

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.



Third Sunday of Advent (Joy) December 11, 2022

* = rise in body or in spirit

Prelude Reflection

Luke 1:46b-50

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation."

Prelude

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Iteke Prins, organ

setting M. Burkhardt

Tolling of Bell (will be tolled by children of First Church)

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing Isaiah 12:2-3

"Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." **Amen.**

Advent Candle Lighting

The Candle of Joy

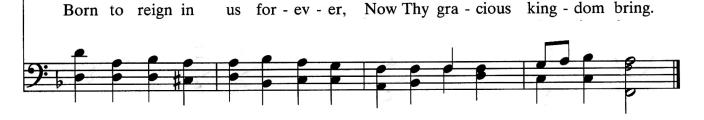
*Advent Anthem

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

Witt's Psalmodia Sacra, 1715; alt.

3. Born Thy peo - ple to de-liv-er, Born a child and yet a King,

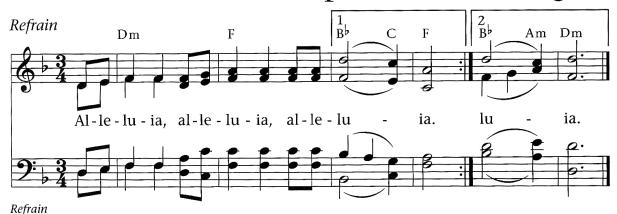


Alternate tune: HYFRYDOL, 2

Call to Worship & Opening Hymn

Each Sunday in Advent, our Call to Worship, which is usually based on the lectionary Psalm, will be a responsorial Advent Psalm. This will also serve as our Opening Hymn. Sing out!

Psalm 146 | A Responsorial Setting



¹ Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

² I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. *Refrain*

³ Put not your trust in rulers, in mortals in whom there is no help.

- ⁴ When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.
- 5 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;
- ⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.

 The LORD sets the captive free. Refrain
- The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.
- The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- ¹⁰ The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah! Refrain

Prayer of Confession (adapted from Memorial Drive Church)

When we allow darkness to overcome the light,

forgive us, Lord.

When we have no joy

have mercy on us, Father.

When hardness of heart keeps us from seeing and hearing and touching the needs of others,

let your grace consume us, O God.

When the wars around us are of no concern,

forgive us, Lord, and move us to compassion for those who suffer.

When our caring is not extended to action,

move us to seek justice for our brothers and sisters.

We come to confess our sinfulness before you and before each other. Remove all barriers that divide us, and let there be no obstacle to our love for you and for one another. Amen.

Time of Silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law Adapted from Psalm 146:5-10

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

*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.

Children's Message & Blessing

Prayer for Illumination *Please sing two times through*

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 Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord. **People: Praise to you, O Christ!**

Sermon See for Yourself: Life Reimagined!

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

*Hymn of Response

Song of Mary

Magnificat
MORNING SONG CM

Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813 Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940 Para. Miriam Therese Winter, 1987 Ab E۶ Cm Fm E١ D١ Fm Cm Fm 1. My soul gives glo my God, My ry to God great things 2. My has done for me: Yes, 5. Praise God, whose Sup lov ing cov e nant \mathbf{D}^{\flat} \mathbf{D}_{P} Eb7 Ab B_{pm} Ab A١ ΕЬ Ab God heart pours out its praise. lift - ed up my ho - ly this Name. All peo - ple will de is Re ports those dis in tress, mem - ber ing past \mathbf{D}_{P} Ab Eb7 B_{pm} E١ B b mE١ Fm low - li In ness man mar-vel-ous ways. - y bless - ings clare me blessed, And thev shall claim. pres - ent prom - is es With faith - ful ness.

Guitar and keyboard should not sound together.

=88-96

Text: © Medical Mission Sisters, 1978, 1987. Used by permission.

Music: Harmonization © 1943, 1961, 1985 Church Pension Fund. Used by permission.

Profession of Faith The Words of the Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55

One: And Mary said,

All: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

One: Surely, from now on, all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name;

All: indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

One: He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

All: He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

One: He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

All: Amen.

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.

Offertory

"In the Bleak Midwinter"
Iteke Prins, organist

arr. A. Fedak

*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.

Prayers of the People

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.

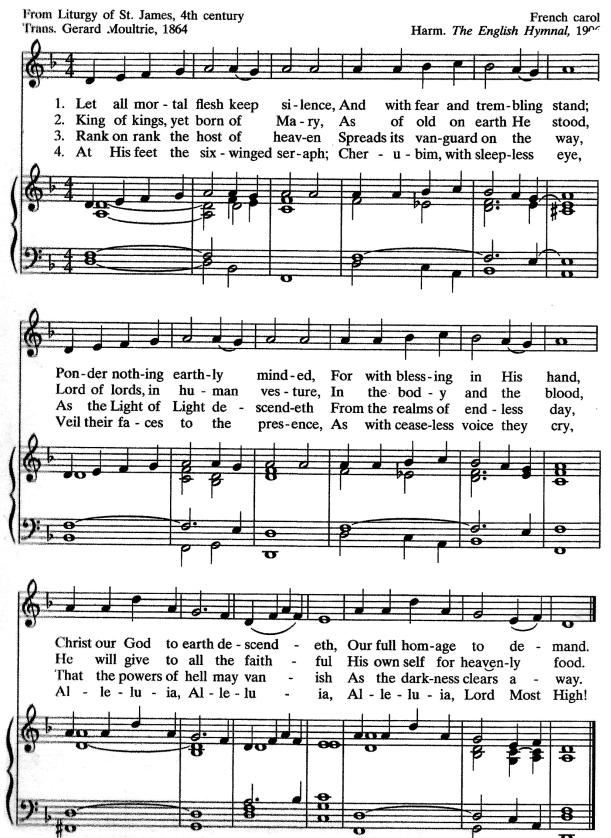
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*Sending Hymn

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

PICARDY 8.7.8.7.8.7



^{*}Charge & Blessing

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

Organist: Iteke Prins

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr



Prayer Joys & Concerns

- 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.

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.



This Week at the First Church in Albany

•	Sunday	12.11	10am	Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom
•	Monday	12.12	9am	Food Pantry & Boutique at First
•	Tuesday	12.13	12pm	Adult Scripture Study
•	Wednesday	12.14	9am	Food Pantry & Boutique at First
	-		12pm	AA Meeting
			12pm	Centering Prayer
			7pm	Blue Christmas Service
•	Thursday	12.15	11:30am	Free Soup in the Park

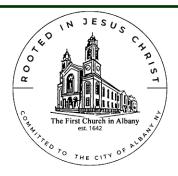
Upcoming Events

- Please note the Leadership Meeting and Consistory Meeting previously scheduled for December will not occur. The next meeting of each will be in January.
- Sunday 12.18 AW Congregational Meeting*
- The Pantry will be closed 12.26.22, 12.28.22, and 1.2.23
- Sunday 1.15 AW Congregational 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