



Welcomes you

Love

**Forth Week of Advent
December 18, 2022
10am 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.



Fourth Sunday of Advent (Love)

December 18, 2022

* = rise in body or in spirit

Prelude Reflection

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

Prelude

"Sussex Carol"
Iteke Prins, organ

A. Fedak

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

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing John 3:16-17

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him." **Amen.**

Advent Candle Lighting The Candle of Love

***Advent Anthem**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTT GART 8.7.8.7

Charles Wesley, 1744

Witt's *Psalmodia Sacra*, 1715; alt.

4. By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;

The first system of musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It also consists of a treble and a bass staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

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 80 | A Responsorial Setting

Refrain

Re-store us a - gain, O Lord God of hosts,

and show us the light of your face and your grace and we shall be saved.

Refrain

- ¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- ² In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- ³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*
- ⁴ O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?
- ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- ⁶ You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- ⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*
- ⁸ You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
you cast out the nations and planted it.
- ⁹ You cleared the ground for it;
it took root and filled the land.
- ¹⁰ The mountains were covered by its shadow
and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.
- ¹¹ You stretched out its tendrils to the sea
and its branches to the river. *Refrain*
- ¹² Why have you broken down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?
- ¹³ The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it,
and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
- ¹⁴ Turn now, O God of hosts,
look down from heaven;
- ¹⁵ behold and tend this vine;
preserve what your right hand has planted.
- ¹⁶ They burn it with fire like rubbish;
at the rebuke of your countenance let them perish. *Refrain*
- ¹⁷ Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.
- ¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- ¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*

Prayer of Confession *Adapted from prayer by Rev. Julie Jensen of First Presbyterian Church, Cartersville, GA*

God whom scripture describes as Love, during Advent and Christmas, we remember Jesus Christ, your gift of love to us and the whole world. We also remember that he commanded us to love one another as much as he loves us. Yet, we struggle to love each other. In fact, we sometimes delight in being hateful, mean, and cruel. Forgive us, God. Send your Holy Spirit to release us from our judgments and fears, and to give us the strength to love as you have commanded.

Time of Silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law Based on Matthew 16

Friends, the good news is this: love is from God, and we are loved by God. Therefore, we are capable of loving one another as Christ loves us; we are capable of becoming friends, as Jesus says in John's gospel:

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

***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

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.” With your light, O God, illuminate what we need to hear today, and give us the strength to love as you have shown us to love.

Scripture Reading

Luke 10:25-28

An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” The law expert answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon Text

1 John 4:7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Is Love Alone Credible?

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word



*Hymn of Response

God Is Love, Let Heav'n Adore Him

1 God is love, let heav'n a - dore him; God is love, let
2 God is love; and love en - folds us, all the world in
3 God is love; and though with blind-ness sin af - flicts all

earth re - joice; let cre - a - tion sing be - fore him and ex -
one em - brace; with un - fail - ing grasp God holds us, ev - 'ry
hu - man life, God's e - ter - nal lov - ing - kind - ness guides us

alt him with one voice. God who laid the earth's foun -
child of ev - 'ry race. And when hu - man hearts are
through our earth - ly strife. Sin and death and hell shall

da - tion, God who spread the heav'n's a - bove, God who breathes through
break - ing un - der sor - row's i - ron rod, then we find that
nev - er o'er us fi - nal tri - umph gain: God is love, so

all cre - a - tion: God is love, e - ter - nal love.
self - same ach - ing deep with - in the heart of God.
love for - ev - er o'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

TEXT: Timothy Rees (1874-1939), alt.

TUNE: Cyril Vincent Taylor (b. 1907). ©1942. Renewal 1970 by Hope Publishing Company
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8.7.8.7.D.
ABBOT'S LEIGH

Profession of Faith *1 John 4:7-12*

One: “Beloved, let us love one another

All: because love is from God;

One: everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

All: Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

One: For God’s love was revealed among us in this way:

All: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

One: In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us,

All: and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

One: Beloved, since God loved us so much,

All: we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; yet, if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us.”

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

*“Love, How a Rose E’er Blooming”
Iteke Prins, organist*

M. Burkhardt

***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

Leader: O Lord,

People: Hear our 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,
forever. Amen.**

***Sending Hymn**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL LM with refrain

Latin, c. 12th century

Stanzas 1-2 trans. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1854

Stanza 3 trans. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916

Adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1854

Accomp. John Weaver, 1988

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
2. O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir - its
3. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind All peo - ples

cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
by Thine ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
in one heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife, and dis - cord

here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
cease; Fill the whole world with heav - en's peace.

continued



Music: Accompaniment © 1990 John Weaver. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude

“Come Now Savior of the Gentiles”
Iteke Prins, organist

A.N. Vetter

CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689

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

Preacher: Rev. Trey Tirpak

Organist: Iteke Prins

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

Today's Scheduled Gathering: Due to several issues, the post-worship gathering scheduled for today hosted by Pastor Trey will be postponed to Sunday, January 15th when the Congregational Meeting will be held.



Poinsettias

Christmas Eve is just around the corner! We have ordered a limited number of poinsettias for the Sanctuary. We would like to continue the tradition of designating a memorial to be listed in the bulletin for Christmas Eve.

If you wish to designate a memorial to be listed, please email the office at fciaofficemanager@gmail.com or call 518-463-4449 with your designation by Wednesday, December 21.

There is a suggested donation of \$10 a plant and any offering toward their cost would be a blessing. Make checks payable to First Church in Albany (Note: Poinsettias) and mail them to First Church in Albany, 110 North Pearl St., Albany NY 12207 or drop them in the offering, marked attention “office”.

Prayer Joys & 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.

**THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR**

Christmas Eve

A Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols
(also on Zoom, see link on our website)

**Saturday
December 24
7pm**

**The First Church in Albany
110 North Pearl St.
Albany NY 12207
518-463-4449**

www.firstchurchinalbany.org

This Week at the First Church in Albany

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|-------------|-------|---------|--|
| • Sunday | 12.18 | 10am | Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom |
| • Monday | 12.19 | 9am | Food Pantry |
| • Tuesday | 12.20 | 12pm | Adult Scripture Study |
| • Wednesday | 12.21 | 9am | Food Pantry |
| | | 12pm | AA Meeting |
| | | 12pm | Centering Prayer |
| • Thursday | 12.22 | 11:30am | Free Soup in the Park |
| • Saturday | 12.24 | 7pm | Christmas Eve, In-person, also on Zoom |
| • Sunday | 12.25 | 10am | Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom
(Pajamas are welcome!) |



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.
- The Pantry will be closed 12.26.22, 12.28.22, and 1.2.23

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

AW = After Worship

GROUP & MINISTRY LEADERS, SEND US YOUR

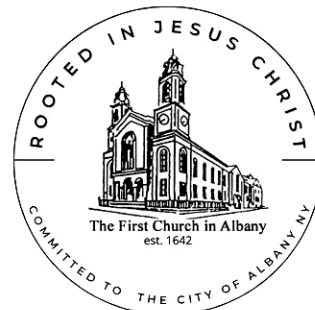
CALENDAR UPDATES

ONE-TIME EVENTS
OR RECURRING MEETINGS

PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE WITH YOUR
SCHEDULED GATHERINGS SO THAT WE CAN PUT
THEM ON THE CHURCH EVENT AND
OPERATIONAL CALENDARS.



EMAIL
OFFICE@FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG
OR CALL
518-463-4449



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