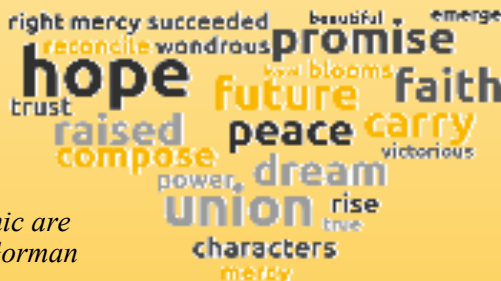


# The First Church in Albany



*The words that form the cover graphic are from Inaugural Poem by Amanda Gorman*

**First Sunday  
After Christmas  
January 1, 2023  
Worship Service**

# **The First Church in Albany** **(Reformed Church in America)**

**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 we are loved.

**Happy** 2023  
**New Year!**

**First Sunday After Christmas**  
January 1, 2023

\* = rise in body or in spirit

**Prelude Reflection** *Excerpt from Inaugural Poem by Amanda Gorman*

When day comes, we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid.  
The new dawn balloons as we free it.  
For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it.  
If only we're brave enough to be it.

**Prelude**

*Intonation on “Tempus Adest Floridum”  
Iteke Prins, organist*

I. Prins

**Tolling of Bell** *bell tolled by children of First Church*

**Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing**



The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned. Isaiah 9:2

**Call to Worship Psalm 8**

Leader: LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**People: You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants, you have found a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;**

Leader: What are human beings that you are mindful of them?

**People: Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.**

Leader: O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

# \*Opening Hymn

## Christ, Be Our Light

Em Am7 D Esus Em

1 Long-ing for light, — we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for  
 2 Long-ing for peace, — our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for  
 5 Man - y the gifts, — man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

Am7 Bm7 Esus Em7/D Am7

truth, — we turn to you. Make us your own, —  
 hope, — man - y de - spair. Your Word a - lone —  
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

D G C Am Dsus D

your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.  
 has power to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
 to one an - oth - er, mak - ing your king - dom come.

*Refrain* G C G Em Bm

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Em Am7 D G Dsus D Em

Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light!

Em7/D C Am7 D G Am7 1-4 G 5 G

Shine in your church gath-ered to - day.

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The chords above the first system are Em, Am7, D, G, Dsus, D, and Em. The lyrics are 'Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our light!'. The second system continues the melody and has chords Em7/D, C, Am7, D, G, Am7, and then a boxed section with '1-4 G' and '5 G'. The lyrics are 'Shine in your church gath-ered to - day.'.

Words and Music (CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT 9.8.9.6 refrain 4.4.5.4.8): Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957) © 1993  
Bernadette Farrell, admin. OCP Publications

## Prayer of Confession

**Dear Lord, You have entered our world so that we may have light and live as light. Forgive us for hiding from your light and hiding the light you have for us to carry into the world. We are often not brave enough to see or ask the question, what would God want us to do? In this new year, give us the strength to walk in the light.**

Time of Silence

## Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law

Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus is joy to the world. As the song says, walk in the light, beautiful light. Come where the dew drops of mercy shine bright.

## \*Passing the Peace

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with a hand-sign of peace.



*Touch your thumb to the tip of your ring finger, and wave to one another. This hand-sign makes Christ's gesture of blessing in a lot of iconography in the Orthodox Tradition.*

## Prayer for Illumination *Please sing*

**Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me. Mold me. Fill me. Use me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me!**

## Sermon Text

Luke 2:15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

When the eighth day came, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

## Sermon

*The Light We Carry in Our Hearts*

## A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

## \*Hymn of Response

### I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 3/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G major. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first line of the hymn, and the second system contains the second line. Chord symbols are placed above the staff lines. The lyrics are written below the staff lines, with some words underlined for emphasis. The score includes a page number '0' at the bottom center.

Chord symbols: C, G, F, G, C, C/E, Dm, Am, C, Em.

Lyrics:

1 I want to walk as a child of the light; I want to  
2 I want to see the bright-ness of God; I want to  
3 I'm look-ing for the com-ing of Christ; I want to

fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give  
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous - ness,  
be with Je - sus. When we have run with

F G C G D G

light to the world; the star of my life — is Je - sus.  
 shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.  
 pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy — of Je - sus.

Refrain C F G C F C Am G

In him there is no dark-ness at all; the night and the

Csus C Am G Dm Em

day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the

D G C Em Dm G7 C

cit - y of God; shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

*Chord symbols represent a simplified harmony.*

Words and Music (HOUSTON 10.7.10.8 refrain 9.9.11.7): Kathleen Thomerson (b. 1934) © 1970, 1975  
 Celebration

## **New Year Re-Commitment First Church's Mission Statement**

**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 we are all loved.**

**Tithes & Offerings:** *If you would like to connect more with the life and mission of First Church, please fill out a Welcome Card found in your pew and place it in the offering as it goes by. Giving is an act of worship. We pray you participate in this meaningful moment.*

### **Offertory**

*“Temps de Noel”  
Iteke Prins, organist*

L. Guitard

### **\*Doxology #592 in pew hymnal**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### **Eucharistic Anthem**

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

### **Communion Prayer**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **Sanctus**

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**



## Mystery of the Faith

**Christ has died!  
Christ has risen!  
Christ will come again!**

## Celebration of Communion

### Intercession

We, indeed, praise and thank you, O Lord, that you have fed us at your Table. Grateful for this gift and mindful of the communion of your saints, here and in all places, we offer to you our prayers for all people:

*Prayers offered*

### 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, forever.  
Amen.**

### \*Sending Hymn

## Arise, Your Light Is Come!

FESTAL SONG SM

Ruth Duck, 1974

William H. Walter, 1894

The musical score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves.

1. A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;  
2. A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door;  
3. A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born,  
4. A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song!

Show forth the glo - ry of your God, Which shines on you to - day.  
Pro - claim the cap-tives' lib - er - ty, Good ti - dings to the poor.  
Bind up the bro-ken - heart-ed ones And com - fort those who mourn.  
Rise up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

Text: © 1981 Ruth Duck. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## \*Charge & Blessing

### Postlude

*“Festal Song”*  
Iteke Prins, organist

D. Janzer

*CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689*

**Note:** Please enjoy a time of coffee and refreshments in Zimmerman Hall after the service.

**Preacher:** Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, Sr. Minister

**Organist:** Iteke Prins

**Audio/Visual:** Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr



**Children & Worship**

*Upcoming Stories*

1/1	No Children in Worship Gathering due to Holidays	
1/8	How the Church Tells Time	Miss Sara
1/15	The Boy Jesus in the Temple	Miss Kathie
1/22	Jesus is Baptized	Miss Kathie
1/29	The Mustard Seed	Miss Kathie



## 2023 Schedule

9up is our ministry to First Church Kids who are 9 years and older.

### January

1, 10am	Worship
8, 10am	Artwork with Miss Kathleen
15, 10am	Artwork with Miss Kathleen
22, 10am	Worship
29, 10am	Worship

The First Church in Albany

[www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)

# Prayer Concerns

- Ruth and Josue Torres
- Rose Hunsberger, her father Jim and their extended family as they mourn her mother's passing.
- The Reohr Family
- Jason Shahid
- Joe Vasta and wife Albie, friends of the Persons
- Deborah Paris, daughter of Betty Pierce
- Alexis Parry, niece of Cheryl Gowie
- Gail Santimaw, friend of Judith Utley-Suess
- John Utley, brother of Judith Utley-Suess
- Judith Utley-Suess, for strength
- Brian Zapel, friend of Dave Andrews
- Ronald Stockhoff.
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- For Mia and Wim Westman
- For Barbara W., dear friend of Barb & Dave Andrews and Donna Jones
- Harold Bushnel
- Alex Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Cheryl Gowie
- Norma McClement
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Mary Ann Selmer
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Donna Schultz
- Jeff Curry
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- Prayers for this burden of gun violence and its aftermath.
- An end to the war in Ukraine

*Prayer Concerns? If you would like your church family to join you in prayer, please share your concerns and joys with us. Call the office at 518-463-4449 or email [office@firstchurchinalbany.org](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org).*

## 28th Anniversary Celebration ECUMENICAL WITNESSES OF BAPTISM



Sunday, January 8, 2023 - 1:30 PM

Each year, pastors and witnesses gather on the 2nd, Sunday of January (Feast of the Baptism of The Lord), to share experiences and learn about baptism in one of our traditions. This year the service will be held at The First Church in Albany. We warmly welcome new witnesses and participating congregations. For information, contact Coordinator Christine Baxter, at [christinejbaxter@gmail.com](mailto:christinejbaxter@gmail.com) or 518-337-8424.

## MADE TO WORSHIP

A Night of Worship  
Thursday, January 5  
7pm  
6pm Potluck





- |             |     |      |                                      |
|-------------|-----|------|--------------------------------------|
| • Sunday    | 1.1 | 10am | Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom |
| • Monday    | 1.2 |      | Office <b>Closed</b> for Holiday     |
|             |     | 9am  | Food Pantry is <u>open</u> !         |
| • Tuesday   | 1.3 | 12pm | Adult Scripture Study                |
| • Wednesday | 1.4 | 9am  | Food Pantry                          |
|             |     | 12pm | AA Meeting                           |
|             |     | 12pm | Centering Prayer                     |
| • Thursday  | 1.5 | 7pm  | A Night of Worship (6pm potluck)     |
| • Friday    | 1.6 |      | Epiphany                             |

## Upcoming Events

- |           |      |        |                                      |
|-----------|------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| • Sunday  | 1.8  | 1:30pm | CACC Ecumenical Witnesses of Baptism |
| • Tuesday | 1.10 | 6pm    | Leadership Meeting                   |
| • Sunday  | 1.15 | AW     | Congregational Meeting               |
| • Tuesday | 1.17 | 6pm    | Consistory Meeting                   |

\*Meeting Schedules are subject to change.  
Watch your email for updates if you are a part of these gatherings.

AW = After Worship



## First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St.,  
Albany NY 12207  
518-463-4449

[www.firstchurchinalbany.org](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)