

# The First Church FAMILY

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

**October 2015**

## **WORSHIP:**

- 4     **Mountain Sunday** (Communion)  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching  
Children & Worship (During Worship)  
Post-service: “The Way”
- 11    **Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost**  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching  
Children & Worship (During Worship)  
Post Service: The Way
- 18    **Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost**  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox preaching  
Children & Worship (During Worship)  
Post Service: The Way; First Church Readers
- 25    **Reformation Sunday**  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. Deb Jameson preaching  
Children & Worship (During Worship)  
Post Service: Rev. Deb Jameson on “FOCUS, Food Pantries and their Future”
- 1     **Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost All Saints** (Communion)  
Children & Worship (During Worship)  
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching  
Post-service: “The Way”

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

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

## From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

A recent op-ed piece in the *New York Times* by Frank Bruni caught my attention. He wrote about his family tradition of gathering together each summer. The extended family— all 20 of them, including siblings, aunts, uncles, nephew and nieces – live together for a week in a beach house big enough to hold all of them. It's challenging, of course, and even stressful at times, but the challenge is worth it, says Bruni, because spending a longer period of time together yields unexpected moments of grace and candor and intimacy.

“With a more expansive stretch, there's a better chance that I'll be around at the precise, random moment when one of my nephews drops his guard and solicits my advice about something private. Or when one of my nieces will need someone other than her parents to tell her that she's smart and beautiful. Or when one of my siblings will flash back on an incident from our childhood that makes us laugh uncontrollably, and suddenly the cozy, happy chain of our love is cinched that much tighter. There's simply no real substitute for physical presence....”

“I know how my 80-year old father feels about dying, religion and God not because I scheduled a discrete encounter to discuss all of that with him. I know because I happened to be in the passenger seat of his car when such thoughts were on his mind and when, for whatever unforeseeable reason, he felt comfortable articulating them.”

Bruni titled his article, “The Myth of Quality Time” (*New York Times*, September 5, 2015). We talk about “quality time” as a kind of corrective to our scattered, busy lives, commuter marriages, and dispersed families. And it is important to spend “quality time” with those we love, of course, but we can't always orchestrate moments of honesty and tenderness or engineer intimacy. So often it's a matter of being there at the right time. It's not so much *quality time*—but simply *time*, good long chunks of it.

That truth applies to all kinds of relationships, including those in the church. There is simply no substitute for physical presence, for being with people over a period of time. “Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another,” says the writer of Hebrews. Gathering in worship, participating in a small group, even attending meetings – over time relationships deepen, honesty builds, compassion grows, grace happens. But we need to be there.

Sincerely,  
John Paarlberg

## A New Worship Center for 9-12 year olds



This year we are offering an additional Children and Worship Center for children ages 9-12 years of age. Worship will take place at the same time as the younger group, ages 4-8 (during the adult worship service). Deb Anderson will be our first leader and Imani Brewer our first greeter. They will help guide the children to hear, see, and deepen their understanding of the story of CREATION. The order of worship will be similar to the younger children's order of worship but how the story is told and the time spent in expression of the story will be different. The older children will spend 4 weeks on each

biblical story and will explore and experience the story through several different modalities. Some of these modalities include drama, artistic group projects, journaling, and at times telling the story themselves.

We are excited to begin a new adventure in sharing the Word of God in creative ways.

Rev. Susan Vincent Cox

## At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary [www.rca.org/athome](http://www.rca.org/athome)  
October 1<sup>st</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>

- |                                      |                                          |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1. Psalm 8                           | 17. Mark 10:35-45                        |
| 2. Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12             | 18. Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost  |
| 3. Mark 10:2-16                      | 19. Job 42:1-6, 10-17                    |
| 4. Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost | 20. Jeremiah 31:7-9                      |
| 5. Job 23:1-9, 16-17                 | 21. Psalm 34:1-8, 19-22                  |
| 6. Amos 5:6-7, 10-15                 | 22. Psalm 126                            |
| 7. Psalm 22:1-15                     | 23. Hebrews 7:23-28                      |
| 8. Psalm 90:12-17                    | 24. Mark 10:46-52                        |
| 9. Hebrews 4:12-16                   | 25. Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost |
| 10. Mark 10:17-31                    | 26. Isaiah 25:6-9                        |
| 11. Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost | 27. Psalm 24                             |
| 12. 1 Timothy 2:1-7                  | 28. Revelation 21:1-4                    |
| 13. Isaiah 53:4-12                   | 29. Revelation 21:5-6                    |
| 14. Psalm 91:9-16, 104:1-9, 24, 35   | 30. John 11:32-37                        |
| 15. Job 38:1-7                       | 31. John 11:38-44                        |
| 16. Hebrews 5:1-10                   |                                          |

## **Training for Children and Worship at First Church**

On Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> our children and worship team members (including our new members) will come together for a training workshop here at FC. Every few years we have hosted a workshop led by C&W/RCA trainer to refresh our storytelling and greeter skills. Geania Lasda, the RCA Trainer, will come and lead this all day workshop. Invitations are being extended to many churches in our area.

Shortly after this training we also provide a child safety course for all our team members. This also includes updating background checks and reviewing safety policies so we can provide Safe Sanctuary for all.

Rev. Sue Vincent-Cox

## **Andrew Mondore and Monica Marsh Recognized for Service to the Church**

During the fellowship hour after worship on September 20, Andrew Mondore and Monica Marsh were presented with the “Silver Rooster,” a recognition given to those who have made significant and long-term contributions to the life and ministry of the church. Monica and Andy have served the church in a variety of ways over several years. They have been deeply involved in youth ministry at First Church for many years, leading young people on work projects, mission trips and other activities. They have served as mentors to youth in the “Journeys of Faith” program. Their attention to relationships, and their faithful care and continuing concern have helped to form the faith and shape the lives of many young people in First Church and beyond.

Andy has also served as a deacon (including sr. deacon), elder and trustee, including secretary of the Board of Trustees. He has served the wider church as president of Albany Classis, member of the Albany Synod Ministries Board and as a delegate to the General Synod.

Monica has served as an elder (currently sr. elder) and has been the chief organizer, administrator, and often ‘behind the scenes’ person who makes possible the annual urban day camp, ministering to children of the church and the neighborhood.

We thank Andrew and Monica for their faithful service, and trust that God will continue to bless them in their ministries.

## **Like to sing? Join the Choir!**

Choir rehearsals have started, but there is still time to join the choir. We meet Thursdays at 7:00 pm in the choir room on the second floor of the education building. We are working on some exciting new music including special pieces for the Re-dedication of our building following our major building renovation project. Come join us for fun, food, fellowship and song. Everyone's welcome. You don't need to read music or have any special talent; just a love of singing. Make a joyful noise, deepen your faith and spread the good news with your song.

## **CD Ministry Update:**

### **Tech Volunteer Needed to Record and Edit Sunday Worship Services**

Recordings of our worship service will no longer be available while we look for volunteers to help with this ministry. We need help recording and/or editing our services.

This ministry has allowed our home-bound members to stay connected to our church family through listening to our services. It has also enabled us to post services on our website, reaching out to the wider community.

Can you help continue this important ministry? It is straightforward. You just need a basic computer knowledge, and we'll provide on-the-job training! Contact Ian Leet, Worship Commission Chair, or the Church Office at 463-4449.

(NOTE: Our ministry will continue to provide bulletins of our Sunday worship services each week to many of our home-bound members and friends thanks to the dedicated work of Dennis Kernahan. If you know of someone who would like to receive our weekly bulletin contact the church office.)

## **Weathervanes**

### **Historic Bethlehem Churches**



Join the Weathervanes for fellowship, lunch, and a program on Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be served. After lunch, Bethlehem town historian, Susan Leath, will explore the historic churches of Bethlehem, including Reformed, Presbyterian, and Methodist congregations from the late 1700s and early 1800s.

Please phone Audrey Ming (465-5485) to let her know you plan to attend.

## Room for All National Conference



"From Sorrow to Celebration," Room for All's 10th anniversary national conference, will take place in Grand Rapids, MI, October 22 - 25. The conference features LGBTQ-inclusive worship, workshops, speakers and support networks. Many have found previous RfA conferences to be life-changing. To register, look for a poster and brochures at the table in the lounge, or go to [www.regonline.com/roomforall2015](http://www.regonline.com/roomforall2015). Need-based airfare assistance is available. Further information about Room for All and the conference may be found at [www.roomforall.com](http://www.roomforall.com), or speak with Marilyn Paarlberg. Registration deadline is October 1st.

## First Church Readers Meets October 18th

Like to read? First Church Readers are people who love to read. We get together once a month in the post-service hour to discuss a book we have read in the past month. October's book is "Clara and Mr. Tiffany: A Novel" by Susan Vreeland. Learn the story behind the making of the famous Tiffany stained glass like that in our exquisite "Sumner Window" in the lobby. Explore what life was like working in the Tiffany stained glass factory, seen through the eyes of a young woman working with the famous Mr. Tiffany.

November's book is *Campus Capers on the Hudson: College Fun Recollections of an Emeritus Professor* by our own William L. (Bill) Staats. You can get a book by contacting Bill. The book group will not meet in December.

## Growing Green - Caring for Creation



'Tis the season for great deals at local farmer's markets and market stands - it saves fuel and supports local farmers.

Compost your leaves (Mary Bon is always looking for leaves for her compost pile if you don't have a compost pile of your own.)

# ***The WAY: A Journey of Faith***

## **All Are Welcome**

Asking questions about God, faith, or the church? Life-long Christian? Seeking to renew or deepen your faith? Every faith journey is unique. The WAY encourages, challenges and invites us into a deeper life of faith. The WAY is especially for those who are new to the church or who are considering membership in the church or who want to explore the Christian faith.

You are invited to join us for a light lunch and small group discussion in the parlor each Sunday after worship.

## **What is The WAY?**

Before the first followers of Jesus were known as Christians, they were called “People of The WAY.” Then, and now, The WAY refers to a way of life in which both believing and living are centered in Jesus Christ.

At the First Church in Albany, The WAY is an opportunity for your faith to be explored, nurtured, and renewed, your commitment to Jesus Christ affirmed, and your walk as a disciple of Christ to be established or re-established through the sacrament of baptism or, if you have been previously baptized, by profession or reaffirmation of your faith. Meeting in small groups we prayerfully read scripture together and listen for the voice of God in our own lives.

## **The Way is:**

- **An exchange of gifts**  
You bring your stories and questions, your life experiences.  
The church offers the treasure of the faith community—past, present and future.
- **An exploration**  
A time to share questions and listen to others share their thoughts  
A time to listen to your own life  
A time to listen to what God is saying through scripture and through your life experiences
- **A journey together**  
A fellowship of travelers who come from different places, are at different points in their spiritual journeys, who may arrive at different destinations, but (for a while at least) have decided to walk together.

## **We need your help with First Church Overflow Homeless Shelter Meals!**

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 be eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health issues. It is open during the winter months and turns nobody away. Since 2008 First Church has been providing two meals a month for the Shelter.

To continue the ministry we need people to provide a dish and help deliver the food to the shelter. Deliveries are made on Fridays during the day at the First Lutheran Church offices or at 6 pm at the Shelter door at First Lutheran Church, Albany. The Shelter opens on November 15th and we need to have deliverers on hand before that date. It is an easy and rewarding way to serve! Watch for the Shelter Sign-up sheet on the Hospitality Table or talk to Mary Bon at 463-4449 or maryebon@verizon.net.

## **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](mailto:deschultz07@aol.com) or [518-429-1255](tel:518-429-1255). Thank you.

## **September Consistory Highlights**

At its September meeting the consistory:

- Approved a modification in Minister for Discipleship and Mission Sue Vincent Cox’s job description, reducing preaching and worship responsibilities so she can devote more time to small group ministry.
- Made plans to form a committee to prepare for the congregation’s 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017.
- Agreed to take a step back from regular business at the October meeting in order to spend time discerning the current needs and opportunities for ministry and discussing our focus for the coming years.

## **Winter Breakfast Volunteers Needed:**

FOCUS Churches of Albany is looking for new volunteers for the Winter Breakfast Program. Are you interested and available? Please call the FOCUS office at 443.0460 or email Belinda at: [belindaq@focuschurches.net](mailto:belindaq@focuschurches.net) (Shifts available T,W, & TH; full shifts 6:30-9:15 am or half shifts 6:30-8 or 8-9:30)

## **Parking Lot: Important Information**

ANYONE PARKING IN FIRST CHURCH PARKING LOTS WITHOUT A DISPLAYED PERMIT MAY BE TOWED.

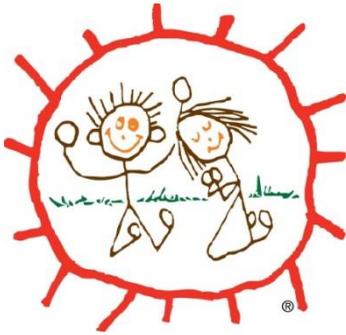
Maiden Lane no longer has an attendant full time. A towing company polices the Sheridan Avenue lot, and if there is no ticket or permit visible in the visor or dashboard you may be towed. There is a ticket booth in the lot right next to the attendant house for purchasing tickets. The charge will be \$140.00 per vehicle or higher if you are towed. Parking permits are ONLY available through Denise, phone: 463-4449. When using the Orange Street parking lot, you need to have and display a permit. In addition, if you have an event at church you MUST contact Denise.

David Bradley Chair, Board of Trustees Parking Committee

## **Building Renovation – October 2015**



- The scaffolding is now off of the Church house.



## Children and Worship

Every Sunday

During Worship (after the children's moment)

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Come hear a story and see the Worship Center

Meet some of our storytellers and greeters

Bring a friend☺

**Thanksgiving is Coming** – The First Church Food Pantry is starting to collect items for the Thanksgiving Baskets. Thanksgiving cake mixes or pie crust mixes would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

**Christmas poinsettia memorials** – Please send a note or call the church office (463.4449) by Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am to place your order for Christmas Poinsettia memorials. A minimum donation of \$10 per plant is requested. Make your check payable to First Church in Albany (marked: Poinsettias). After Christmas, the plants are shared with our homebound members and friends.

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**The deadline for the November issue of *FAMILY* is October 15.**

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## Congratulations

Congratulations to O'Asia West on the birth of her son, Vincent Wright born on September 10, 2015.

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## In Sympathy

Sympathy is extended to Kathie Monthie, family and friends on the death of her mother, Ruth Reiners on September 13, 2015.

Sympathy is extended to Terence Murphy, family and friends on the death of his wife, Holli Rossi Murphy who passed away on September 14, 2015.

## Memorials

In celebration of the life of **Helen H. Bryce** a gifts have been received from John D. Squadrito and Julie A. Squadrito, John Winhold, Capital District Funeral Direct for the **Music Fund**.

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

In celebration of the life of **Ruth Reiners** an anonymous gift has been received for the **Lynn T. Joosten Scholarship Fund**

## In Honor

A donation in honor of **Shirley Bone** has been received for the Capital Campaign Fund (Tower Restoration) from her devoted friends, Helen Goldenberg and Stephen Barr.

## Tech Volunteer Needed

We have suspended CD recordings of our worship services while we look for a volunteer to help continue this important ministry. These recordings have allowed our shut-ins to hear our services and also enabled posting of our services on our website. If you can help with this ministry, please contact Ian Leet, Worship Commission Chair, or the Church Office at 463-4449.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED