

The First Church in Albany

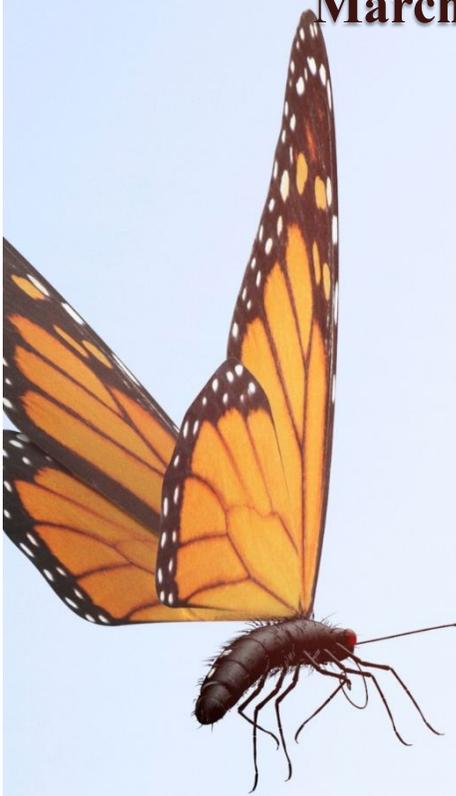
Welcomes you

**Third Sunday in Lent
March 12, 2023, 10am Worship Service**

Just when the
caterpillar
thought the
world was over,
it became a

butterfly.

English Proverb



The First Church in Albany

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.

(Reformed Church in America)

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.

Third Sunday in Lent, March 12, 2023



LENT

Prelude Reflection *Maya Angelou*

If you must look back, do so forgivingly. If you must look forward, do so prayerfully. However, the wisest thing you can do is to be present in the present. Gratefully.

Prelude

“Meditation”

“Meditation”

flute and organ

F. Bridge

arr. A.V. Fedak

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

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing *Lamentations 3:1*

For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.

Lenten Introit & Draping of the Cross (Taizé) X3

Wait for the Lord

Lento ($\text{♩} = 48$)

The musical score is written for piano in G major, 4/4 time, with a tempo of Lento (♩ = 48). It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef staff with notes and a bass clef staff with chords. The lyrics 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.' are written below the notes. The second system also has a treble clef staff with notes and a bass clef staff with chords. The lyrics 'Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!' are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: Em, C, Am6, B in the first system; Em, D, G, Am, B, Em in the second system. Dynamics include piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf).

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Prayer in the spirit of the Taizé Community is a meditative form of common prayer. Gathered in the presence of Christ we sing uncomplicated, repetitive songs, uncluttered by too many words, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity. A few words sung over and over again reinforce the meditative quality of prayer. They express a basic reality of faith that can quickly be grasped by the intellect and that gradually penetrates the whole being. Silence is observed by all prior to the service for prayer and reflection.

Call to Worship Inspired by Psalm 95

Leader: O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

People: For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

Leader: O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

ALL: For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. O that today you would listen to his voice!

*Opening Hymn

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

AUSTRIAN HYMN 8.7.8.7 D

John Newton, 1779; alt.

Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797
Desc. Michael E. Young, 1979

Descant

3. Round each hab - i - ta - tion hov - ering, See the cloud and

1. Glo - rious things of thee are spo - ken, Zi - on, cit - y
2. See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, Spring - ing from e -
3. Round each hab - i - ta - tion hov - ering, See the cloud and

fire ap - pear For a glo - ry

of our God; God, whose word can - not be
ter - nal love, Well sup - ply thy sons and
fire ap - pear For a glo - ry and a

cov - ering, Show - ing that the Lord is near.

bro - ken, Formed thee for a blest a - bode.
daugh - ters And all fear of want re - move.
cov - ering, Show - ing that the Lord is near.

Thus de - riv - ing light by night and

On the rock of a - ges found - ed, What can shake thy
 Who can faint while such a riv - er Ev - er flows their
 Thus de - riv - ing from their ban - ner Light by night and

shade by day, Safe they feed on

sure re - pose? With sal - va - tion's walls sur -
 thirst to as - suage? Grace, which like the Lord the
 shade by day, Safe they feed up - on the

man - na Which God gives them when they pray.

round - ed, Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.
 giv - er, Nev - er fails from age to age.
 man - na Which God gives them when they pray.

Alternate tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH, 461

Prayer of Confession

Lord, we confess that we see the many crises around us today and feel overwhelmed. Like the woman at the well, we often cling to the familiar. We walk long worn paths out of comfort. It is often easier to stick to what and who we know that voyage out on the strength of your call. Help us to not only look back, but to also be present in this day that you have made. Help us Lord to evolve into living as members of your precious body.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law

Hear the assurance of the our Lord, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28 — The New International Version (NIV)

*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.

Children's Message & Blessing *Standing in the Need of Prayer*

Prayer for Illumination *for the season of Lent*

As these ancient words are read, as these stories reach our ears, prepare our hearts for change; confirm, disrupt, disturb. Surprise us!

(John Thornburg, Iteke Prins)

As These Ancient Words Are Read

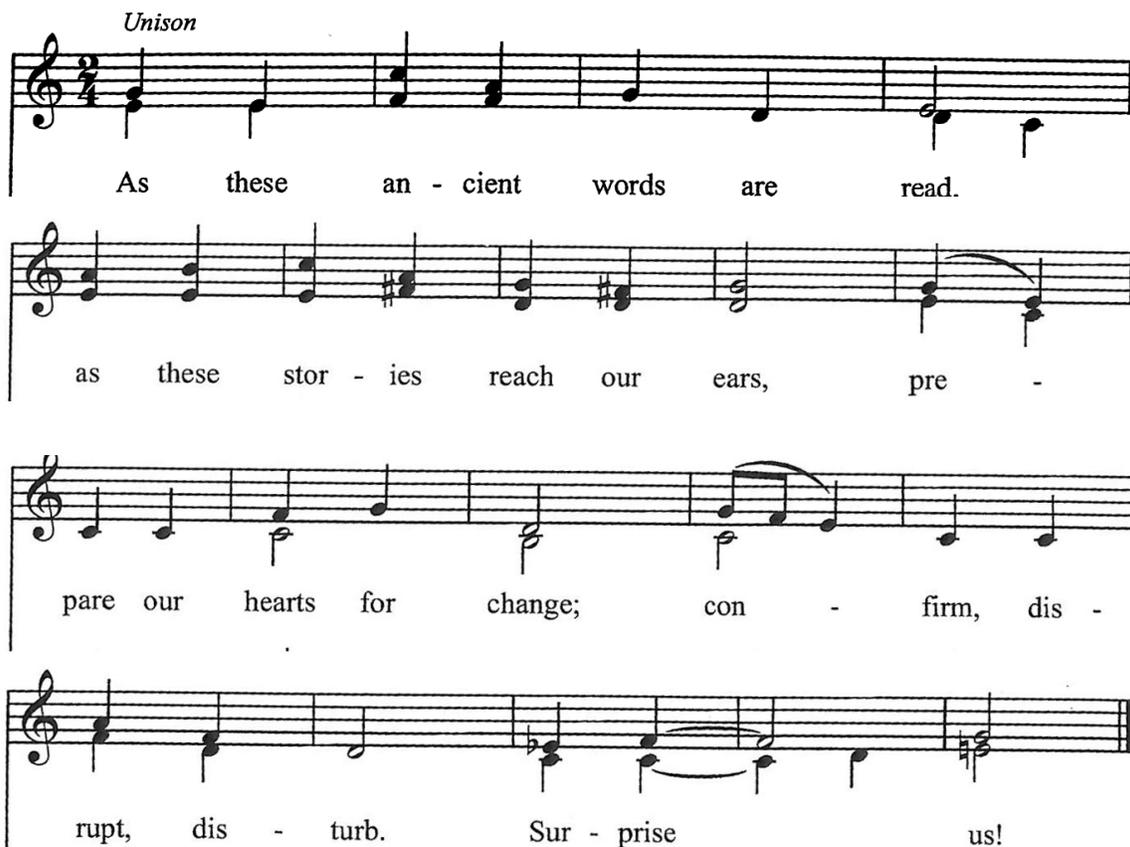
SACRED WORD

Irregular

John Thornburg (b. 1954)

Itেকে Prins

Unison



As these an - cient words are read.
as these stor - ies reach our ears, pre -
pare our hearts for change; con - firm, dis -
rupt, dis - turb. Sur - prise us!

Sermon Text John 4:5-22 (please read until verse 42 at home)

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Evolve: The Answer to Present Challenges

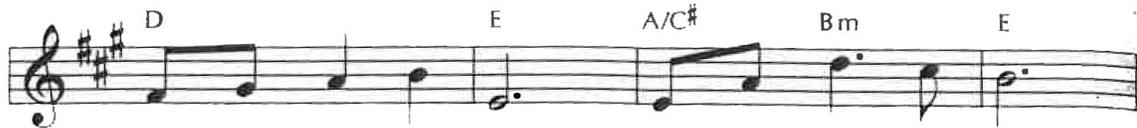
A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response**

Woman in the Night



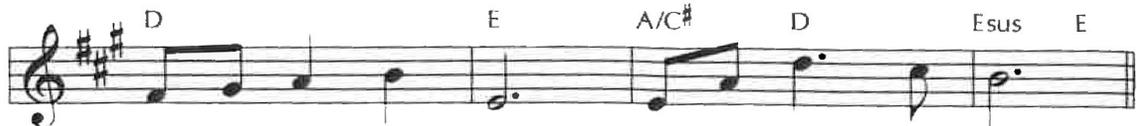
1 Wom-an in the night, spent from giv - ing birth,
 2 Wom-an at the well, ques - tion the Mes - siah;
 3 Wom-an in the house, nur - tured to be meek,
 4 Wom-en on the hill, stand when men have fled;



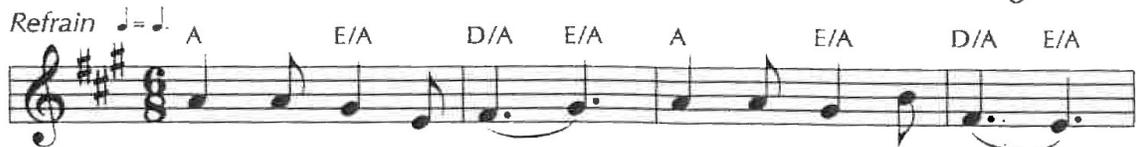
guard our pre - cious light; peace is on the earth.
 find your friends and tell: drink your heart's de - sire!
 leave your sec - ond place, lis - ten, think, and speak!
 Christ needs lov - ing still, though your hope is dead.



Wom-an in the crowd, creep - ing up be - hind,
 Wom-an at the feast, let the righ - teous stare;
 Wom-en on the road, from your sick - ness freed,
 Wom-en in the dawn, care and spic - es bring,



touch - ing is al - lowed: seek and you will find!
 come and go in peace; love him with your hair!
 wit - ness and pro - vide, join - ing word and deed:
 ear - li - est to mourn, ear - li - est to sing!



Refrain
 Come and join the song, wom - en, chil - dren, men.



Je - sus makes us free to live a - gain!

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

Beginning with a reference to Mary giving birth to Jesus, this text describes a series of women who had important encounters with his life, ministry, death, and resurrection. The dancelike refrain celebrates how their experiences reveal that the Good News is for all people.

TEXT: Brian Wren, 1982; rev. 1995
 MUSIC: Alfred V. Fedak, 1989
 Text © 1983, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company
 Music © 1990 Selah Publishing Co., Inc.

NEW DISCIPLES (Fedak)
 5.5.5.5.D with refrain

Profession of Faith *Excerpts regarding the perseverance of the saints from The Canons of Dort: The Fifth Main Point of Doctrine, Articles 8 & 12.*

“So it is not by [our] own merits or strength but by God’s undeserved mercy that we neither forfeit faith and grace totally no remain in their downfalls... **For God’s promises cannot fail; the calling according to God’s purpose cannot be revoked; the merit of Christ as well as his interceding and preserving cannot be nullified; and the sealing of the Holy Spirit can neither be invalidated nor wiped out.**

This assurance of perseverance, however, so far from making [us] proud and carnally self-assured, **is rather the true root of humility, of child-like respect, of genuine godliness, of endurance in every conflict, of fervent prayers, of steadfastness in cross bearing and in confessing the truth, and of well-founded joy in God.** Reflecting on this [assurance] provides an incentive to serious and continual practices of thanksgiving and good works...”

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

“*Andante op.49*”
flute and organ

J.G. Rheinberger

***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

Jesus, Lover of My Soul

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are arranged in four stanzas, each corresponding to a system of music.

1 Je - sus, lov - er of my soul, let me to thy bos - om fly,
2 Oth - er ref - uge have I none; hangs my help - less soul on thee.
4 Plen - teous grace with thee is found, grace to cov - er all my sin.

while the near - er wa - ters roll, while the temp - est still is high.
Leave, ah! leave me not a - lone; still sup - port and com - fort me.
Let the heal - ing streams a - bound; make and keep me pure with - in.

Hide me, O my Sav - ior, hide, till the storm of life is past.
All my trust on thee is stayed; all my help from thee I bring.
Thou of life the foun - tain art; free - ly let me take of thee.

Safe in - to the ha - ven guide. O re - ceive my soul at last!
Cov - er my de - fense - less head with the shad - ow of thy wing.
Spring thou up with - in my heart. Rise to all e - ter - ni - ty.

Originally titled "In Temptation," these four stanzas (of five) call to mind how a spiritual and emotional tempest can move from turmoil to tranquility. This tune was first used with this text in a cantata by the composer in 1910, and since then has become the standard one.

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude

“O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden”

W. Held

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

Liturgist: Rev. Trey Tirpak

Organist: Iteke Prins, organist & choir master

Specialist: Jackie Wright, flutist

Vocalists: Choir

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689

Note: You are invited to coffee and refreshments down in Zimmerman Hall. Today will be the first of the **All Members Series** starting at 11:20. “Grab some joe and get in the know!”

This Lent, we’re encouraging all those who are a part of First Church in any way to participate in our All Members series, which will serve as a “refresher” course on being part of a church and a new member’s class for those who would like to formally join First. Come learn about belonging!

Prayers, Joys & Concerns

- Ian Leet, recovering from health issue
- Imani Brewer, for the passing of her grandfather
- Eula, friend of Joanna Brown
- Patty Salisbury, for the passing of her niece Kimberly
- Marilyn Bonam, Sara's mother
- Sharnelle Jones
- For Mia and Wim Westman
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Kokese Ballou
- Janie Unright, friend of the Andrews family
- Carol LaBatte
- Norma McClement
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- David Bradley
- For Jason Shahid
- 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 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 the recent 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.

Lent Special Services

**FCIA
2023**

ASH WEDNESDAY 2.22.23

- Service in Chapel at noon
- Ashes-to-Go 4:30pm-6pm in parking lot
Drive-up and be blessed!

A SPECIAL NIGHT OF WORSHIP THURS. 3.2.23

- Potluck at 6p; worship at 7pm in the Chapel
Come and get creative with your Lenten Journey!

PALM SUNDAY 4.2.23

- Youth process with palm fronds; gather at back of Sanctuary before service.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE OF SHADOWS 4.6.23

- First Church Sanctuary 6pm

HOLY THURSDAY SERVICE LAST SEVEN WORDS OF CHRIST

- Sweet Pilgrim Baptist Church 7pm (after service at First)

ECOLOGICAL GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE WITH REV. MARK CHAFFIN 4.7.23

- Details TBD

CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ECUMENICAL SERVICE 4.7.23

- Details TBD

HOLY SATURDAY LITURGY & EUCHARIST 4.8.23

- Cathedral of All Saints, Albany 9am

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER 4.8.23

- Cathedral of All Saints, Albany 7pm

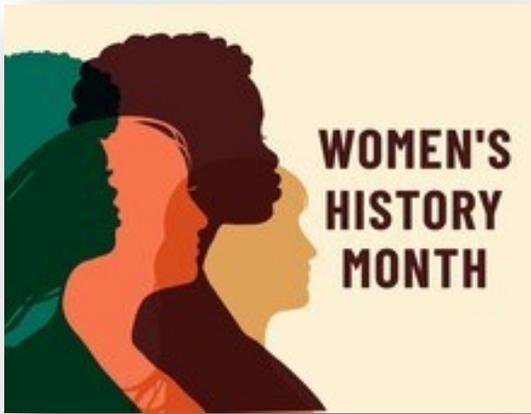
FOCUS SUNRISE SERVICE 4.9.23

- West Capital Park Time TBD

EASTER SUNDAY 4.9.23

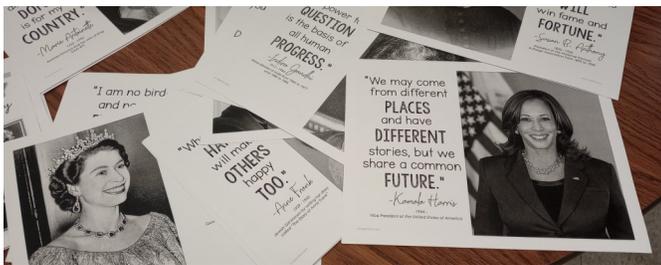
- New members join First Church during the Easter Worship service

Check each week for updates to the schedule.



This week, in honor of Women's History Month, in March. We will be putting up a display on the North Pearl Street fence that provides amazing examples of women who have impacted our world. In the vein of our StoryWalks, please bring your friends and family and enjoy being outdoors and learning about these important contributions.

#firstchurchinmotion



POSTING

VOLUNTEER

NEEDED

Volunteer Christian Education Coordinator

This person would oversee and help coordinate the different aspects of Christian education at First Church. This includes seniors, adults, youth, children and nursery activities.

The ideal person would have a love for learning and sharing the gospel. The ideal volunteer would respect and encourage others to use their gifts in service for the growth of all.



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!

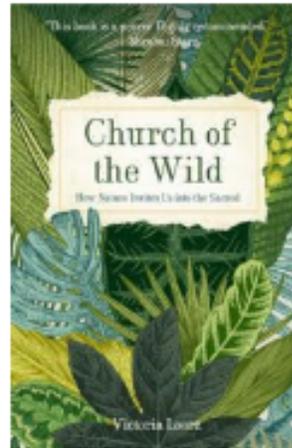
The First Church in Albany

MARCH 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 AA	2 A Night of Worship	3	4
5 AW	6 Prayer Shawl Mtg. 11am	Zoom Study noon Consistory Mtg. 6pm	8 AA	9 	10	11
12 AW 	13	Zoom Study noon 14	15 AA	16 	17 St. Patrick's Day 	18
19 AW	20	Zoom Study noon 21	22 AA	23 	24	25
26 AW	27	Zoom Study noon 28	29 AA	30 	31	
<p><i>Celebrate</i> WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH</p>						

- Key:**
- Pantry 9am
 - Centering Prayer 12pm
 - Worship 10am
 - Communion Sunday
 - Coffee Hour
 - Soup & Sandwiches the Park 11:30am
 - Weather vanes 12:30pm
 - Choir Rehearsal
 - After Worship

Spiritual Study to begin March 15...



Have you been considering reconnecting with nature and rewilding your spirit and spirituality?

Join our six part study of *Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred* by Victoria Loorz, the Co-founder of the Wild Church Network and Center for Wild Spirituality.

Beginning March 15, 2023, we will meet every other Wednesday at 7:00pm (ET) for an hour in-depth discussion that will help you connect with the more-than-human world in a deeper way, commune with the spirit of the wild, and excite you to explore its mysteries in the manner of Terry Tempest Williams, Mary Oliver, Henry David Thoreau, and John Muir.

Obtain your copy of *Church of the Wild* wherever you purchase books and sign up here. Spaces are limited so please contact us today.

Co-facilitators – Penny Brink and Mark Chaffin of Fellowship of the Sacred Earth (Glens Falls, NY) who have studied with Victoria Loorz and completed the program from the Center for Wild Spirituality.

To register: email Mark Chaffin at waveriderk1@gmail.com or sign up on the Fellowship of the Sacred Earth website: <https://fellowshipofthesacredearth.org>.

