

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207 ~ 518-463-4449

Email: info@firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Website: www.firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Sunday Worship: 10:30 am



Reformation Sunday 375th Anniversary Celebration October 29, 2017

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today

In response to God's unconditional love for all people made known to us in Jesus Christ, we are called to be a welcoming and affirming community. The First Church in Albany includes young and old, families, couples and singles, rich and poor, persons of various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identities, differing physical and mental abilities, believers and seekers. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are loved.

THE APPROACH TO GOD

Prelude	<i>Contrapunctus 3</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach
	<i>Ein' Feste Burg</i>	Johann Kittel
	<i>Die Bankelsangerlieder</i>	Anonymous
	<i>Fanfare on Thaxted</i>	Gustav Holst arr. Kevin Hildebrand

Welcome and Announcements

Moment of Silent Centering

Call to Worship

BY FAITH

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

By faith Abel offered to God an acceptable sacrifice.

By faith Abraham set out for a land known only to God.

By faith Noah built an ark to save his household.

By faith Moses led God's people towards the promised land.

By faith the people of God passed through the Red Sea on dry ground.

By faith our ancestors journeyed to this new land to worship and to work.

By faith our ancestors reached out to care for those in need.

By faith our ancestors built churches and a community of faith to witness to God's love in this place.

By faith our ancestors sought to create a city where people of every color and class, every creed and culture, were treated with dignity.

By faith our ancestors looked to God for strength in times of trouble, for solace in times of suffering, for hope in times of struggle.

By faith our ancestors looked to each other for support in ministry, for love in community and for compassion in weakness.

By faith we come to this day to celebrate 375 years of worship and ministry,
And in thanksgiving for the faith of our ancestors and the faithfulness of our God, we commit ourselves to a future filled with hope.

Portions from Hebrews 11
adapted by the Rev. Dr. Gregg Mast for the 350th Anniversary Celebration

1. Sing praise to God who reigns a - bove, the God of all cre -
2. The Lord is ne - ver far a - way, but through all grief dis -
3. Thus all my toil - some way a - long, I sing a - loud thy
4. Let all who name Christ's ho - ly name give God all praise and

- a - tion, the God of power, the God of love, the God of
tres - sing, an e - ver pre - sent help and stay, our peace and
prai - ses, that earth may hear the grate - ful song my voice un -
glo - ry; let all who own his power pro - claim a - loud the

our sal - va - tion. With heal - ing balm my soul is filled and
joy and bles - sing. As with a mo - ther's ten - der hand, God
wea - ried rai - ses. Be joy - ful in the Lord, my heart, both
won - drous sto - ry! Cast each false i - dol from its throne, for

ev - ery faith - less mur - mur stilled: To God all praise and glo - ry.
gent - ly leads the cho - sen band: To God all praise and glo - ry.
soul and bo - dy bear your part: To God all praise and glo - ry.
Christ is Lord, and Christ a - lone: To God all praise and glo - ry.

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy, grace, reconciliation and goodness:

**As we gather in celebration of a long and storied past,
our hearts are full of gratitude**

**for the great cloud of witnesses surrounding the life of this church,
for the love of Christ alive in our history and our ministry,
for your steadfast love.**

**But we also know that not everything has been faithful, and so we confess:
words that were better left unsaid,
memories that give pain,
actions that turned us or others from you.**

You know our hearts.

Relieve us of our burdens,

Shower us with your mercy,

Bind our hearts to you as we continue to move out in faith

So that, in all ways, we may live in the joy of your salvation

And the delight of your loving embrace.

The prayer may continue in silence.

Assurance of Pardon

*The Peace

As God's forgiven people, let us lead lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

(from Ephesians 4:1-3)

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

*Response

Now Thank We All Our God (verses 1 and 2)

Tune: NUN DANKET

1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voice,
2 O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in highest heaven,

who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
to Father and to Son and Spirit now be given:

who, from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore,

with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
the God who was, and is, and shall be ever more.

Although this hymn is often used on large and festive occasions, its first two stanzas had much humbler beginnings: they originated as a family table prayer during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). These words have been associated with this tune since the mid-17th century.

TEXT: Martin Rinkart, c. 1636; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt.
MUSIC: Johann Crüger, 1647; harm. Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT
6.7.6.7.6.6.6.6

THE WORD OF GOD

The Prayer for Illumination

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scripture, may your word be heard; in the meditation of our hearts, may your word be known; and in the faithfulness of our lives, may your word be shown. Amen.

The Old Testament Lesson Isaiah 56:5-7

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn *Old Hundredth Psalm tune*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

(Congregation and choir sing verses 1, 2, 5; Choir only on verses 3 and 4)

1. All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with
2. Know that the Lord is God in - deed; With - out our aid He
3. O en - ter then His gates with praise, Ap - proach with joy His
4. For why? The Lord our God is good, His mer - cy is for -

cheer - ful voice; Him serve with mirth, His praise forth
did us make; We are His folk, He doth us
courts un - to; Praise, laud, and bless His name al -
ev - er sure; His truth at all times firm - ly

tell, Come ye be - fore Him and re - joice.
feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.
ways, For it is seem - ly so to do.
stood, And shall from age to age en - dure.

**5. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

A Word with Children

The Gospel Lesson Matthew 21: 12-16
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Gregg A. Mast

The Prayer for Blessing on the Word

THE RESPONSE TO GOD

The Blessing of the 375 Anniversary Hymn

Please read with me the first verse of the new text that the church has commissioned to become part of our hymnody.

**At the heart of human history
stands a single, empty cross,
emblem of the world's redemption,
drawing life from grief and loss.**

**For the suffering, Christ was born,
as a lily 'mid the thorn,
joy resplendent and surprising
in his dying and arising.**

Congregation of Jesus Christ, do you embrace this expression of our living faith as representative of our past, as a statement of our present mission, and, with God's help, as an expression of our hopes and beliefs for the future?

We do embrace "At the Heart of Human History" into our sung expressions to the glory of God.

Let us praise God in song.

*Hymn

At the Heart of Human History

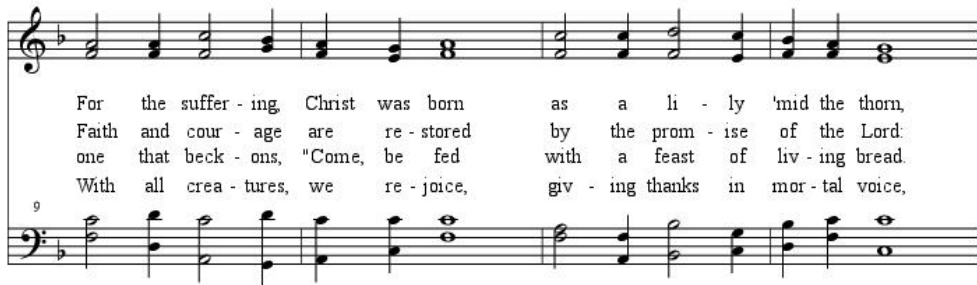
Commissioned by The First Church in Albany (NY) for its 375th Anniversary



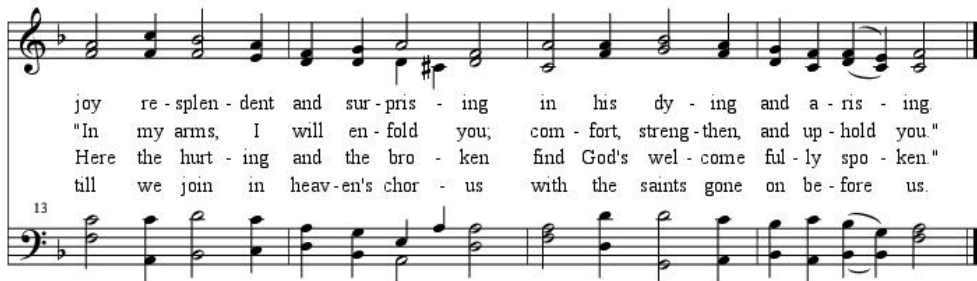
1. At the heart of hu-man his - tory stands a sing - le, emp - ty cross,
2. At the heart of ev - ery per - son stirs a thir - sty, rest - less soul,
3. At the heart of ev - ery cit - y dwells a world in need of care:
4. At the heart of all cre - a - tion, God's em - bod - ied Spir - it sings.



em - blem of the world's re - demp - tion, draw - ing life from grief and loss.
keen to drink from liv - ing wa - ter, find new hope and be made whole.
those who long for food and shel - ter; those who seek a house of prayer—
5 Ways break o - pen in the des - ert; dri - est val - leys gush with springs.



For the suffer - ing, Christ was born as a li - ly 'mid the thorn,
Faith and cour - age are re - stored by the prom - ise of the Lord.
one that beck - ons, "Come, be fed with a feast of liv - ing bread.
9 With all crea - tures, we re - joice, giv - ing thanks in mor - tal voice,



joy re - splen - dent and sur - pris - ing in his dy - ing and a - ris - ing
"In my arms, I will en - fold you; com - fort, streng - then, and up - hold you."
Here the hurt - ing and the bro - ken find God's wel - come ful - ly spo - ken."
13 till we join in heav - en's chor - us with the saints gone on be - fore us.

WORDS: Mary Louise Bringle © 2017 GIA Publications, Inc.
MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551

PSALM 42
87.87.77.88

Offering Sentences

Offertory *O How Amiable*

Ralph Vaughan Williams

O how amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of hosts! My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young: even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. They will be always praising thee.

The glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper thou the work of our hands upon us. O prosper thou our handiwork. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home. Text adapted from Psalms 84 and 90

*Doxology (Tune of Hymn 229)

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Alleluia, Alleluia.
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.
Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia!**

The Joys and Concerns of the Church

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Litany and Bells of Remembrance and Hope

1 A might-y for-tress is our God, a bul-wark nev-er fail-ing;
 2 Did we in our own strength con-fide, our striv-ing would be los-ing,
 3 That word a-bove all earth-ly powers, no thanks to them, a-bid-eth;

C G Em Am D7 G Am Em F C Am Dm G7 C

our help-er he, a-mid the flood of mor-tal ills pre-vail-ing.
 were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choos-ing.
 the Spir-it and the gifts are ours thro' him who with us sid-eth.

C Am G D7 G C G C F Am E Am E Am D7

For still our an-cient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je-sus, it is he; Lord Sab-a-oth his
 Let goods and kin-dred go, this mor-tal life al-so; the bod-y they may

G F C7 A Dm E Am Em F C Am Dm G7 C

great, and, armed with cru-el hate, on earth is not his e-qual.
 name, from age to age the same, and he must win the bat-tle.
 kill: God's truth a-bid-eth still; his king-dom is for-ev-er.

WORDS: Martin Luther (1483-1546); tr. Frederick H. Hedge (1805-1890)
 MUSIC: Martin Luther (1843-1546)

EIN' FESTE BURG
 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.6.7.

*Charge and Blessing

*Choral Response *O Prosper Thou the Works of our Hands*

Mary Bon

*Postlude *My Spirit Be Joyful*

Johann Sebastian Bach

AΩ *Those who are able please stand.

WORSHIP LEADERS: Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, Mela Jensen, Ann Snyder - Chair of the Diocesan Committee for Protestant/Catholic Dialogue, Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox, Ian Leet, William Staats, Preacher: Rev. Dr. Gregg Mast; Minister of Music: Mary Bon.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS: The entire congregation.

WORSHIP MUSICIANS: The Albany Brass: Eric Latini, trumpet; Peter Bellino, trumpet; Jessica Lascoe, french horn; Paul Bellino, trombone; John Bottomley, tuba; David Bon-Keen, timpani. Choir of First Church.

We welcome all who gather to worship God this morning, especially visitors and friends from near and far. Please sign our guest book or complete a visitor's card (found in the pew rack) and place it in the offering plate. There is an elevator in our building, which makes every floor accessible. Please join us for refreshments and conversation after worship.

Hearing assist devices are available for your use. Please ask an usher.

The Prayer of Confession is adapted from the work of the Rev. Kaji S. Dousa, Senior Minister of Park Avenue Christian Church (DOC), New York City.

The flowers this morning are given in loving memory of the Rev. Jack K. White on the 75th anniversary of his birth; and in celebration of the 4th birthday of his grandson, Jack Beckett White by Ella White Campbell and the White and Longtin families.

Pocket Prayer Shawls are available at today's Worship. Please ask one of our greeters and they can provide a basket of pocket prayer shawls to choose from. Pocket Prayer Shawls are made and filled with prayers and can be given to someone in need of comfort, healing, or a reminder of the closeness of God.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday	10/29	Reformation Sunday/375 Anniversary Sunday
	10:30 AM	375 Anniversary Worship Service Children & Worship (during service)
	11:45 AM	Cider & Donuts (in the lobby)
	1:00 PM	375 Anniversary Luncheon at Normanside Country Club
Monday	10/30	9:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Food Pantry Open
	10:30 AM	Staff Meeting
Tuesday	10/31	NOON Bible Study
Wednesday	11/1	9:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Food Pantry Open
	12:00 NOON	AA Meeting
	6:30 PM	Consistory Meeting
Thursday	11/2	7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	11/5	Sunday After All Saints (Daylight saving time ends)
	10:30 AM	Sanctuary Worship Service (Communion) Children & Worship (during service)
	11:45 AM	Coffee & Conversation