

The First Church in Albany

February 8, 2026, 10am

**DO JUSTICE,
LOVE KINDNESS,
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR**

GOD

The First Church in Albany (RCA)

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.

Prelude

"Amazing Grace"

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

Tolling of Bell

Welcome, Announcement, & Blessing

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Grace to you and peace from God our Creator and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Call to Worship *inspired by Genesis 22: 1-14; Micah 6:8; Deuteronomy 6:5*

Leader: What does the Lord require of you?

People: To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

Leader: What does God command of us?

People: To love God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our mind, and all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Leader: God does not call us to ease or to comfort.

People: But to presence, abundance, and grace in our struggle.

Leader: Let us worship the God who believes in us, and trusts in us, and abides with us.

People: Let us worship the God who will ask much of us, but will be beside us every step of the way.

Call to Confession:

Holy God,
we do not deserve to be in your dwelling place. We have not led a blameless life. We have not done what is right in your sight or spoken the truth that you have sealed in our hearts. We have done evil to both those we love and to those we refuse to love as we should. We have not been faithful stewards of that which we have been blessed and have hoarded that which should be shared with the least of these. Hear our cry, God of our hope, as we confess that which weighs us down...

Prayer of Confession *Unison (inspired by Psalm 15)*

**Redeeming God,
save us from our foolishness and guide us to your wisdom.
Gather us in your righteousness and redemption. Forgive us for we are seeking your light and your salvation. Cleanse us of our brokenness that we might do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Amen.**

Time of silence and reflection

Assurance of Pardon

Because we are not worthy to enter God’s dwelling, God came to dwell with us through the body and being of God’s Son, Jesus Christ.
Christ came to be with us, amongst us, and for us. Hear the good news of the Gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Alleluia! Amen!

***Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet one another with Christ’s peace.

(Don’t forget to wave to those worshipping from home!)

Children’s Message & Blessing

Prayer for Illumination

O God,
you spoke your word and revealed your good news in Jesus, the Christ. Fill all creation with that word again, so that by proclaiming your joyful promises to all nations and singing of your glorious hope to all peoples, we may become one living body, your incarnate presence on the earth. Amen.

Scripture Reading Micah 6:1-8

Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the LORD has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel.

O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him,

and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

“With what shall I come before the LORD and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Text 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon title "Clowning Around" Rev. Dr. Mark Mast

Hymn of Response "Now Thank We All Our God" #643 NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT
See p. 8

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

Profession of Faith - (Inspired by the Belhar Confession)

Leader: We believe in the triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, who gathers, protects and cares for his Church by his Word and his Spirit, as He has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

People: We believe in one holy, universal Christian Church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another. That unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the Church of Jesus Christ.

Leader: This unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another;

People: that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind; have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one Name; are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope.

ALL: To the one and only God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.

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 "For the Beauty of Each Hour" Alfred V. Fedak (b. 1953)

***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.**

***Offertory Prayer**

God is the giver of every good gift, pouring out grace upon grace on us and our world. We give back a portion of those gifts in humility and thanksgiving. Amen.

~ The Sacrament of Communion ~

Meaning of the Sacrament

Invitation

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!

The Mystery of Faith

Christ has died!

Christ has risen!

Christ will come again!

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Intercession

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.**

*Sending Hymn

"Be Thou My Vision" #339

SLANE

(from Hymns, Psalms & Special Songs)

See p. 9

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude

"Pasticcio"

Jean Langlais

Today's Hymns are found in the Glory to God Hymnal unless otherwise noted.

Today's organ Prelude and Postlude were composed by the great Parisian organist Jean Langlais. Blind from birth, he became one of the 20th century's leading organ composers. Langlais composed his setting of "Amazing Grace" after hearing the hymn sung in Notre Dame Cathedral by Joan Baez. His wife Marie-Louise transcribed the composer's Braille manuscript into conventional notation for publication.

Note: Join us in Zimmerman Hall after worship for Coffee Hour!

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mark Mast
Liturgist: Ned Monthie
Organist: Alfred Fedak

Worship Techs: Joshua Bliss,
Stephen Reohr

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For the Beauty of the Earth 14

1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;

for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

THANKSGIVING

643 Now Thank We All Our God

1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voic - es,
 2 O may this boun - teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in high - est heav - en,

who won - drous things hath done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
 with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us;
 to Fa - ther and to Son and Spir - it now be giv - en:

who, from our moth - ers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
 and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 the one e - ter - nal God, whom heaven and earth a - dore,

with count - less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 the God who was, and is, and shall be ev - er - more.

Although this hymn is often used on large and festive occasions, its first two stanzas had much humbler beginnings: they originated as a family table prayer during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). These words have been associated with this tune since the mid-17th century.

339

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE 10.10.9.10

Ancient Irish poem
 Trans. Mary E. Byrne, 1905
 Vers. Eleanor Hull, 1912; alt.

Irish ballad
 Harm. David Evans, 1927

1. Be Thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2. Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 3. Be Thou my wis - dom, and Thou my true word;

Nought be all else to me, save that Thou art—
 Thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 I ev - er with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;

Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
 Thou and Thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

Wak - ing or sleep - ing, Thy pres - ence my light.
 Great God of heav - en, my trea - sure Thou art.
 Still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Music: Harmonization from the *Revised Church Hymnary 1927*. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.

Prayer LIST

as of 2.3.26



Indicates a new request

Current Joys & Concerns

- For all those impacted by the cold and winter weather.
- For Holly Allen, recently hospitalized with a serious illness and is now home recovering
- For Jim Gallagher, son-in-law of Joyce Recene
- For Jill Busman, continuing medical treatment, and for her husband, Kent, as he supports her

GiveThanks



- For the Food Pantries of the Capital District and their efforts in partnership with many pantries like ours, to provide delivery for those who are not able to physically get to their pantry.
- For our coming together in worship, and the to praise God
- The Church of today, and the Church of the future.

Ongoing Needs

- Olivia Gaydushek
- Mia Westman
- For our broken world, may the example of Jesus Christ lead us all to choose our words and actions from hearts of love and justice
- For the food insecure wrestling with loss of benefits, and for pantries and food banks as they try to fill the needs
- For all those impacted by mass-shooting incidents, for peace and comfort

(To add an item to the prayer chain, contact the minister, the office or a member of consistory.)

Note: Prayer concerns will be kept on the list for 4 Sundays. Please let the office or a member of Consistory know if a concern needs to be kept on after that.

SOUP & SANDWICHES

Wednesday

11:30am - 1pm

Clee Park

FREE

Join us in the park for lunch. Fresh homemade soup and sandwiches. Free to all. Caring for our neighbors.

If you would like to volunteer to serve on a Wednesday, please contact office@firstchurchinalbany.org






#firstchurchinmotion

cutie be mine love u

February 2026



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

<p>MARCH 2026</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</p> <p>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</p> <p>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>29 30 31</p>	 <p>Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18</p>	 <p>2026 Winter Olympics Friday, February 6 through Saturday, February 22</p>				
<p>1</p> <p>FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY</p> <p>Combined Winter Worship Service at Westminster Presbt. 10am</p> <p>No service at FCIA</p>	<p>2</p> <p>WiFi Project begins</p>  <p>Groucho Day</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>  <p>Prayer Shawl Mtg 11:30am</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Soup & Sandwiches 11:30am</p>  <p>Centering Prayer 12pm</p>  <p>AA 12pm</p> <p>WMA Mtg. 5:30pm</p>	<p>5</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>10am</p>  <p>Castle Island Bilingual Montessori Play 5pm</p>
<p>8</p>  <p>Indoor Worship 10am</p>  <p>Communion Sunday</p>  <p>Coffee Hour</p>  <p>Castle Island Bilingual Montessori Play 2pm</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p> <p>Consistory 5:30pm</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>Soup & Sandwiches 11:30am</p>  <p>Centering Prayer 12pm</p>  <p>Weather vanes 12:30pm</p>  <p>AA 12pm</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>  <p>10am</p>  <p>Happy Valentine's Day</p>
<p>15</p>  <p>Indoor Worship 10am</p>  <p>Coffee Hour</p>	<p>16</p>  <p>PRESIDENT'S DAY</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>17</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p> <p>Mardi Gras</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>Soup & Sandwiches 11:30am</p>  <p>AA 12pm</p> <p>Ash Wednesday</p>	<p>19</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>  <p>10am</p>
<p>22</p>  <p>Indoor Worship 10am</p>  <p>Coffee Hour</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>Soup & Sandwiches 11:30am</p>  <p>Centering Prayer 12pm</p>  <p>AA 12pm</p>	<p>26</p>  <p>Pantry 9am</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>  <p>10am</p>

Key:













Information as of 1.21.26. Calendar subject to updates.

**CALENDAR
OF EVENTS**
THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

**FEBRUARY
2026**



**TUE
10**

PANTRY  **CONSISTORY**

**9AM
5:30PM**

**WED
11**

SOUP & SANDWICHES

11:30AM

IN CLEE PARK

CENTERING PRAYER

NOON

IN THE POWELL RM

AA MEETING

IN THE PARLOR

NOON

WEATHERVANES

IN ZIMMERMAN HALL

12:30PM

**THU
12**

PANTRY 

9AM

**SAT
14**

KEYS FOR KIDS

10AM

**SUN
15**

WORSHIP

SANCTUARY

10AM

COFFEE HOUR **IN ZIMMERMAN HALL**

10:45AM

FOR MORE INFO VISIT US AT WWW.FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG



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