

# FAMILY

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*The First Church in Albany · Founded in 1642  
Reformed Church in America*  
**November 2020**

## WORSHIP:

### Musicians for Worship Services November 2020

- 8** Gordon Peters, bagpipes
- 15** Rose Hunsberger, soprano; Peter Subers, baritone  
Music for Consecration Sunday - *Here I am, Lord; At the heart of human history (our Anniversary hymn)*
- 22** Rose Hunsberger, soprano; Peter Subers, baritone  
Music for Thanksgiving - *Sing to the Lord of harvest; Thou visitest the earth*
- 28** Rose Hunsberger, soprano; Peter Subers, baritone  
Music for Thanksgiving - *Sing to the Lord of harvest; Thou visitest the earth*

### JOIN SERVICE VIA ZOOM

First Church in Albany is inviting you to Zoom Worship.

Time: October 11, 2020 10:00 AM and every Sunday until Dec 27, 2020.

Join us by clicking on the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89749605068?pwd=bjM2cjZNZDZUdTQ2UmJqa08rK25CUT09>

If you wish to join by telephone, send an email to [ian.leet@outlook.com](mailto:ian.leet@outlook.com) for special instructions.

### SERVICE STILL ON CONFERENCE CALL

Conference Call **Dial in number: (425) 436-6200**

**Access code: 586376**

## *From Pastor Mashona...*

Dear FCIA Friends and Family,

On November 1, 2020, I celebrated my one-year anniversary with all of you at First Church in Albany! It has been quite a year! On Sunday, November 1, 2020, I looked out from the beloved outdoor pulpit at a parking lot filled with cars and one brave woman standing by the fence, in the cold weather.

As worshipers honked their horns and another woman of Zion got out of her car with shouts of acclamation, I was filled with awe! In the face of wind, rain, and cold we have held worship outside each week since Sunday, March 22, 2020. I have only preached behind the sacred desk inside the sanctuary 18 times. On Sunday, November 1, 2020, I realized that the outdoor pulpit with floor and side window stained by paintballs from Halloween nights revelry is where I have preached. This parking lot is where we have faithfully gathered and even grown in Sunday morning worship attendance.

In the face of layers of challenge, we as a people have learned to pivot and let our light shine for the community where our historic building stands.

Thank you for serving during what will go down in history as the best and the worst of

times. A year ago, we began a Centering Prayer ministry that continues to gather each Wednesday at noon. As a pastor, it filled my heart with joy when you kept gathering and praying while I took a vacation. We have continued to gather for worship, in the face of two pandemics: COVID and cries for justice. Even after neighborhood fires and protests, we let our light shine. We joined the protests and prayer vigils. We cried on the sidewalks with others who mourned. We kept the lines of communication with those from both sides of the aisles. We invited our young adults to speak from their perspectives. When other businesses boarded up, we chose to remain open and shine the light. We still preached the gospel outside and encouraged our neighbors to hold on for a brighter day. It wasn't easy or always smooth. Now, I reflect with laughter at the times we lost sound, ZOOM and conference call connections, or battery power. Do you remember the Sunday the passer-by tried to climb up behind me in the outdoor pulpit... while I was in the middle of preaching?!!!

It has been an epic ride and I await to see what else God will do in 2021. I have a feeling that everything is going to be better than alright. I've gotta feeling that the light of FCIA is going to burn even brighter. Please pray for me

and my family as I pray for you. Please pray that our community of faith grow and serve effectively in this coming season of more change and challenge. Pray that when the sky gets dark, FCIA will always share the light of God!

*A song from my childhood sums it up for me: I'm looking for a miracle. I expect the impossible. The sky is the limit for what we can have! Believe and receive it. God will be performing, today!*

Amen

## *News*

### **SCAM ALERT: FIRST CHURCH ONLY ACCEPTS MAIL-IN DONATIONS**

*A note from Pastor Mashona:*

Please only send donations to First Church's official mailing address. Unfortunately, over the past couple years someone continuously sets up fake email accounts in the names of our clergy/ministers at First Church in Albany. Our ministers and staff do not solicit donations via email, text, or wire accounts. For your protection please do not give your personal information online, email, text, or phone. We ask that all donations to First Church be mailed directly to First Church in Albany (110 North Pearl Street) and to no single individual or alternate method at this time.

## **REOPENING COMMITTEE PREVIEW...**

*from Jean Lamere*

We will be moving indoors on December 6th. Here is what you need to know:

Masks are mandatory. Social distancing must be followed.

All will enter from the Sheridan Ave. parking lot and exit at the North Pearl Street door. The exceptions will be for those who need the elevator or the ramp.

It will be required for members to sign in with name only.

The sanctuary has been measured for social distancing. The doors will be open on available pews.

The balcony will be closed.

No bulletins until next year.

The lectern will be used for preaching and will be behind a Plexiglas panel.

There will be no singing.

There will be offering plates at the entrance and exit.

Prepackaged communion elements will be provided by a gloved Deacon, or you can bring your own.

The service will be 35 minutes in length and will include a children's moment.

Cleaning will be done before and after the services by our sextons.

If you have felt ill in the past 2 weeks, or have been with a person who has tested positive for Covid, or have been in a large group, please remain at home and use Zoom or Conference Call for the Worship Service.

Thank you for your prayers. More details to come and some projections are subject to change and your safety is our priority.

## **WELCOME REX THE DINOSAUR**

*From Pastor Mashona*

Please pay special attention and meet our newest member of the FCIA staff. His name is Rex and he will assist me each Sunday with announcements concerning children. Rex is actually a Dino. Even though he is from another time, he loves worship and children. So, be on the look out!



Rex wants you to know that soon and very soon FCIA will have our very own **story walk**. We will place pages of a book around the outside of the church and in Clee park for all to read. Our target reading age is K-3. However, this story will be for all who are young at heart!

## **FIRST CHURCH HOSTING BEGINNING EXPERIENCE FOR WIDOWS AND DIVORCEES**

FCIA will be hosting "Coping with Life Alone" a program given by Beginning Experience of the Hudson Valley, Saturday, November 21, 2020 8 am to 6 pm. Advanced registration only. Please see flyer below for details.

## **TROY AREA UNITED MINISTRIES TO HOLD HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER**

Troy Area United Ministries (TAUM) is holding an annual TAUM Day at **Ten Thousand Villages**, Sunday November 22. TAUM will receive 15% to support their programs. COVID protocols will be observed. See the flyer below for all the details.

## *Consistory Update*

## **SHERIDAN AVENUE PARKING LOT**

*From the Board of Trustees - Parking Lot Committee*

Maiden Lane Parking of Albany, Inc. has ceased operations of the Sheridan Avenue parking lot effective September 30. The Board of Trustees Parking Lot Committee is actively negotiating with another organization to manage the lot. In the interim parking will be free. Daily and monthly parkers have been notified. Any concerns or problems should be reported to the church office at 518-463-4449.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

*From Wayne Sivaslian*

Dear Friends,

**2021 Pledges** - If you've mailed in a Pledge Card for 2021 and have not received an acknowledgement, please allow a short time for mailing & processing. You may also contact me at [wsivaslian@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wsivaslian@nycap.rr.com) or 518-495-6353.

**2020 Donations** - At the end of 2020, all donations for 2020 must be **received** by Sunday December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the last Sunday of this year. Any 2020 donations **received** after this date will be **credited** for 2021 regardless of how dated or designated.

If you have any questions regarding this message or you have any questions regarding your donations & pledges or any other financial questions,

please contact me at your convenience.

Thank you.

Wayne Sivaslian, Financial Secretary

[wsivaslian@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wsivaslian@nycap.rr.com)  
519-495-6353

## Groups

### BIBLE STUDY

**You are invited to the First Church Bible study of Romans** continuing though the Monday before Christmas (12/21).

**For those of you have been participating, THIS IS A NEW LINK, MEETING NUMBER AND PASSCODE.** Zoom is changing its security requirements and a new meeting seemed to be the easiest way of dealing with that. You will be able to click on the link as before, but you won't be able to use the old link from last week, for example.

**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88622347479?pwd=NWNKNFB1MlhSQ1RoZjNRcmFWTDlvQT09>

**Meeting ID: 886 2234 7479**  
**Passcode: 601365**

**For telephone users:**

**Dial by your location**  
**+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)**

**Meeting ID: 886 2234 7479**  
**Passcode: 601365**

or  
**Find your local number:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88622347479>



**WEATHERVANES –**

**NO NOVEMBER**

**MEETING**

*From Audrey Ming*

There will be no November Weathervanes meeting. However, we will have a **Christmas Celebration** on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Save the date on your calendar and stay tuned for further details!

## CENTERING PRAYER EACH WEDNESDAY

Centering Prayer each Wednesday at Noon in **James Chapel** and via **Conference Call**.  
**Dial in number: 425- 436-6200**  
**Access code: 586376.**

## Mission

### FUNDRAISER FOR YOUTH MISSION TRIP

*From Pastor Mashona*

The spirit of mission continues at FCIA with our youth! Please support their next mission trip in 2021 with a \$5.00 purchase of this jazzy tote!



Call the church office to arrange for your curb side pick up. Exact change only please.

## FOOD PANTRY

### Thanksgiving Baskets

*From the Board of Deacons*

This year instead of making separate Thanksgiving Bags, we will make each guest's 1<sup>st</sup> visit a mix of regular pantry items that we serve each month and incorporate Thanksgiving items. We will give anyone who wants to utilize the pantry some Thanksgiving items and hand out the gift cards to FCIA guests that live in our catchment area.

This option would save time and volunteers from making separate bags, opening up a separate day and also having guests "sign up" for Thanksgiving. The gift cards will be \$10.00 per household.

Please mail a contribution (checks) marked THANKSGIVING to the church for the benefit of the pantry.

Again, only mail checks and do not purchase gift cards.

### Cake Mixes for Thanksgiving baskets:

The Food Pantry is collecting boxed cake mixes and icing for the Thanksgiving baskets (any flavor). These can be dropped off at the church Monday through Thursday between 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. They will also be collected at the Sunday service.

### Food Pantry Statistics For October

The pantry was open 7 days in October. 65 households were served, 5 of them new. A total of 14 children, 67 adults and 12 seniors were served.

## FIRST CHURCH OVERFLOW HOMELESS SHELTER DINNERS NEEDS NEW COORDINATOR

*From Mary Bon*

For eleven years Mary Bon has organized and coordinated First Church Meals for the Emergency Overflow Homeless Shelter. Thanks to generous First Church people we have been able to provide meals for the Shelter one or two times a month from November to April.

**We need a new coordinator, since Mary retired from organizing and coordinating this ministry in April.**

The Shelter is still operating in spite of COVID and opens in

Mid-November. To continue the ministry we need someone to coordinate this ministry and people willing to provide a dish and help deliver the food.

**Can you help? Contact Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston at the church office 518-463-4449 if you are interested coordinating or helping with this ministry. It's an easy and rewarding way to serve!**

*The Emergency Overflow Shelter at First Lutheran Church in Albany, sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches, is a "shelter of last resort" when other shelters are full or for those not eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health issues. It is open during the winter months and turns nobody away.*

## Music News

### MUSIC AT THE FIRST CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICES

*From Mary Bon*

As we plan worship and music with the various constraints caused by the ongoing Covid pandemic and postpone our move into the sanctuary, we are trying new ways of having music at the Drive-In Worship Services and on Zoom.

Our Consistory has decided that in the cold weather, we will be using pre-recorded music with



our outside Sound System at the Drive-In.

Our Minister of Music, Mary Bon has been searching past recordings of First Church Services for anthems, hymns and musical offering. She will be excerpting and editing music from these services to broadcast at our services. You'll hear familiar voices like our First Church Choir as well as soloists, Peter Subers, and Rose Hunsberger, all via pre-recording music.

We thank you all for your patience and understanding as our staff and volunteers work to find new ways to include music in our Drive-In services and on Zoom.

## *Congregation*

### **CONSECRATION SUNDAY AND FCIA HISTORY**

Tom Allison has written of a series of articles called "Church Voices." Each week, as part of

our attenuated services leading up to Commitment Sunday on November 15, we will be sharing how the First Church in Albany has always been a church with many voices. The first article "Consecration Moment," was published in the October 26 FCIA eblast. Keep a lookout in future eblasts for more installments.

### **November Birthdays**

13 Rebecca Mondore

21 Wayne Sivaslian

30 Darius Shahinfar

Not seeing your November birthday here? Well, then, contact the church office and tell us when your birthday is!

### **PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS**

At home: Rob Bauer (partner of Peter Subers); Olivia Gaydushek (granddaughter of Karen Van Epps); Cheryl Gowie; Elaine

Jenks (mother of Rose Hunsberger); Family of Virginia "Ginny" LoJacono (aunt of Rose Hunsberger); Peter and Ruth Pagerey and family of Adrienne Pagerey

### ***Prayer Concerns?***

Prayer concerns may be shared in The Family. Please call the office at 518-463-4449 or email me with your prayer requests, and I will include them in an upcoming issue.

Thanks,

Rose

*The deadline for the December Family is November 15. Like the new format? We are moving away from full-blown articles to brief announcements. We welcome your short and sweet contributions!*



**Beginning Experience of the Hudson Valley**  
invites men and women of all ages  
who have suffered the loss of a spouse  
due to death, divorce or separation to a one day program:

## **COPING WITH LIFE ALONE**

Take the first step on the road to recovery from one of life's most  
traumatic experiences.



### **First Church in Albany**

110 North Pearl St., Albany NY 12207

**Saturday, November 21, 2020**

9:00AM to 4:30PM

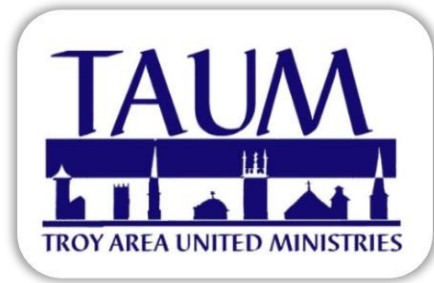
*Remote Attendance is available*

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED: Call Jim 845-569-9452  
or Denise 845 325 3147**

Email: [beginningexperienceofhv@gmail.com](mailto:beginningexperienceofhv@gmail.com)

Website: [www.beginningexperiencehv.org](http://www.beginningexperiencehv.org)

# Holiday Shopping Fair Trade Style



&



Ten Thousand Villages' mission is to create

opportunities for artisans in developing countries to earn income by bringing their products and stories to our markets through long-term fair trading relationships.

The store is taking COVID 19 precautions, and order by phone & curbside pickup are available.

**Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>**

(the Sunday before Thanksgiving).

11am until 6pm at

**Ten Thousand Villages, Stuyvesant Plaza**

**Please Mention TAUM when making a purchase so that our programs will receive a donation of 15% (excluding gift cards)**

TAUM's Furniture Program annually gives \$250,000 worth of good used furniture to families fleeing domestic violence, the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness.

The Troy Damien Center annually serves over 5,000 nutritious meals and provides small group support, information and referral to people with HIV/AIDS and others in need.

The Computers for Kids Program teaches low income teens to rebuild computers, to install and run software and then gives computers to young people.