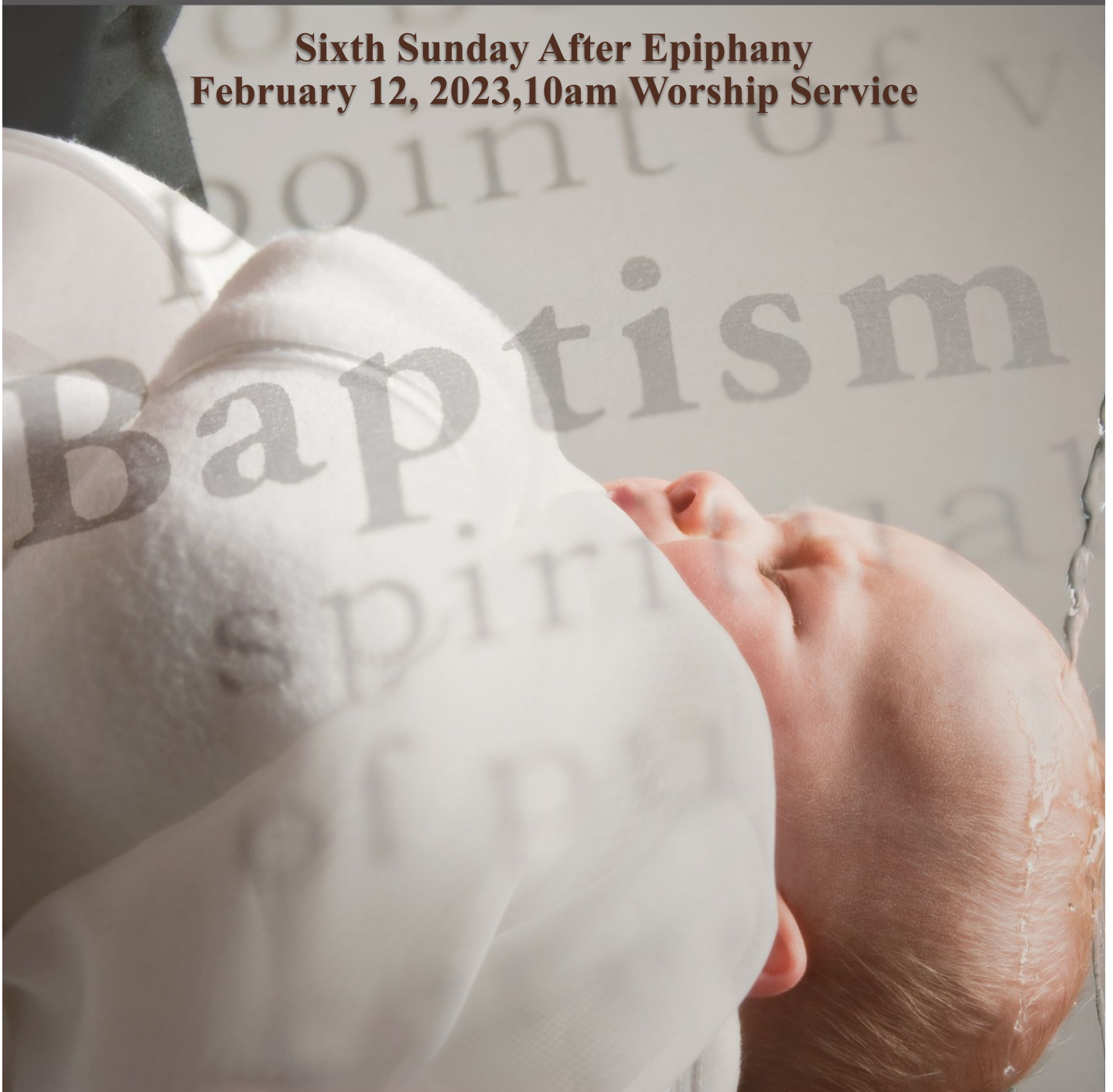


The First Church in Albany

Welcomes you

**Sixth Sunday After Epiphany
February 12, 2023, 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.

Sixth Sunday After Epiphany, February 12, 2023

Prelude Reflection *Matthew 22:37-40*

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Prelude

"Love Divine"
Gloria Norton, organist

D. A. Schack

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

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. **Amen.**

Call to Worship *Psalms 119: 1-8*

Leader: Hear what God says about those who strive to walk in the way of discipleship:

Leader: Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD. Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways. You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.

People: O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous ordinances. I will observe your statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

ALL: Let us praise and worship the Holy One together!

*Opening Hymn In Christ Called to Baptize

1 In Christ called to bap - tize, we wit - ness to grace
 2 In Christ called to ban - quet, one ta - ble we share,
 4 U - nite us, a - noint us, O Spir - it of love,

and gath - er a peo - ple from each land and race.
 a ha - ven of wel - come, a cir - cle of care.
 for you are with - in us, a - round us, a - bove.

In deep, flow - ing wa - ters, we share in Christ's death,
 Al - though we are man - y, we share in one bread.
 E - quip us for ser - vice with gifts you be - stow.

then, ris - ing to new life, give thanks with each breath.
 One cup of thanks - giv - ing pro - claims Christ, our head.
 In Christ is our call - ing. In Christ may we grow.

Written for use at the 1997 meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, this text about Christian vocation and ministry organizes the first three stanzas around verbs: baptize, banquet, witness. The final stanza is a prayer for the Spirit's gifts to empower all these callings.

TEXT: Ruth Duck, 1995
 MUSIC: Welsh folk melody; adapt. in *Caniadau y Cyssegr*, 1839
 Text © 1995 The Pilgrim Press

ST. DENIO
 11.11.11.11

Prayer of Confession

God of all creation, you sent Jesus to make reconciliation possible. Through Christ we are in a loving relationship with you and called to love one another. We confess that despite your command to love our neighbor we build walls in our hearts and our cities. We do not wish to be hurt or vulnerable. We fear the strength of others more than we believe in your wondrous working power. Help us Lord to have courage and live our faith in the world today.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law

L: Hear this good news! Christ is the shining and redeeming light into the pain and sorrow of human sin. In him, we are forgiven, restored, and made new. Thanks be to God: we can make a fresh start today.

ALL: Praise be to You, Lord Christ!

The Sacrament of Baptism (*please refer to pages last 2 pages for baptism liturgy*)

The family of Margo is invited forward to gather around the baptismal font.
The children of the congregation are invited to gather on the front bench.

*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

Matthew 5:21-37

“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment, and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ But I say to you: Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Better with People

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response**

732

The LORD, My Shepherd, Rules My Life

PSALM 23

5 Your goodness and your gracious love pursue me all my days; your house, O LORD, shall be my home—your name, my endless praise. fresh - ing streams; in pas - tures green I feed. his name's sake, he guides my fal - tering feet.

5 Your goodness and your gracious love
pursue me all my days;
your house, O LORD, shall be my home—
your name, my endless praise.

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.*

Special Offering

Once again, need is upon us. The Global Missions of the RCA is already on the ground helping the victims across the world suffering from earthquakes and aftershocks.

Please tell your neighbors and friends that FCIA is collecting from this Sunday until Ash Wednesday. Envelopes will be available.

As our neighbors are living in ashes across the planet may we remember them as we journey towards Ash Wednesday when we remember that from dust we come and to dust we all shall return.

Offertory

*“Jesus, Priceless Treasure”
Gloria Norton, organist*

D. A. Schack

***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 Let This Be My Supreme Desire

PSALM 26

1 Let this be my su-preme de-sire, my ob-ject and my prayer,
2 To lead a blame-less life, O Lord, to trust you with-out fear,
3 To walk be-fore you in the truth, to shun all e-vil ways,
4 Let this be my su-preme de-sire, my ob-ject and my prayer,
un-til I stand be-fore your throne to glo-ri-fy you there:
to bring my hum-ble heart to you and know your love is near:
to come in-to your house to pray and shout a-loud your praise:
un-til I stand be-fore your throne to glo-ri-fy you there!

Chord symbols represent a simplified harmony.

Words: Michael Perry © 1989 The Jubilate Group, admin. Hope Publishing Company

Music (WINCHESTER OLD 8.6.8.6): attr. George Kirbye, 1592, P.D.

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude: From All That Dwell Below the Skies by David a. Schack

Note: You are invited to coffee and refreshments down in Zimmerman Hall to celebrate the baptism of Margo.

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

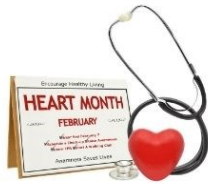
Liturgist: Rev. Trey Tirpak

Organist: Gloria Norton

Vocalist: Sue Fedak

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

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The First Church in Albany

FEBRUARY 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 AA	2 A Night of Worship	3	4
5 FOCUS Service 10:30am 	6 Prayer Shawl Mtg. 11am	Zoom Study noon 7 Consistory Mtg. 6pm	8 AA	9	10	11
12 	13	Zoom Study noon 14 	15 AA 	16 Montessori School Play 6pm	17	18
19 Soup Ministry Planning Mtg. 	20 Office Closed President's Day	Zoom Study noon 21 	22 AA Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26 	27	Zoom Study noon 28	* Combined FOCUS Worship Service, 2.5.23 at 10:30am at First Presbyterian in Albany. See website for details Ash Wednesday Service noon in Chapel Ashes to Go 4:30pm in parking lot			

Key:



Pantry
9am



Centering
Prayer 12pm



Worship
10am



Communion
Sunday



Coffee
Hour



Soup in
the Park
11:30am



Weathervanes
12:30pm

Prayer Joys & Concerns

- Ian Leet
- Roger Monthie, Ned Monthie's brother
- Kokese Ballou
- Janie Unright, friend of the Andrews family
- Carol LaBatte
- Norma McClement
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- Larry McCarthy, friend of the Andrews Family
- David Bradley (it has been requested that contact be by card or email only at this time)
- For all our friends with health issues
- For Jason Shahid
- The family of Danielle, as they approach the year anniversary of her death
- Ruth and Josue Torres
- For Jim, Rose Hunsberger's father
- The Reohr Family
- 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
- Ronald Stockhoff
- 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
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Mary Ann Selmer
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Donna Schultz
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- For the survivors and rescue workers in Turkey and Syria after last week's earthquake. For all who lost loved ones.
- 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.



This from **RCA Global Missions**:

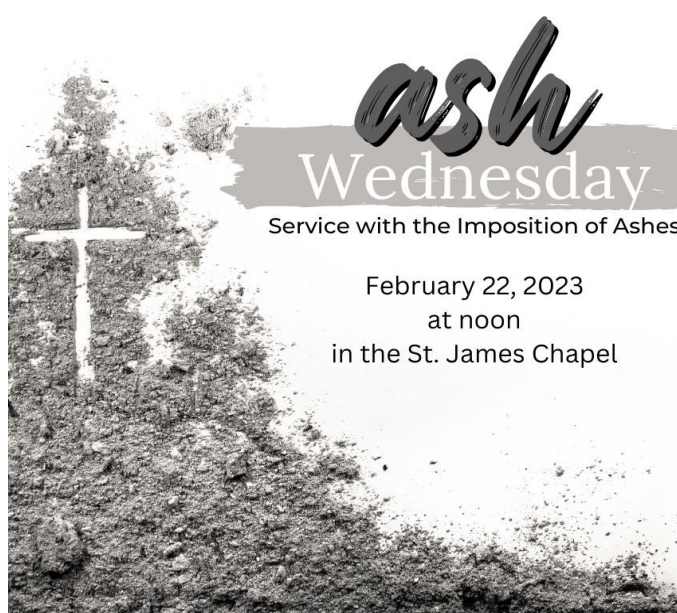
Our hearts broke Monday morning when we saw the devastation of a 7.8 earthquake that rocked Syria and Turkey. In an area of the world where thousands of people are already displaced, we are filled with grief and mourn with our sisters and brothers over the significant loss that has occurred and will continue to be uncovered in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

We are working with two trusted partners to respond to the humanitarian needs that arise and we need your help. We will work closely with **Partners Relief & Development** who have had a strong, long-standing presence in Syria, and local churches on the ground in Southern Turkey that an RCA missionary who formerly served there has established relationships with.

As one pastor in Turkey shared, “It is a time of unity and of loving our neighbors as ourselves. Like Jesus' example of the Good Samaritan, we should strive to serve our neighbors, to heal their wounds, and to help and serve the earthquake victims, especially the family of Christ.”

Envelopes are available if you wish to make an offering toward this cause.

Lent 2023 begins on Wednesday, February 22



We need
your help!

We are collecting Plastic Easter Eggs and Candy in preparation for this year's **Easter Egg Hunt**.

If you can contribute, please bring the items to the Workroom and leave them on the table.

Candy that is individually wrapped preferred, but we will welcome Jelly Beans as well.

Important: Please, no candy with nuts. Thank you!



This Week at the First Church in Albany



♥ Sunday	2.12	10am	Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom
♥ Monday	2.13	9am	Food Pantry
♥ Tuesday	2.14		Valentine's Day
		12pm	Adult Scripture Study
♥ Wednesday	2.15	9am	Food Pantry
		12pm	AA Meeting
		12pm	Centering Prayer
		12:30pm	Weathervanes Gathering
♥ Thursday	2.16	11:30am	Soup & Sandwiches in Clee Park



Upcoming Events

♥ Sunday	2.19	AW	Soup & Sandwich in Clee Park Planning Mtg.
♥ Monday	2.20		President's Day
			Office & Pantry Closed
♥ Wednesday	2.22	noon	Ash Wednesday Service
		4:30pm	Ashes to Go (Sheridan Parking Lot)

AW = After Worship

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



First Church in Albany

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

www.firstchurchinalbany.org



Margo Van Derwerker

Born January 24, 2023

PREPARATION

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28:18-20)

Hear also these words from Holy Scripture:

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Eph. 4:4-6)

Baptism is the sign and seal of God’s promises to this covenant people. In baptism God promises by grace alone: **to forgive our sins; to adopt us into the Body of Christ, the Church; to send the Holy Spirit daily to renew and cleanse us; and to resurrect us to eternal life.**

This promise is made visible in the water of baptism. [Water is poured]
Water cleanses; purifies; refreshes; sustains: *Jesus Christ is living water.*

Through baptism, Christ calls us to new obedience: **to love and trust God completely; to forsake the evil of the world; and to live a new and holy life.**

Yet, when we fall into sin, **we must not despair of God’s mercy, nor continue in sin, for baptism is the sign and seal of God’s eternal covenant of grace with us.**

PRESENTATION

Monica Marsh, Sr. Elder

On behalf of the Board of Elders, I present Cuyler and Eden Van Derwerker who bring Margo to receive the sacrament of baptism.

***PROFESSION OF FAITH**

**I believe in God, the Father
almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only
Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power
of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, died,
and was buried.
He descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father.
He will come again to judge the
living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***BLESSING Numbers 6:24-26**

**The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the
Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
Amen.**

As we continue with the Passing of the Peace, let us welcome Margo and family to the life of First Church.



From Cuyler & Eden: *Margo Cecile Van Derwerker was born 01/24/2023 at St Peter's Hospital in Albany. We are grateful for First Church for baptizing Margo, and we look forward to future fellowship with First Church. Margo's father, Cuyler, grew up attending First Church with his family as a child for about 5 years and has fond memories attending prior to the family moving to Minnesota in 2004. Cuyler and Eden (Hunter) met in Eden's hometown of Minneapolis prior to moving to Albany in 2017. Multiple family lines of the Van Derwerker family were members of First Church over the past three centuries, which makes this occasion all the more meaningful.*