

The First Church in Albany



Sunday, May 18, 2025, 10am

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.

Prelude Reflection *Version by Civil War Troops*

Ride on, King Jesus, no man can a-hinder we
Ride on, King Jesus, ride on.
No man can a-hinder we

Prelude

Tolling of the Bell

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing II Corinthians 13:14

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
Amen.

Call to Worship *ased on Psalm 48*

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

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! Young men and women alike, old and young together! Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!

*Opening Hymn

“O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

See p. 7

Prayer of Confession *from faithandworship.com*

O Lord, you love us without questioning, heal and bring wholeness without prejudice. Embrace us as a parent would their child. Forgive us when we forget, feel isolated or alone, and don't know where to turn. Forgive us when we fail you, choose those we minister to, or do not listen to your Word. You love us without questioning. May we bring compassion, healing and peace, without prejudice, to all those to whom you lead us. Amen.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon Revelation 21:5-6

...And they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

***Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us rise and greet one another with Christ's peace.

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

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!

First Scripture Lessons Revelation 21:1-6

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Second Scripture Lesson John 13:31-35

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.

Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon Text Acts 11:1-18

Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?"

Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts

of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven.

At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Different!

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response** "The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound"

See p. 8

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.

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

***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**

Good God, may these gifts be used to spread your love to others, bringing hope and healing to a world in need. Thank you for your love that never fails us. **Amen.**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hal- lowed 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 Us Build a House ”

See p. 9

***Charge & Blessing**

Postlude

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

Liturgists: Rev. Trey Tirpak

Organist: Iteke Prins

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and
Stephen Reohr

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



Notes:

- We will be hosting our annual potluck and May congregational meeting in Zimmerman Hall today after worship.
- The Consistory will meet in the Parlor immediately after worship to formally dissolve the call of the Senior Minister.
- Next Sunday's worship service will be held in the chapel, and will be the "Service of Farewell and Godspeed" for our Senior Minister, the Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston.
- Drive-In Worship begins on Sunday, June 1st at 10 AM. (When there is rain, we will worship in the chapel.)
- **2025 FCIA Officer Nominations**

Elders—Zak Morton
Deacon—Jean Lamere

The following incumbent trustees have terms that are expiring in June. Each one has indicated their willingness to be nominated for another three-year term:

- Monica Marsh
- Edward (Ned) Monthie
- Joyce Recene
- Raymond Van Epps

The following trustee is completing her term and does not wish to be nominated for another term: Karen Van Epps.

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing 610

1 O for a thou - sand tongues to sing my
 2 The name of Je - sus charms our fears, and
 3 Christ speaks, and lis - tening to his voice new

dear Re - deem - er's praise, the glo - ries of my
 bids our sor - rows cease, sings mu - sic in the
 life the dead re - ceive; the mourn - ful wak - en

God and King, the tri - umphs of God's grace!
 sin - ner's ears, brings life, and health, and peace.
 to re - joice; the poor in heart be - lieve.

This text comes from an eighteen-stanza hymn the author wrote to mark the first anniversary of his life-changing conversion experience. It is now customarily the first hymn in Methodist hymnals worldwide. This tune, adapted from a German composer, is the usual North American setting.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.; Spanish trans. Federico J. Pagura;

Korean trans. The United Methodist Korean Hymnal Committee, 2001

MUSIC: Carl Gotthelf Gläser, 1828; arr. Lowell Mason, 1839

Spanish Trans. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

Korean Trans. © 2001 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

AZMON
CM

766 The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound

1 The church of Christ can - not be bound by
 2 True faith will o - pen up the door and
 3 True love will not sit i - dly by when
 4 If what we have we free - ly share to
 5 The church of Christ can - not be bound by

walls of wood or stone. Where char - i - ty and
 step in - to the street. True ser - vice will seek
 jus - tice is de - nied. True mer - cy hears the
 meet our neigh - bor's need, then we ex - tend the
 walls of wood or stone. Where char - i - ty and

love are found, there can the church be known.
 out the poor and ask to wash their feet.
 home - less cry and wel - comes them in - side.
 Spir - it's care through ev - ery self - less deed.
 love are found, there can the church be known.

This text was the winning entry in a hymnwriting competition seeking new texts dealing with poverty and homelessness, but as the stanza sung at the beginning and end of the hymn makes clear, such specific ministries grow out of an understanding of the church as love in action.

301 Let Us Build a House

All Are Welcome

Capo 3: (A7) (D) (A) (D) (G) (A) (Bm)
 C7 F C F B^b C Dm

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter,
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the

(D) (A) (D) (Bm7) (Em) (A)
 F C F Dm7 Gm C

safe - ly live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell
 wine, and wheat; a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground
 wood and stone to heal and strength-en, serve and teach,

(Em) (A7) (G) (D) (F#m) (Bm)
 Gm C7 B^b F Am Dm

how hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 and live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the

(Em) (A) (D) (G)
 Gm C F B^b

vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us

Refrain

(D) (G) (F#7) (Bm) (Em) (Bm)
 F B^b A7 Dm Gm Dm

love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 share in Christ the feast that frees us: all are wel - come;
 bring an end to fear and dan - ger:

(F#m) (Em) (D) (Em) (A7) (D) (G) (D)
 Am Gm F Gm C7 F B^b F

all are wel - come; all are wel - come in this place.

Although it was written for a church dedication, this text is not about a physical structure but a spiritual one. The building is at best only a vessel for the essential love and hope, life and faith, peace and justice, hospitality and nurture that form the worshipping community.

Prayer LIST as of 5.12.25

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

♥ **Indicates a new listing**

Current Concerns

- ♥ David Allen, for his continued recovery.
- ♥ Eric Witt Nebel's health, friend of Michelle Williams
- ♥ Phyllis Dean, friend of Michelle Williams
- ♥ For Itেকে Prins, mourning the passing of loved ones

Give Thanks

- We welcome home Deacon Becky Hudak and fellow pilgrim Faye after their two-month long adventure on the Camino de Santiago in Spain. We look forward to all the stories of faith and friendship and growth.
- For the staff and guests of the CACC Overflow Shelter that ended their first season in April. May they enjoy their summer of respite and prepare well for the fall when the shelter returns to First Church. We give thanks for their hearts and their efforts.

Ongoing Needs

- Olivia Gaydushek
- Wilma Sheffer
- Mia Westman
- Ministers, staff, and leaders of First Church as they move forward into our everchanging World
- For areas recovering from natural disasters like fires, earthquakes, etc.
- For war-torn places and area of conflict throughout the world
- For those in our immediate area dealing with gun violence and its aftermath

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.

The First Church in Albany
Join us at

Centering
PRAYER

Every
Wednesday at noon
All are welcome!

110 North Pearl St. Albany NY 12207

Hot Dog
WEDNESDAY

READY FOR ANOTHER
GREAT SUMMER IN
CLEE PARK?



We will be announcing Opening Day soon!

Sheridan Ave. Lot next to FCIA

FCIA PRESENTS

Through
Labor
Day

DRIVE-IN
Worship

**FOLLOWED BY
THE LEMONADE
LULL IN CLEE
PARK**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP
GOES OUTSIDE**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 1
AT 10AM**

**110 NORTH PEARL ST. ALBANY NY
518-463-4449**

WWW.FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY



MAY 2025

**TUE
20**

**PANTRY
ZOOM BIBLE STUDY**

**9AM
1PM**

**WED
21**

**CENTERING PRAYER POWELL RM
AA MEETING
ZOOM BIBLE STUDY**

**NOON
NOON
7:30PM**

**THU
22**

PANTRY

9AM

**SUN
25**

**LECTIO DIVINA IN CHAPEL
WORSHIP [AT] FCIA
COFFEE HOUR**

**9AM
10AM
11AM**

**MON
26**

**MEMORIAL DAY
OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY**



FOR MORE INFO VISIT US AT WWW.FIRSTCHURCHINALBANY.ORG



First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St., Albany NY 12207

518-463-4449

www.firstchurchinalbany.org