

The First Church in Albany

# Welcomes you

Second Sunday in Lent  
March 5, 2023, 10am Worship Service

**WITH GOD,  
EVERY MOMENT  
IS  
THE MOMENT  
OF  
BEGINNING AGAIN.**

Catherine Doherty

# 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.

# **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.

## **Second Sunday in Lent, March 5, 2023**



# **LENT**

### **Prelude Reflection** *Begin Again (p. 24 Seeking a Lenten Devotional)*

In the deep night of the soul  
Rich in questions, yearning for Life that matters  
far beyond picket fences and front lawns.  
When we tire of life mundane we can still begin again.

In the sunset of our life,  
after years of joy and strife as we ponder legacy,  
wondering what we will leave  
When the lights are growing dim we can still begin again.

Every moment, every hour,  
Spirit gifts us with the power to begin our life a new  
What then will we choose to do?  
Close a chapter, lift the pen to once more begin again.

**Prelude**

*“Blessed Assurance”*  
*Iteke Prins, organist*

R. Hobby

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

## Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing *Lamentations 3:22-23*

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

## Lenten Introit & Draping of the Cross (Taizé)

### Wait for the Lord

**Lento** (♩ = 48)

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 *Psalms 121*

**Leader:** I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come?

**People:** My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

**Leader:** The LORD will not let your foot be moved; the One who keeps you will not slumber. The One who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

**People:** The LORD is my keeper; the LORD is my shade at my right hand.  
The sun shall not strike me by day, nor the moon by night.

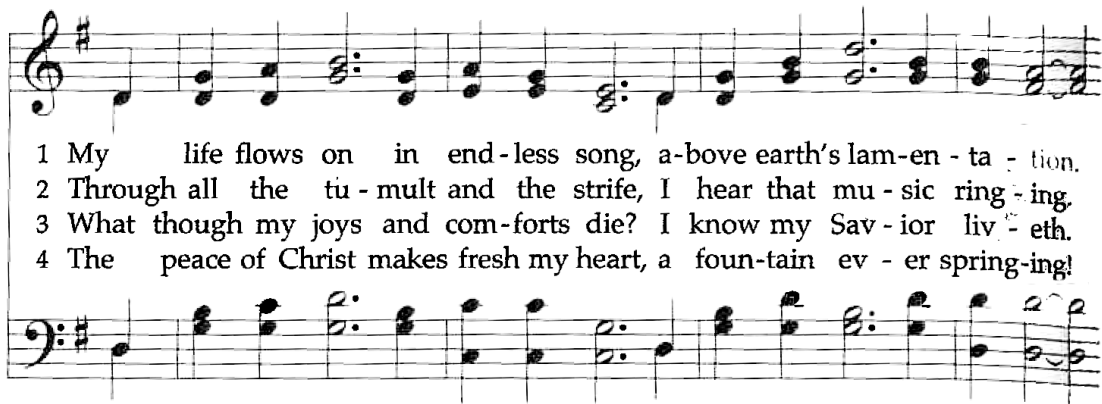
**Leader:** The LORD will keep you from all evil; the LORD will keep your life.  
The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.



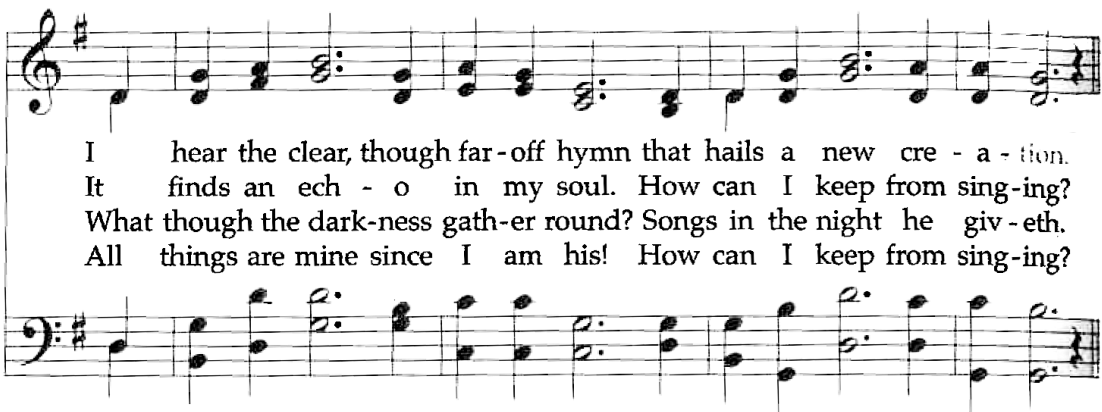
\*Opening Hymn

# My Life Flows On

## How Can I Keep from Singing?

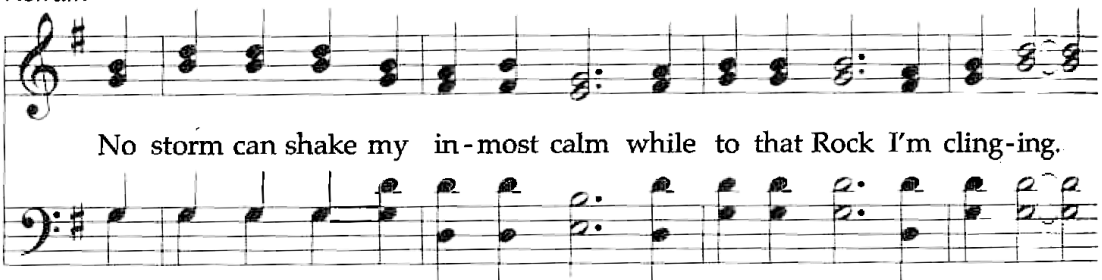


1 My life flows on in end-less song, a-bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion.  
2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu - sic ring - ing.  
3 What though my joys and com-forts die? I know my Sav - ior liv - eth.  
4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing!



I hear the clear, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.  
It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?  
What though the dark-ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv-eth.  
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

### Refrain



No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.



Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

In the *New York Observer* of August 27, 1868, this text was titled "Always Rejoicing," and was attributed to "Pauline T." This may well be where the Baptist pastor and musician to whom it is usually credited encountered the words that he later published with his tune.

## Prayer of Confession

Dear Lord, we confess that most days we do not feel like beginning again. We are often comfortable in our discomfort. Even though we may be sick and tired of being sick and tired, it is easier to embrace the same thinking. We admit that our lives, communities, and families have become unmanageable. So, today we present ourselves to you, a power greater than ourselves. Help us to begin again. Amen.

*Time of silence*

## Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law

"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." Hear the call of the Lord in the wilderness, and know it is saying you are forgiven. Let this empower you as you wrestle in life so you might live in Christ's 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.

## Children's Message & Blessing

### 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

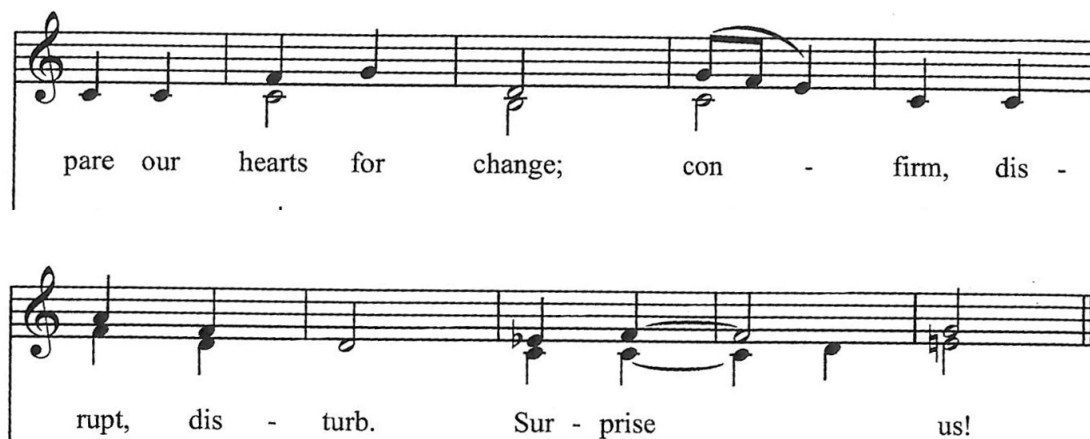
John Thornburg (b. 1954)

Iteke Prins

*Unison*

As these an - cient words are read,

as these stor - ies reach our ears, pre -



## Sermon Text

John 3:1-17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"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.

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

Sermon

*Begin Again*

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

**\*Hymn of Response      To God Be the Glory**

TO GOD BE THE GLORY    11.11.11.11 with refrain

Fanny Jane Crosby, 1875

William Howard Doane, 1875

1. To God be the glo - ry, great things He hath done!  
2. Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,

So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
And great our re - joic - ing through Je - sus the Son;

Who yield - ed His life an a - tone - ment for sin,  
But pur - er, and high - er, and great - er will be

And o - pened the life - gate that all may go in.  
Our won - der, our trans - port, when Je - sus we see.



*Refrain*

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,

And give Him the glory: great things He hath done!

**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**

*“Closer Walk”  
Iteke Prins, organist*

R. Hobby

**\*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.**

**Eucharistic Anthem**

**He Came Down**

The musical score for 'He Came Down' is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are: 'He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.' The score includes three systems of music. The first system has the lyrics 'He came down that we may have love; he'. The second system has the lyrics 'came down that we may have love; he came down that we may'. The third system has the lyrics 'have love; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.' The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp, a 4/4 time signature, and triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a bracket) in the Soprano and Alto parts. The lyrics are written below the corresponding musical staves.

*Additional stanzas:*

- 2 ... that we may have peace
- 3 ... that we may have joy

Because this traditional Cameroon piece begins with the refrain, it does not initially reveal that it is cast as a call-and-response song. Assigning the answers to the congregation rather than to the leader is a notable affirmation of the corporate wisdom of God's people.

TEXT: Cameroon song  
MUSIC: Cameroon melody; transcr. and arr. John L. Bell, 1986  
Music Arr. © 1986 WGRC, Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

HE CAME DOWN  
LM

## The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

### Communion Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### Sanctus

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

### Mystery of the Faith

**Christ has died!**

**Christ has risen!**

**Christ will come again!**

### Celebration of Communion

#### Intercession

We, indeed, praise and thank you, O Lord, that you have fed us at your Table. Grateful for this gift and mindful of the communion of your saints, here and in all places, we offer to you our prayers for all people:

*Prayers offered*

### 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.**

## Just a Closer Walk with Thee



Refrain Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it,  
1 I am weak, but thou art strong; Je - sus,  
2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I  
3 When my fee - ble life is o'er, time for

Je - sus, is my plea, dai - ly walk - ing close to  
keep me from all wrong; I'll be sat - is - fied as  
fal - ter, Lord, who cares? Who with me my bur - den  
me will be no more; guide me gent - ly, safe - ly

thee: let it be, dear Lord, let it be.  
long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. Ref.  
shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. Ref.  
o'er to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore. Ref.

The chromatic musical style of this anonymous short hymn suggests that it probably dates from the early 20th century. It also seems to owe much of its popularity to radio broadcasts and recordings as well as to evangelistic meetings and singing conventions of that era.



## \*Charge & Blessing

### Postlude

*“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”*

W. Held

**Preacher:** Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

**Liturgist:** Rev. Trey Tirpak

**Organist:** Iteke Prins

**Vocalists:** Choir

**Audio/Visual:** Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

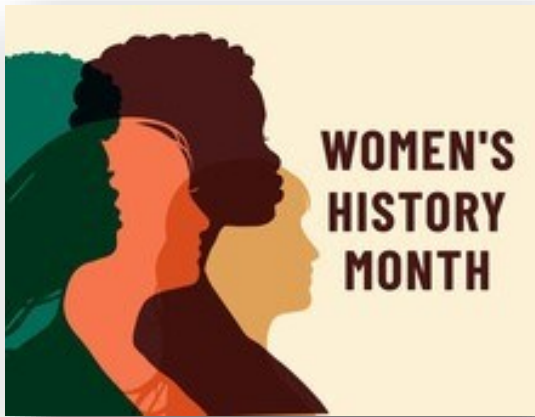
*CCLI License #463379; One License #A-700689*

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!”

## *Prayers, Joys & Concerns*

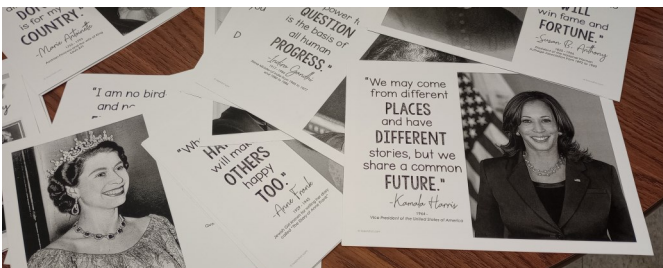
- Eula, friend of Joeanna Brown
- Marilyn Bonam, Sara's mother
- Barbara R., friend of Barb Andrews
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Ian Leet
- Kokese Ballou
- Janie Unright, friend of the Andrews family
- Carol LaBatte
- Norma McClement
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- Larry McCarthy, friend of the Andrews Family
- David Bradley
- For Jason Shahid
- The family of Danielle, for 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](mailto:office@firstchurchinalbany.org).*



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	
Celebrate <b>WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH</b>						

Key:

Pantry 9am	Centering Prayer 12pm	Worship 10am	Communion Sunday	Coffee Hour	Soup in the Park 11:30am	Weathervanes 12:30pm	After Worship



## This Week at the First Church in Albany

- |             |     |                     |   |
|-------------|-----|---------------------|---|
| • Sunday    | 3.5 | 10am<br>AW          | Indoor Worship at FCIA, also on Zoom<br>All Members' Class —<br>Zimmerman |
| • Monday    | 3.6 | 9am<br>11:30am      | Food Pantry<br>Prayer Shawl Meeting                                       |
| • Tuesday   | 3.7 | noon<br>6pm         | Zoom Book Study<br>Consistory Meetings (soup at 5:30pm)                   |
| • Wednesday | 3.8 | 9am<br>noon<br>noon | Food Pantry<br>AA Meeting<br>Centering Prayer in the Chapel               |
| • Thursday  | 3.9 | 11:30am             | Soup & Sandwiches in Clee Park  |

*AW = After Worship*

### Updated Info

- Daylight Savings begins on March 12. Move your clocks ahead an hour.
- See p. 2 for all of the Holy Week Events.
- The 9Up ministry is now meeting every Sunday with the exception of the first Sunday of the month (Communion Sunday).

\*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](http://www.firstchurchinalbany.org)