

The First Church **FAMILY**

*The First Church in Albany · Founded in 1642
Reformed Church in America*

September 2017

WORSHIP:

- 3 **Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
9:00 AM – Last Drive-In Worship (Communion)
Rev. John Paarlberg preaching
9:30 AM – FOCUS Combined Worship Service
at First Presbyterian Church

- 10 **Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost** (Communion)
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service: Directory Photos

- 17 **Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service: Library Open House
Directory Photos

- 24 **Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service: First Church Readers

- 1 **Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost** (Communion)
10:30 AM- Sanctuary Service Rev. John Paarlberg preaching
Post Service: Reception for John and Marilyn Paarlberg

Our Sunday morning service may be found anytime at www.firstchurchinalbany.org.

FAMILY is published eleven times a year by First Church in Albany, 110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Sunday, October 1, will be my last day as pastor of First Church. Fourteen years ago when I was installed by the Classis of Albany as pastor and teacher of this congregation we entered into a particular relationship. I was charged to proclaim God's Word, to declare forgiveness through Jesus Christ, to call publicly on the name of the Lord on your behalf, to celebrate the sacraments, and to be your pastor and teacher, sharing your joys and sorrows, encouraging the faithful, recalling those who fall away, helping the sick and the dying. You, in turn promised to receive me as your pastor and teacher, to receive with meekness and love the word proclaimed, and to encourage and pray for me as we labored together in obedience to the gospel for the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the unity, purity, and peace of the church, and the welfare of the whole world (from the "Order for the Installation of a Minister of Word and Sacraments," *The Liturgy of Reformed Church in America*).

Those are large promises. None of us could have foreseen at the time exactly how this would unfold. Now we look back and can recall particular events, specific ways we engaged in ministry together, problems and challenges we faced together, blessings received, joys shared and celebrated, and most of all the precious people who have been companions and friends as we traveled together.

Our particular relationship as pastor and congregation will soon come to an end, yet friendships endure, memories persist, and my gratitude for what we have shared together abounds. And ministry continues – both yours and mine, but now in different ways.

You will enter into a new relationship with your interim minister, The Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, as she shepherds you through this time of transition. Lynn brings a wealth of experience to this specialized ministry. I am grateful and comforted knowing that with her guidance and with the support of the dedicated and gifted staff and lay leaders of the congregation you will be in good hands.

And though I will retire as pastor and teacher of First Church none of us ever retires from following Jesus Christ. We are reminded of that each time we celebrate a baptism or ordination: "All who believe and are baptized receive a ministry to witness to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and to love and serve those with whom they live and work." I look forward with anticipation and curiosity to where God might be leading me to new ways of serving. Being able to spend more time with grandchildren feels like a calling. And so does working with other people of faith in caring for creation, or being involved in supporting justice and peace in Palestine and Israel, or perhaps something else as yet unforeseen.

And I will continue to follow your journey with interest, and will keep you in my prayers and hold you in my heart.

Sincerely,

John D. Paarlberg

Worship Service and Holy Communion Reception for John and Marilyn Paarlberg

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 2017

Members and friends of First Church in Albany are invited to participate in our service of worship and Holy Communion starting at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, October 1st. We will bid farewell and godspeed to Rev. John Paarlberg and Marilyn Paarlberg at a reception in Zimmerman Hall starting at 12:00 noon.

Rev. John Paarlberg has served as our Senior Minister since 2003. He has faithfully preached the Gospel from our historic pulpit, and lived the Gospel in his commitment to helping those in need and pain, healing our environment, and witnessing for peace in the Holy Land.

Marilyn has been active in the life of First Church, especially in the choir, Children & Worship and the Kibera project. She also has a leadership role in the RCA's Room For All organization.

If you would like to share a note, letter, or picture with John and Marilyn on this occasion, please send it to Valerie Williams, parish administrator, by Monday September 18. You may put the item in Valerie's mailbox, or send it by e-mail to

vwilliams@firstchurchinalbany.org

Pete Pagerey, Senior Elder
Erica Zetterholm-Bliss, Senior Deacon
Jim Folts, President, Board of Trustees

At Home with the WORD

Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary www.rca.org/athome
September 1st – September 30th

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Romans 12:9-21 | 16. Matthew 18:21-35 |
| 2. Matthew 16:21-28 | 17. Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 3. Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost | 18. Exodus 16:2-15 |
| 4. Exodus 12:1-14 | 19. Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 |
| 5. Psalm 149 | 20. Jonah 3:10–4:11 |
| 6. Ezekiel 33:7-11 | 21. Psalm 145:1-8 |
| 7. Psalm 119:33-40 | 22. Philippians 1:21-30 |
| 8. Romans 13:8-14 | 23. Matthew 20:1-16 |
| 9. Matthew 18:15-20 | 24. Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost |
| 10. Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost | 25. Exodus 17:1-7 |
| 11. Exodus 14:19–15:11, 20-21 | 26. Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 |
| 12. Psalm 114 | 27. Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 |
| 13. Genesis 50:15-21 | 28. Psalm 25:1-9 |
| 14. Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13 | 29. Philippians 2:1-13 |
| 15. Romans 14:1-12 | 30. Matthew 21:23-32 |

Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden to be Interim Senior Minister

The First Church Joint Boards met on Sunday, August 13 and voted unanimously to offer the position of Interim Senior Minister to Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and a specialist in interim ministry. Her contract must now be approved by the Classis of Albany, Reformed Church in America, and signed by her and the Senior Elder, Senior Deacon, and President of the Board of Trustees. After that happens she will assume her responsibilities on Monday, October 2nd.

Lynn has over thirty years of experience as a pastor, in both permanent and transitional positions, in churches of the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., in several New England states, North Carolina, and New York. Her most recent position was interim senior pastor at the Scotia Reformed Church. Lynn is credentialed as a Professional Transition Specialist, Interim Ministry Network, and teaches in that program. She has extensive experience in consulting to churches. She is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Yale Divinity School. Her personal interests include running and cooking. She is married to the Rev. Peter J. B. Carman, pastor of the Emmanuel Friedens Church in Schenectady.

Rev. Bodden will perform all the regular duties of a senior minister. She will also work with Leadership, Joint Boards, and members of the congregation to develop goals for the transition ministry, guide us in self-study to strengthen our commitment to Christ and the mission of His church, assist Leadership and staff in preparing a congregational profile, and advise on the process for recruiting a permanent Senior Minister. The Classis of Albany has appointed a team—Rev. David Jones of the East Greenbush Reformed Church and Nancy Landrigan a member of Delmar Reformed Church and Clerk of Classis—to oversee First Church during the transition period.

The First Church Leadership Committee for 2016-17 served as the search committee, assisted by Rev. Susan Vincent Cox, First Church Minister of Discipleship and Outreach. The committee spent several months developing a duties description, and searching for appropriate candidates. Two individuals, both with successful ministerial experience, were invited for two interviews each. Members of the committee were Erica Bliss, Joanna Brown, Jim Folts, Andy Mondore, Pete Pagerey, Jay Reohr, and Ross Westhuis.

First Church Members Raise \$1075 through the Albany Crop Walk

It was another rainy afternoon for the CROP Walk this year, but the Albany CROP Walk still raised is \$95,660 to help hungry people here and around the world. First Church had 10 walkers (plus Baxter the Dog) who raised a total of \$1,075 (\$410 of which was on-line). Thank You!

Small Group Gatherings this Fall at First Church

- **Nonviolent Communication Practice Group** **Wed. Sept 27th 6-8 pm**

Beginning in September we will again meet monthly on a Wednesday evening each month. This year we will welcome some new members from the community after they complete Basic NVC Workshops at either the Albany Unitarian Universalists, First Church, or the FOCUS Volunteer Training for the Breakfast Program (FC provides a presentation each year). Here we learn how to observe more closely, without judgment, what is happening around us or within us. We learn to treat one another respectfully even if we have very different viewpoints or experience conflict in a particular situation. If you are interested in learning more about NVC and want to attend one of our workshops, please contact Pastor Sue Cox at the church office.

- **Prayer Shawl** **Monday Sept 18th at 11:30 am**

We will meet monthly on the 3rd Monday of the month. Our meetings are for 1 ½ hrs. We have made and given over 40 shawls to those in need of comfort. When we meet we enjoy fellowship, knitting, praying, sharing ideas and tips, and planning for our ministry. We are always open to new members joining us and welcome those who are “homebound” to join our ministry, too. If you can knit a shawl at home we can stay in touch together by phone or visit you for one of our meetings. Please join us!!

- **Pilgrim’s Walk**

Joanna Brown and Rev. Sue Cox are planning to offer a group in our neighborhood this fall. Sandy Scudder and Cheryl Gowie have co-led with Pastor Sue at Beltrone, Sheehy Manor and the Beverwyck over the past 3 years. This is a small supportive group for those 65 years and older that builds caring community and provides spiritual support and direction. We hope to offer more of these groups to the greater community this upcoming year.

- **Tuesday Bible Study** **begins September 12th at noon**

Join us if you can for this adult bible study. We offer this group at the lunch hour for those who might leave work or stop in between errands. We would love to have you join with us. We have studied Exodus, Joshua, Galatians, our RCA church doctrines, the Muslim faith and many more topics over the past few years. On the 12th we will make plans for this year’s study. Hope you will join us.

- **Children and Worship**

We will have our **Open House on October 8th** (during adult worship) and begin **weekly worship on October 15th**. We hope you will invite children you know whose parent or guardian might be a neighbor, a friend, or someone you know at work. We will offer both a worship time for children ages 4-7 and 8-12. We hope you will visit our worship centers soon!

Drive-In Offering

The special offerings received at the Drive-In Worship this summer have been designated for Koinonia Primary Care/Compassion in Action, a ministry providing access to quality primary and mental health services for the underserved in West Hill and surrounding neighborhoods in Albany. Koinonia Primary Care, under the leadership of Dr. Robert Paeglow, has been serving people in Albany since 2002.

I've come to the realization that life is not designed for our comfort, or pleasure, but for us to discover our gifts and contribute what we can to make life better for others. Dr. Robert Paeglow

Join the Choir: First Rehearsal September 14th

We love to welcome new members to the choir. If you are looking for a community of friends that love singing, want to serve First Church and are looking for ways to better understand our faith, come join the choir! We resume rehearsals on Thursday, September 14 at 7:00 pm. You don't need to read music or have any special talent; just a love of singing.

Choir Night Out: September 21st

The choir is having dinner together on Thursday September 21st at 5:30. Everyone is welcome - family, friends, spouses, partners, potential choir members! You don't need to be a choir member to come! Meet the choir members in an informal setting. Stop by just for a drink or to join us for a meal! Contact Mary Bon at maryebon@verizon.net or 463-4449 for more information.

Weathervanes. Recap of Spring Trip to Palestine



Join the Weathervanes for fellowship, lunch, and a program on Wednesday, September 20th, at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be served. After lunch, Rev. John Paarlberg and members of the Palestine Trip, will recount with us about their trip and events and update us with current meetings

Please telephone Audrey Ming (518- 456-5485) to let her know you plan to attend.

Mission Trip to Rochester

The First Church Mission Work Group had a fantastic time in July working in Rochester, New York Recap of First Church's Summer Mission Trip. 215 kids, 8 states & 36 homes repaired! Prayer Shawls were given to the school staff that served 212 kids in Charlotte, New York. Thank you Stephen Reohr, Andy Mondore and Monica Marsh!



Special Heritage Service and Luncheon – October 29, 2017

As the final event in our year-long celebration of our Three Hundredth Seventy Fifth Anniversary, we will be having a grand service on Reformation Sunday, October 29, 2017. The Rev. Dr. Gregg Mast will be returning to the pulpit for this celebratory service. This year is also the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, so this Heritage Worship Service promises to be a special event indeed. Put the date on your calendar now.

The service will be followed by an Anniversary Luncheon at the Normanside Country Club in Delmar. Speaker at the luncheon, the Honorable Jack McEneny, historian, former Assembly Member and a longtime friend of First church, will present remarks. Details about the luncheon—menu choices, pricing, accessibility, and driving directions—will be mailed to First Church members and friends soon.

Transportation can be provided to those who need it. We welcome your presence and participation!

The Next Church Directory. September Update



Plans are coming together for a new directory for First Church. During September we will be taking individual photos. All photos will be taken by staff and our talented member photophiles in the Powell Room. All of the photos will include the option for everyone to print their own. Please note: September is the last month that we are taking photos! There are many ways to sign-up. Many spaces are already filled! Sign-up online at: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F0F44A5A82FA4F85-directory, on a sign-up sheet in the lobby or by calling Valerie at the church office: 463-4449. Fifteen minute time slots have Friday September 8: 10 am – 2:00 pm Sunday September 10: 11:30 am - 2:00 pm

Friday September 15: 10 am -2:00 pm
and Sunday September 17: 11:30 am - 2:00 pm

Special 375th Commemorative Service – August 20, 2017

Three hundred and seventy five years ago, on August 17, 1642, Rev. Johannes Megapolensis, preached his first sermon in what was then the Patroonship of Rensselaerswijck. We have traditionally marked this date as the founding date of the First Church in Albany.



On August 20, 2017, the Sunday nearest the Three Hundred Seventy Fifth Anniversary of that event, First Church held a special service to commemorate that founding. The Rev. Kenneth Bradsell, co-pastor here from 1981 – 1984 was our special guest preacher. Music was provided by the Nat Phipps Jazz Trio. CDs

of the service and an online link to the video will be available soon.

Library Open House- Sunday, September 17th

Have you seen the newly decorated library? On Sunday, September 17th there will be a special Open House after the worship service for anyone who wants to visit. See the new sitting/reading area for children and adults. All the books have now been categorized into 23 categories ranging from a parenting section, children's section, inspirational section to a church history section. The library is open weekdays during office hours and on Sundays. Come see Mary, Carol, Joeanna and Cindy and they'll gladly show you around and answer any questions you may have! Book donations still accepted.

Growing Green

Check out the plantings as you enter First Church from the large parking lot. These plants, including lavender, thyme, Russian sage, and sedum can all exist in a low water environment eliminating the need for extra watering once they are established. Thank you to Ella Campbell, Brad Jones, Neil Keen and Mary Bon who prepared the ground, planted and tended over these plants.

First Church Readers Meets September 24



First Church Readers will meet on September 24 after the worship service. We get together once a month after worship to discuss a book we've been reading during that month. The group is open to everyone. Come join us!

Upcoming books are:

September *The Annotated Persuasion* Jane Austin

Annotated by David M. Shapard

Austin's last book is a story of true love delayed with lots of notes, pictures, maps and details to help the reader understand the context.

October *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* J. D. Vance
Vance, a former marine and Yale Law School graduate offers a powerful account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt town, and gives a broader, probing look at the struggles of America's white and working class.

November *For One More Day* Mitch Albom

From the author of *Tuesdays with Morie*, a novel about a grown child given the chance to have one more day with the mother he lost to the shifting loyalties and relationships of divorce.

School Supply Drive

Thank you to all for your generous contributions of school supplies. The First Church Food Pantry supplied 42 children with brand new backpacks and back to school essentials for the coming year.



Rev. Cameron Monthly Brunch

Rev. Bill Cameron began gathering a group for lunch on the first Thursday of the month. The group continues to meet each month at the Gateway Diner, 899 Central Ave. in Albany. Anyone can join us starting at 12:15 and stay until you wish to leave. We all pay for our own. Contact Donna E. Schultz at deschultz07@aol.com or 518.429.1255.

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The deadline for the October issue of *FAMILY* is September 15.

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Congratulations

Congratulations to Adrienne Pagerey on the birth of your son, Clay!

Memorials

In memory of Rev. Lynn Joosten a gift was received from the Joosten family for the Lynn T. Joosten Scholarship Fund .

Thank You

Thank you to all who called, sent cards, prayers and well wishes, and brought over hot meals while I was recovering from hip replacement surgery. I am always blown away by how kind and thoughtful our First Church family is. It's good to be back! Mary Bon

A First Church Welcome to Jeff

Jeff Curry has joined the First Church staff as the assistant sexton. Jeff has fit right in with assisting Larry with building maintenance. Jeff also has many responsibilities with the First Church Food Pantry from deliveries, storage and food rotation. Jeff began his work at First Church on June 5th. Please help us welcome him to the First Church community!





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