jones and at times Deb Anderson, Marilyn Paarlberg and Susan Vincent Cox.

***May 18<sup>th</sup> will be our last Children and Worship until we meet again in September.***

We hope you will come visit a Sunday in May and see the Center. It has been our joy to be in this ministry and to teach and to share the wonder of God's love.

In Christ's Peace,  
Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox and the Children and Worship Ministry Team

## **Pilgrim's Walk at Beltrone Senior Living Center**

Last summer at First Church members who are 65 yrs. and older gathered in 2 small groups for ***Pilgrim's Walk: The Third Stage of Life***. This was a 7 week series led by Rev. Susan-Vincent Cox where participants shared their experiences living into and through the last stage of their lives. Topics such as loss, illness, dying, physical aging, grandchildren, mental health, and of special emphasis spiritual growth and well-being were all areas of discussion/support. We hope to offer another group this summer for those who are interested.

***This May***, First Church will offer this group in our larger community to the Beltrone Senior Living Center. This group will be ***offered to residents to Beltrone as well as all Senior Citizens in the Colonie area***. The Administrative Staff at Beltrone are pleased we will offer this group to their community. They have stated that this kind of peer support with a special focus on spiritual growth and well- being is an essential need of their residents.

Sandy Scudder will join Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox in facilitating discussion in this group. We are pleased to build relationships with others in our greater community, ***sharing the Word and Love of God***.

## **Drive-In Worship to Resume Sunday, May 4th**

Drive-in worship, which runs from May through the first Sunday in September, offers an innovative, informal and inspiring service for those who may want to get an early start on Sunday during the warmer months. Services begin at 9:00 a.m. and we gather in the Sheridan Avenue parking lot and in Clee Park for a half-hour worship service led from the outdoor pulpit.

Drive-In Worship services are enhanced by special music and we depend on the generosity of guest musicians to supply music for our services

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

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## **NVC for FOCUS Churches in Albany**

For one of our small groups in the Lent Season we offered a workshop at First Church on ***Compassionate Living: An Introduction to Nonviolent Communication***. This workshop was offered to our First Church members as well as all members of the FOCUS Church congregations and ministries. There were 18 participants who came together looking for ways to be more effective in connecting with others in their ministries, work places, and personal relationships. We learned through discussion and some group exercises how to build relationships based on mutual respect, compassion, and cooperation.

When we hear the Gospel message every Sunday in our worship we see revealed to us the Master of Compassion, our teacher and guide to world peace, Jesus Christ. We concluded each session raising our gratitude to God for giving guidance and tools to work for peace in our families, communities, and in our world.

Steve Anderson and Rev. Sue Vincent-Cox co-facilitated the group and hope to offer more opportunities for continued learning this fall.

## **CROP Walk SUNDAY, MAY 4<sup>th</sup>**

**The Crop Walk for Hunger is Sunday, May 4.** To date the following have registered as walkers: Diane Wuerstlin, Larry Wuerstlin, Kate Wuerstlin, Zak Morton, Susan Cox, Shirley Joosten, Bill, Jen and Olivia Long, Becky Hudak, Cindy Gillespie, Deb Anderson, John Paarlberg, Bob Dorn, Gert Dorn, Ian Leet, and....Baxter the Dog. Please support our walkers and/or sign up to walk today at the CROP Walk table during coffee hour. You can also register as part of the First Church team or contribute on line by connecting through the link on the First Church web page: [www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)



## **BREAKING NEWS FROM KIBERA**

The Sosep school in Kibera, Kenya is being demolished. *May update: The Kibera Committee is developing a recommended response from First Church to this situation.*

We need to remember that Raphael and everyone else in Kibera are squatters. They do not own the land that they are on. In years gone by, the army has actually been called in, and battles have erupted between Kibera residents and the government. Raphael is now looking for property that he can buy for the school, and therefore own the land.

Hi Steve my friend, i know you are still in Jerusalem but i just want to let you know what is going on here.

Our Sosep Nursey school is faced with two big challenges which will affect the school seriously.

1. The Kenya Railways is constructing two lines in their old railway line passing through Kibera slums, our school is a few meters away from the railway line, and because of the expansion which is going on now several houses, schools, churches, businesses and projects are going to be affected, Sosep school is one of them, our school has been marked to be pulled down like others. The construction of the railway has just started in the upper side of Kibera, maybe it will reach our school in the next 3 months.

2. The second challenge is the upgrading of the Maram road which passes near our school, this one too has put mark on school and the old iron sheet building which we were using before we build our blue class rooms.

I strongly feel that i should tell you before i tell anybody else this BIG problem we are faced with here as a school. Attached are photos of the construction work going on at the Kibera railways and photos of marked classrooms and the old building. Totaly sad news but many people are affected some houses have been pulled down. Raphael

## Musical Thank Yous

The trumpet fanfares, the roar of the organ and the excitement of the *Hallelujah Chorus*, are gone, but the joy of the Easter season is still with us. The choir and soloists are still hard at work and, again, we thank them for their faithful witness and hard work, illuminating our worship together with their beautiful music.

## Heritage Sunday is May 11

Join us on May 11<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Heritage Sunday at First church. We'll experience some musical heritage from famous Dutch composers to Early American music. With our sanctuary organ covered up during the restoration work on the towers, we'll be using an organ similar to organs of the 17th and 18th century. We'll have tours of our sanctuary. And, as First Church in Albany has done each Sunday for almost 400 years, we will worship together in our historic sanctuary.

## First Church Readers meets June 1



First Church Readers will meet on June 1<sup>st</sup> during the post-service time to talk about *Twelve Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup. Read the book or seen the block buster movie based on the book? Come join us! Got a book you think would be an interesting read for the summer or next fall? We welcome your suggestions. Contact Mary bon at [marybon@verizon.net](mailto:marybon@verizon.net).



## Weathervanes

### "OLD FRIENDS" TO LUNCH

The Weathervanes will again host the "Old Friends Luncheon" on Wednesday, May 21st at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. If you would like to renew some friendships or make some new friends, partake of an excellent Chicken a la King lunch, and enjoy a great program, please plan to join the "regulars" at this Weathervanes Special. After lunch, The New Messengers, a barbershop quartet featuring gospel music, will entertain with their great harmony. Come and enjoy!

Make your reservation before May 17 by telephoning Audrey Ming (456-5485).

### SAVE THE DATE:

Thursday, June 19 – Enjoy dinner at lunch-time and then travel to The MacHaydn Theatre to see "Fiddler on the Roof." Our tickets are limited, so please call Audrey Ming (456-5485) NOW for details and reservations.

## Garden Time at First Church-- GROWING GREEN



Start 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.

Bring your newspaper/cardboard to First Church.



### First Church Hosts Community Dinner

Bakmi Goreng, Babi Kecap, Kolal Pisang...

Those were some of the delicious Indonesian dishes enjoyed by people from the neighborhood who gathered at First Church on April 12 for a community dinner. The event was organized by the Albany Food and Justice Coalition, a coalition of organizations working together to build food security and access to healthy food in the Albany area, especially in the neighborhoods of Arbor Hill, West Hill and the South End. Chef Yono (from Yono's Restaurant) and students from a cooking class at Arbor Hill Community Center prepared the meal and demonstrated how to prepare healthy, inexpensive (and very tasty!) meals. People at the dinner also learned about restaurant workers rights, a living wage and issues of food distribution and justice.

Many thanks to Chip and Sara Welge for their help in with the dinner.

## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Donald Hay Wilson on the birth of his great grandson, Hayden Ryder Wilson born on 4/2/14.

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## **Memorials**

In celebration of the life of the **Rev. Lynn T. Joosten**, a gift has been received from the Joosten family for the **Lynn T. Joosten Scholarship Fund**.

In celebration of the life of **Hank Reiners**, a gift has been received from Ruth Reiners for the **Capital Campaign Fund**.

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## **In Sympathy**

Sympathy is extended to Joline Mondore, Andrew Mondore and Rebecca Keller Mondore on the death of husband/father, Edward Mondore on April 17, 2014.

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## **Thank you**

Donna Miller Jones, Charnelle Jones, Anthony Miller and Brian Miller wish to express their thanks for all the prayers, kind words, cards, and support during the recent loss of mother and grandmother, Joyce Miller.

I wish to express my deep appreciation for the blessings I have received from so many church members, from cards to prayer visits and phone calls to Rev. John's special Christian caring during my recent illness. God bless you all, many many thanks, Helen H. Bryce.

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## **Easter Lilies**

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



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