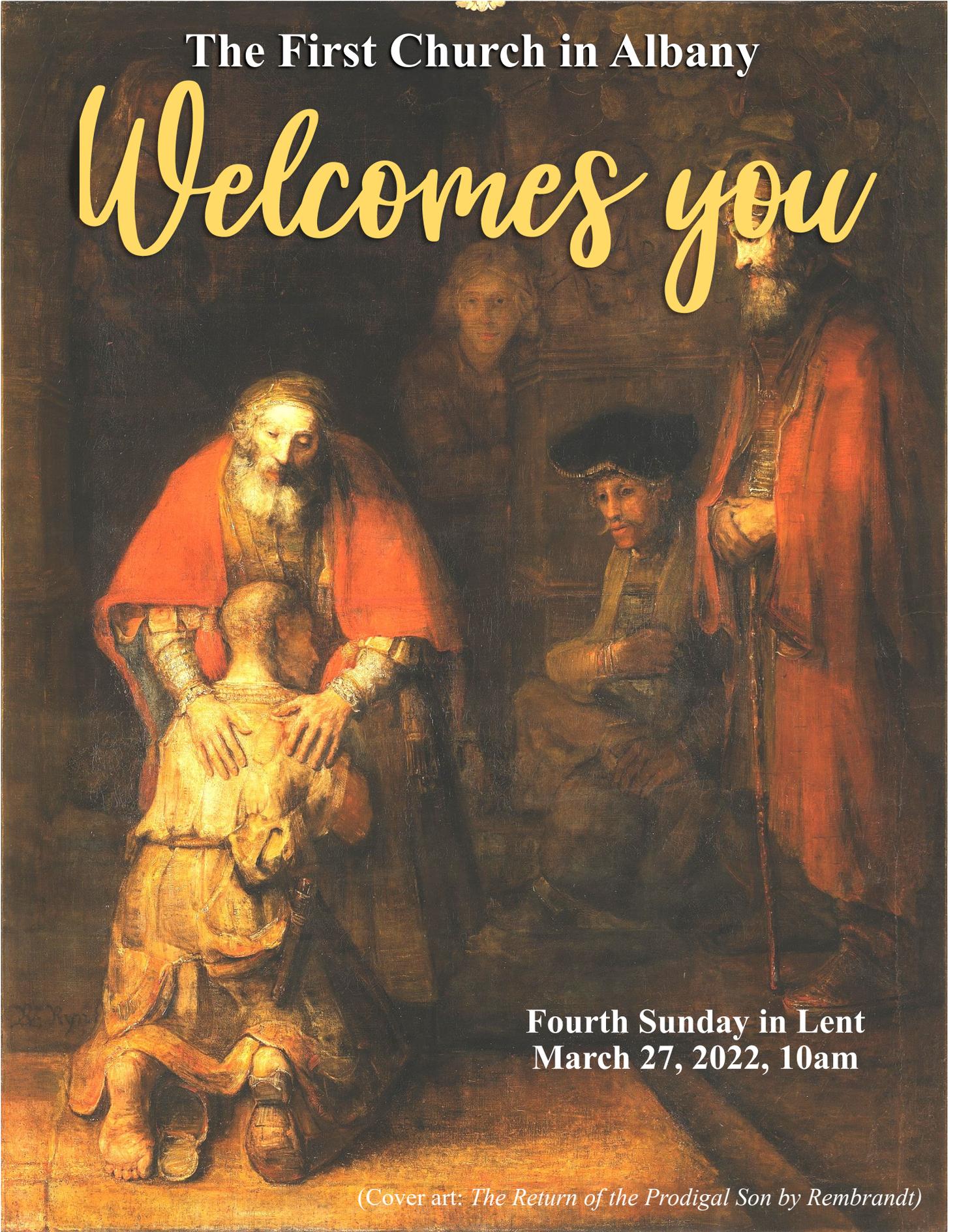


The First Church in Albany

Welcomes you

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 27, 2022, 10am

(Cover art: *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Rembrandt)



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 Lent March 27, 2022

Prelude

Prelude on "ST. COLUMBA"
Iteke Prins, organist

H. Willan

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." 2 Corinthians 13:14

Lenten Introit & Draping of the Cross

v. 1 & 4

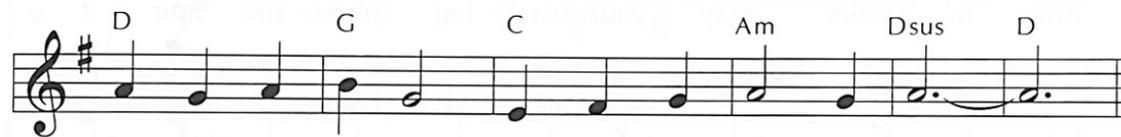
Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness Christ, Be Our Light



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
3 Long-ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for
4 Long-ing for shel - ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for
5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
has power to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
to one an - oth - er, mak - ing your king - dom come.



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

By blending biblical images and current vignettes in the present tense, this hymn connects Christ's promise that he is the Light of the world (John 8:12, 9:5) and his charge to his followers to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). This is part of the church's servant calling.

TEXT and MUSIC: Bernadette Farrell, 1993
Text and Music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell (Published by OCP)

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT
9.8.9.6 with refrain

Call to Worship Based on Psalm 23 & Reformed Worship Resources

Leader: We rejoice in the One who leads us beside still waters,

People: and refreshes our souls.

Leader: Christ our Shepherd shows us the way we should go,

People: so that the name of God will be glorified.

Leader: Though all manner of evil befall us, we will not be afraid,

People: for the Good Shepherd of our lives is with us.

Leader: Surely Christ's goodness and mercy shall follow us, all the days of our lives,

People: and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever!

Leader: Let us sing praises to our Shepherd, the King of Love!

*Opening Hymn

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

(Psalm 23)

1 The King of love my shep-herd is, whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow my ran - somed
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul he lead - eth, and where the ver - dant
love he sought me, and on his shoul - der
Lord, be - side me; thy rod and staff my

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
com - fort still, thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

Since its creation in the mid-19th century, this text has been one of the favorite paraphrases of Psalm 23 in the English-speaking world. That popularity increased in the early 20th century when *The English Hymnal*, 1906, first joined these words to this flowing Irish melody.

Prayer of Confession *by Mary Petrina Boyd*

Good Shepherd, we take your care for granted. In the midst of your many blessings, we complain of not having enough. In the presence of danger, we fail to trust your abiding love. When you set a table before us, we turn aside from you. Call us back into your care and help us trust your caring presence, that our actions may proclaim your truth. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

First Church, hear this good news: God in Christ has already forgiven us, and know that “goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives.” Live in this peace.



***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

God our Father, teach us these texts anew today. Hug us with these texts, and remind us that our true home is always with you. Amen.

First Reading

Genesis 46:28-34

Israel sent Judah ahead to Joseph to lead the way before him into Goshen. When they came to the land of Goshen, Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. He presented himself to him, fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. Israel said to Joseph, “I can die now, having seen for myself that you are still alive.” Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, ‘My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. The men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.’ When Pharaoh calls you, and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our ancestors’—in order that you may settle in the land of Goshen, because all shepherds are abhorrent to the Egyptians.”

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Short Musical Interlude

Second Reading

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Lookin' for Love in All the Wrong Places

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

*Hymn of Response Help Us Accept Each Other

1 Help us ac - cept each oth - er as Christ ac - cept - ed us;
 2 Teach us, O Lord, your les - sons, as in our dai - ly life
 3 Let your ac - cept - ance change us, so that we may be moved
 4 Lord, for to - day's en - coun - ters with all who are in need,

teach us as sis - ter, broth - er each per - son to em - brace.
 we strug - gle to be hu - man and search for hope and faith.
 in liv - ing sit - u - a - tions to do the truth in love,
 who hun - ger for ac - cept - ance, for right - eous - ness and bread,

Be pres - ent, Lord, a - mong us and bring us to be - lieve
 Teach us to care for peo - ple, for all, not just for some,
 to prac - tice your ac - cept - ance un - til we know by heart
 we need new eyes for see - ing, new hands for hold - ing on;

we are our - selves ac - cept - ed, and meant to love and live.
 to love them as we find them, or as they may be - come.
 the ta - ble of for - give - ness, and laugh - ter's heal - ing art.
 re - new us with your Spir - it, Lord, free us, make us one!

Words: Fred Kaan, 1975, © 1975 Hope Publishing Company
 Music (NYLAND 7.6.7.6 D): Finnish; harm. David Evans (1874-1948) from the *Revised Church Hymnary*,
 1927, reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, shap - er of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - ery land be clothed and fed.
 for peo - ple ev - ery - where, that all may live.
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

Greater awareness has enlarged Christian stewardship to develop new dimensions of concern for people in all parts of the world. Because we believe that it is God's will that the gifts we have received should be shared, this hymn concludes with that phrase from the Lord's Prayer.

TEXT: Georgia Harkness, 1955, alt.
 MUSIC: Felice de Giardini, 1769, alt.
 Text © 1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Company)

ITALIAN HYMN
 6.6.4.6.6.6.4

Offering & Offertory *“My Spirit Dry as Desert Land”*
Iteke Prins, organist

***Doxology #592**

**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.**

O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high, be - yond all
 2 For us bap - tized, for us he bore his ho - ly
 3 For us by wick - ed - ness be - trayed, for us, in
 4 For us he rose from death a - gain; for us he
 5 All glo - ry to our Lord and God, for love so

thought and fan - ta - sy, that God, the Son of
 fast and hun - gered sore; for us tempt - ta - tions
 crown of thorns ar - rayed, he bore the shame - ful
 went on high to reign; for us he sent the
 deep, so high, so broad: the Trin - i - ty whom

God, should take our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake.
 sharp he knew, for us, the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
 cross and death; for us gave up his dy - ing breath.
 Spir - it here to guide, to strength - en, and to cheer.
 we a - dore for - ev - er and for - ev - er - more.

Reducing a twenty-three-stanza Latin text to these five English stanzas intensifies this survey of the mystery of the Incarnation and strengthens the repeated reminder that all was done "for us." A comparable tone of proclamation animates this 15th-century song celebrating a military victory.

TEXT: Thomas à Kempis, 15th cent.; trans. Benjamin Webb, 1854, alt.
MUSIC: "The Agincourt Song," c. 1415; harm. Alfred V. Fedak, 1993
Music Harm. © 1993 Selah Publishing Co., Inc.

DEO GRACIAS
LM
(alternate harmonization, 189)

***Charge & Benediction** (from the Franciscan Billabong Community)

May God bless you with Discomfort...
at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships,
So that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with Anger...
at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless you with Tears...to shed for those who suffer from pain,
rejection, starvation, and war
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them
and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness...
to believe that you can make a difference in this world,
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done. Amen.

Postlude

*“DEO GRACIAS”
Iteke Prins, organist*

G. Lachenauer

Worship Leadership:

Preacher: Rev. Trey Tirpak
Liturgist: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston
Guest Organist: Iteke Prins
Vocalist: Members of the First Church Choir
Technical Team: Joshua Bliss, and Stephen Reohr

CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689

Taizé Service: In light of the violence of war, come to a time of prayer for peace, song, and contemplation at **4pm today** in the Stephen James Chapel.



PRAYER REQUEST

WE ARE HERE TO PRAY FOR YOU



- Norma McClement
- Joan, friend of Karen Van Epps who was injured in a fire
- Norma and Leo, neighbors of Audrey Ming
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Joe Vasta, friend of the Persons family
- Family of Nathaniel Marable
- Mary Ann Selmer
- For the family of Danielle as they mourn her passing, friends of the Andrews kids
- For Katherine's grandmother
- For the friends and family of Nat Phipps (of the Nat Phipps Jazz Trio) at his passing
- Carol LaBatte
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Jane, sister of Donna Schultz
- Elaine and Jim Jenks, Rose Hunsberger's parents
- Peter, Karen Van Epps' brother
- Charnelle Jones
- Jeff Curry
- Samuel, Barb Andrew's son
- Brian, the Andrew's son-in-law
- Haleigh Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Neil Keen
- Fran Carr Morton
- Harriet Stockhoff
- Kathy Stallmer (Monthie family)
- Cheryl Gowie
- Steve Hoffman
- Ada Harris
- Gwen, friend of Becky Gardner
- Charles Welge
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- Prayers for the people and leaders of Ukraine. For the countries accepting those fleeing the violence. For thoughtful and productive resolution immediately.

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



FOUNDED IN 1642
"OLDEST PULPIT IN AMERICA"

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

www.firstchurchinalbany.org