



The First Church in Albany

Church Profile

**110 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207**

CHURCH PROFILE FORM
Reformed Church in America

Position to be filled: Minister of Word and Sacrament

Date: November 2018

CHURCH INFORMATION

Name: The First Church in Albany of the Reformed Church in America

Mailing Address: 110 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207

Telephone: (518) 463-4449

Email Address: info@firstchurchinalbany.org

Classis: Albany

Classis Supervisor: Rev. David Jones

Mailing Address: 688 Columbia Turnpike
East Greenbush, NY 12061

Telephone: (518) 477-6030

Email Address: grcpastor1@verizon.net

Chair of Search

Committee: Monica Marsh

Mailing Address: 572 Pearse Road
Schenectady, NY 12309

Telephone: (518) 265-7621

Email Address: monicamarsh@iheartmedia.com

IMPORTANT NOTE: Minister's profiles and other communications about the senior minister position at First Church in Albany should be directed to:

Jean Lamere

Mailing Address: 15 Saradale Avenue
Albany, NY 12211

Email Address: jlamere@nycap.rr.com

INVITATION TO CANDIDATES:

We hope this profile of First Church in Albany will give you essential information about our congregation and community, and encourage you to learn more about us and perhaps work with us to spread our message of God's love for our church, our community, and our world.

We invite you to consider participating with us in fulfilling our mission, "centered in Christ and committing ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are loved."

First Church in Albany Search Committee:

Monica Marsh (chair)

Norma Jean Ballou

Imani Brewer

Janet Conti

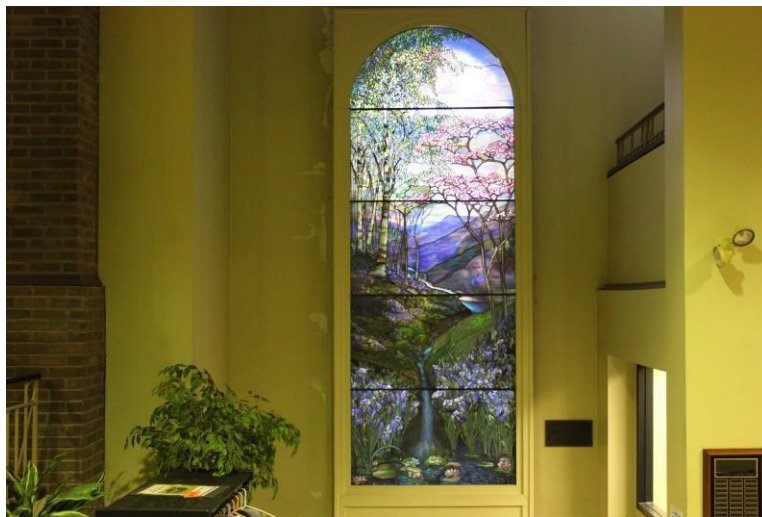
Jim Folts

Jean Lamere

Andy Mondore

Jay Reohr

Ross Westhuis



Sumner Memorial Window (Tiffany Studios) in First Church Lobby

MEMBERSHIP

	Five years ago	Today
Active Confessing Members	185	159
Inactive Confessing Members	174	187
Worship Attendance (average)	92	76

Significant changes explanation: The congregation is aging, there have been few new members for several years, and we have lost members from deaths and removals out of our area. Our senior minister retired after 15 years. Large number of inactive members indicates First Church’s continuing concern for their spiritual health and well-being.

WORSHIP INFORMATION



Worship schedule:

Time
10:30 A.M.: Regular sanctuary worship from September through June
10:00 A.M.: Regular sanctuary worship during July and August
9:00 A.M. Drive-in worship from Memorial Day to Labor Day

Please indicate the title and publisher of the hymnal(s) used in worship:

Rejoice in the Lord (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company)
Sing to the Lord a New Song (Hope Publishing Company)

Please attach a bulletin of a typical service. If the service is different in the summer, please also enclose a bulletin used during the past summer. (See Appendix.)

Describe a typical worship service (order of worship, music, etc.) What is your congregation’s preferred style of worship? Does your congregation use more than one style?

A typical sanctuary worship service follows the RCA order of worship. We use the common lectionary. The worship service is a structured liturgy based on three parts; approach to God, Word of God, and response to God. The drive-in worship service is less formal, but would not be described as contemporary or alternative. The drive-in service is a shorter version of the sanctuary service. First Church has a fine pipe organ which is used in most sanctuary services. Occasionally music is provided by other instruments and by a local jazz trio.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial Information:

	2014	2017
Total spent for congregational purposes	\$577,983	\$719,154
Total spent in benevolence	\$88,434	\$87,746

Percentage of total budget contributed by living donors:

44% or less	2014	\$192,243 - 29% Total: \$666,417
	2017	\$177,367 - 22% Total: \$806,900

Please attach a copy of your annual budget. (See Appendix.)

Congregational giving:

\$100 or less	2
\$101 - \$500	11
\$501 - \$1,000	9
\$1,001 - \$2,000	14
\$2,001 - \$2,500	5
\$2,501 - \$3,000	2
\$3,001 and over	14
Total giving units	57

**This report represents all pledging donors and some non-pledging donors who give regular fixed amounts but do not pledge. Other non-pledging donors are not included as their donations vary from week to week and cannot be tracked like the others. Please note that unpledged offerings are at 15-18% of total giving on an annual basis. Figures are for 2018.*

Financial assistance – Do you receive financial assistance beyond congregational giving?

Yes No

If yes, amount received last year: \$171,600 (parking lot rental) and \$378,000 (endowment drawdown)

List other fundraising programs that support the church:

Capital Campaign in 2010-2012 raised \$450,000 for major building repairs and special ministries whose cost was apx. \$2,300,000. Remaining funds were borrowed from a loan management account maintained by our investment advisor and secured by the main endowment fund. Since then the overall growth in the endowment fund (market increases, interest, dividends) has exceeded the interest rate on the loan.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND EDUCATION

What is the stated mission, vision, or purpose of your congregation?

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 all are loved.



First Church in Albany- Stone Church erected in 1715

What specific ministry goals have been developed from your mission and vision statement for the next five years?

Worship is the central expression of our ministry to our congregation and to those from the community who may join us. Members and friends of First Church want to broaden our current approaches in two areas of the worship experience. Our goal is to satisfy diverse tastes and increase congregants' comfort level with the service. This may be accomplished by utilizing various styles of worship and providing for more involvement of congregation members as worship leaders (readers of prayers, liturgies, and litanies, even messages). Responsive reading encourages participation and requires focus. Guest preachers offer diversity of style and message. An effort should be made to convey the full biblical message by using the entire lectionary as a basis for worship and sermons (including Old Testament lessons). Series of sermons developing one topic (e.g. Creation) have been successful. Variety in worship music, including alternative instruments (guitar, piano, percussion, brass, strings) and alternative vocal music (spirituals, world music), has been well received. Congregants admire First Church's great pipe organ and value the contributions of our music program.

What new program or outreach ministry expansion do you hope to provide in the next five years? Include long-range or strategic plan.

First Church currently does not have a long-range or strategic plan, we are looking forward to working with our new pastor in developing a long range/strategic plan for our congregation. Members of First Church have many ideas for congregational activities and community outreach. These ideas are partly an extension of current programs, while others are an expansion of outreach ministries. They include providing a bus or van to transport people to/from church; educational programming such as speakers and lectures; Bible study for more people, especially for youth; and classes in parenting and other family needs. Social activities such as church outings in and around Albany (movies, plays, even cruises) have been suggested. Our current outreach activities (mission trips for youth, food pantry) could be expanded. (Suggestions include a small shelter for homeless women and families, soup kitchen two times a week, a thrift shop, and a ministry to offenders and ex-offenders). Re-establishing the Community Outreach Commission would help implement such proposals.

What leadership roles do women currently fill in your church?

Senior Minister (interim), Minister of Discipleship, Minister of Music, leaders of Children and Worship program, Elders, Deacons, Trustees. Women serve as Parish Administrator, Accounts Manager, Communications Coordinator, Food Pantry Coordinator, child care aides, and youth advisors

Children and youth programs/organizations (briefly describe; include age range of each).

Children and Worship: This program began five years ago. It is a worship time of 45 minutes each Sunday when children go to their own worship center, immediately after the children's sermon in the sanctuary worship service. In the worship center they hear/see biblical stories, do artwork for expression, and have prayers and songs. This program has replaced Sunday school. This past year we had up to six children attending 4-7 year worship and two or three older children attending 8-12 year worship. This latter program began three years ago and attendance has been steady. In the younger program there has been a slight increase in attendance.

Youth Group/Young Adults: Young people aged 13-30 meet four times a year to do mission work in the community or go on special, church-funded mission trips out-of-state.



First Church youth mission trip group with adult advisors

Adult Education and Activities (describe briefly)

Adult Bible Study: Open group of about eight adults meets each Tuesday to study the Bible and share conversation about their faith. This group has also studied the Muslim faith and explored the biblical basis of our RCA doctrines. There are a few members in Bible study who come from outside the congregation.

Non-Violent Communication Workshops and Practice Groups: Workshops have been offered at First Church, the FOCUS churches (with which First Church is associated), and Albany Medical Center (chaplaincy trainings). There have been monthly practice groups with five to eleven participants. These groups were active for five years and were most recently led by Pete Pagerey and Robin Hepko. Participants were from both the community and the First Church congregation.

Pilgrim's Walk: For those in the third stage of life (ages 65 to end of life). This was offered at First Church four years ago and since 2013 out in community, at the Beltrone and Beverwyck senior living communities. Average group size is eight to fifteen participants. Problems of aging, transition from home to independent or assisted living, relationships and loss, employment to retirement, are some of the discussion topics. Death and dying, purpose, coping, leisure, and spiritual development are other leading topics. Pilgrim's Walk is currently offered at the Beverwyck and led by Cheryl Gowie; twelve participants.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: There are eight participants who meet monthly to make prayer shawls for those in need both within First Church and out in the greater community. Shawls are blessed in worship and given by members to those for whom we care.

Congregational Care Callers: Several members of the congregation assist the ministers in visits to those who are homebound and unable to come to worship services and other events.

Journey through the Psalms: A current Bible study program offered after worship. Participants learn about the healing nature of the Psalms and their relationship to our faith journeys. This program began in September 2018 and continues through Advent.

Membership Class for Adults: A small-group program is available for those adults who are considering membership in First Church. It is offered as need arises.

Confirmation Class: Teenagers attend three months of classes with the Senior Minister and Minister of Discipleship, exploring God's Word and declaring their personal faith publicly, with support of their mentors. The class is offered as need arises.

Weathervanes: A group for older adults meets for luncheon and a program once a month except during the summer. (The "Weathervanes" are named for the historic brass weathervane that stood on top of the 1656 and 1715 churches and is now on display at First Church.)

FOCUS Churches: The FOCUS congregations are six covenant churches (First Church in Albany, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Trinity United Methodist Church, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Delmar Reformed Church, and First Presbyterian Church), four faith affiliates, and two faith partners.

FOCUS Churches Mission: Doing together what we cannot do alone, united in a common calling to respond to our neighbors' needs in the city of Albany and beyond, as God's servant people in a broken and hurting world, FOCUS now serves hungry bodies and souls through its feeding programs. The Breakfast Club at Westminster Presbyterian Church provides more than 18,000 meals year-round and helps connect guests with much-needed services such as housing. The Interfaith Food Pantry located at Emmanuel Baptist Church and the affiliated Food Pantry at First Church in Albany offer food supplies to families and individuals in need. And with each meal FOCUS serves a helping of hospitality. FOCUS also gives voice to critical issues of hunger and homelessness and joins with other organizations to raise awareness of the impacts and needs of those living in poverty.

First Church Food Pantry: Operating continuously since 1980, the First Church Food Pantry serves disadvantaged households (families and single persons) in the lower Clinton Avenue neighborhood of Albany. The Food Pantry is staffed by volunteers and managed by a part-time coordinator. The Pantry is open two mornings each week. In a recent month the Food Pantry served 215 individuals, each person receiving food for eighteen meals. Food Pantry clients are welcome to attend our worship services, and some do.



First Church Food Pantry volunteers and coordinator

Emergency Overflow Shelter Meals: Since 2008 First Church members have been providing dinner at the Shelter two Fridays a month, from November through April. The Emergency Overflow Shelter is a “shelter of last resort” year-round when other shelters are full. It also serves those who are not eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health problems. Located at First Lutheran Church in Albany, it is open during the winter months and attempts to turn nobody away. About thirty people have contributed food and delivered meals to the shelter.

First Church Readers: First Church Readers is a small group of six people who meet to discuss a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. The group meets once a month in the post-service hour to discuss a book read in the past month.

First Church Choir: Thirteen people, including two paid soloists, make up the choir at First Church. The choir is an essential part of our weekly worship service, September through June. Choir members frequently provide music at drive-in services during the summer. The choir is supplemented on special occasions by instrumentalists (such as brass, strings, and a local jazz trio).



First Church choir, Minister of Music, and instrumentalists.

Describe one event or experience over the last year that has significantly contributed to the spiritual life of the congregation.

Transition Team activities from fall 2017 through spring 2018 involved a large part of the congregation. “Cottage Meetings” were well-attended and helped us know each other better. Those meetings and other gatherings were well-structured to elicit comments about our current situation and hopes for the future of our church.

BUILDING INFORMATION

Buildings: Please describe church-owned or rented buildings and their purposes.

First Church's current sanctuary was built in 1796-97 and is a National Historic Landmark. The parish house, built in 1938, and expanded in 1988 with elevator access, is a three-story building attached to church. It includes a spacious lobby, offices, classrooms, meeting rooms (including Zimmerman Hall on the ground level), choir room, gymnasium, and facilities for our food pantry.

Is your building adequate for your present program? Yes No If no, please explain:

Our building is underutilized. We occasionally make our facilities available for special uses and events. (See below under "Community Involvement.").

Do you plan any capital expenditure during the next five years? If yes, please explain briefly: No

Is there a mortgage indebtedness? Yes No

*2017 - \$2,716,035.00 secured loan against endowment funds [ADD 2019 figure]

How long-standing? 25 Years

Annual rate of repayment - \$184,000

Pastor's study is:

In church

In parsonage

Not provided

Other (please explain)

STAFF INFORMATION

List all paid staff in addition to the pastor:

Senior Minister	Full-time
Minister of Discipleship	Part-time - apx. 20-22 hrs. per week
Minister of Music	Part-time - apx. 22 hrs. per week
Parish Administrator	Full-time
Treasurer	Part-time - apx. 8-10 hrs. per week
Accounts Manager	Part-time - apx. 4-6 hrs. per week
Communication Coordinator	Part-time - apx. 5 hrs. per week
Sexton	Full-time
Assistant Sexton	Half-time
Doorman	Part-time (Sundays only) apx. 4 hrs. per week
Child-care assistants (two)	Part-time (Sundays only) apx. 1.5 hrs. per week
Choir soloists (two)	Part-time (rehearsals and Sundays only) apx. 3 hrs. per week

INFORMATION ON CONSISTORY AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Members of First Church Joint Boards during a recent retreat at Delmar Reformed Church

Membership: What method is used in selecting members?

Members of Consistory are nominated at-large by the congregation. The consistory votes on candidates from the nominee list. Deacons and Elders serve a two-year term and are generally expected to serve two terms (four years). There is a mandatory year-off after four years. There is a separate Board of Trustees, responsible for church facilities and financial assets. Trustees serve three-year terms; there is no limit on number of terms served. The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are set by New York state law and by First Church by-laws.

Members of Consistory and Board of Trustees are elected by members of First Church at the annual congregational meeting in May. We ask for the congregation's prayerful consideration of people whom they think might be gifted and called to serve as our leaders.

The Consistory (boards of Elders and Deacons) meets monthly. The Consistory and the Board of Trustees meet as the "Joint Boards" to approve the annual church budget and to extend a call to a minister. The Senior Elder, Assistant Senior Elder, Senior Deacon, Assistant Senior Deacon, and the President and Vice-President of the Board of Trustees with the Senior Minister form the Leadership Committee. That committee acts as a personnel committee, compiles the annual budget (with input from others) for approval by the Joint Boards, approves building use requests, and advises the Senior Minister, especially between stated meetings of Consistory and the Board of Trustees.

Elders are set apart for a ministry of watchful and responsible care for the welfare and order of the church. They have oversight of all members, including one another, the deacons, and the ministers, equipping everyone to live in harmony with God's Word. At their ordination elders are asked: "Will you faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully study God's Word, oversee the household of faith, encourage spiritual growth, maintain loving discipline?" (From RCA Book of Church

Order) In First Church the Elders help serve communion, assist in home visitation, oversee the spiritual welfare of the congregation, and maintain the membership rolls.

Deacons are set apart for a ministry of mercy, service, and outreach. At their ordination deacons are asked: "Will you faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully manifest Christ's love and care, gather and distribute the offerings of God's people, visit and comfort the distressed, minister to the poor and needy, and strive to advance God's reign of justice and peace?" (From RCA Book of Church Order) In First Church the Deacons help serve communion, are responsible for ushering at Sunday and special services, develop the budget for benevolences, and administer the Deacons' Fund for special assistance to needy individuals.

Trustees are responsible for the building, property, and financial management of First Church. They make decisions concerning the church's endowment fund, capital improvements, two parking lots (one of them leased), Clee Park, and building maintenance. Trustees also are responsible for non-ministerial staff. The Board of Trustees meets four times a year with additional meetings as needed.

List gender and occupation of each current consistory member and trustee.

Elders *indicates second term

Peter Pagerey (Sr. Elder) – 2019* - male - retired engineer
Norma Jean Ballou (Asst. Sr. Elder) – 2019 – female - senior administrative assistant.
Becky Hudak - 2019* - female - retired public school reading specialist
Rebecca Mondore – 2019 – female - medical school educator
Charles Welge – 2020 – male – public health professional
Joeanna Brown – 2020 – female - retired human resource manager

Deacons *indicates second term

Andrew Mondore (Sr. Deacon) – 2020 – male - senior systems programmer
Robert Dorn (Asst. Sr. Deacon) - 2020* - male - track coach
Richard Gardner – 2020 - male
Theresa Brewer – 2019 – female - home health aide / daycare provider
Bill Kendall – 2019 – male - truck driver

Trustees:

Shirley Bone 2020 – female - retired homemaker – registered nurse
David Bradley 2020 – male – retired science teacher
James D. Folts (Pres.) 2021 – male - archivist / historian
Andrew Mondore (Secr.) 2020 – male - senior systems programmer
Edward M. Monthie 2019 – male - retired school teacher / swim coach
Wayne Sivaslian (Financial Secr.) 2021 – male - retired newspaper circulation manager
Joyce Recene 2019 – female - retired tax practitioner
Raymond Van Epps (Treas.) (2019) – male - retired from NYS Dept. of System Implementation and the National Guard
Ross Westhuis (Vice Pres.) 2020 – male - retired minister / retired clinical social worker

CONGREGATION INFORMATION

Age of all active members (baptized and confessing):

10%	0-20
15%	21-34
15%	35-49
30%	50-64
30%	65+

**These numbers are a close estimate of the age ranges of our congregation. We have a high percentage of single-person households—about 35.*

Racial/ethnic composition of congregation:

15%	African-American
85%	Caucasian
0%	Asian
0%	Hispanic
0%	Other (please specify)

**These numbers are a close estimate of our congregation’s composition.*

Few Many Most

x			have had only twelve or fewer years of formal education
		x	have had some education beyond high school
		x	have a college degree
x			have a graduate degree

Few Many Most

x			are scientists and engineers
x			are farmers
x			are business people
	x		are students and teachers
x			are industrial workers
		x	are office workers
	x		are healthcare workers
x			are military personnel
x			are ministers



What specific ministry gifts do you need in your next pastor in relation to these activities?

1. Leadership ability - encourage optimism, hope, energy, and spirit in our congregation.
2. Administrative and supervisory skills
3. Interpersonal communication skills
4. Interactive leadership style
5. Expressive personality

Special training/experience desired (Describe briefly.)

1. Supervisory and administrative experience
2. Ability to communicate well with a diverse congregation and community
3. Ability to relate to a variety of family and household type

Languages. Should your pastor be fluent in any languages other than English?

If yes, please indicate language and importance:

Language: Spanish*

Helpful **Essential** **Must be primary language**

**Some food pantry clients are Spanish-speaking. The Capital District's Hispanic population is increasing. We know of no Protestant church in the area that serves Spanish speakers, and we hope to bring Spanish speakers into our church family.*



Oldest pulpit in the United States

COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND MINISTRY EXPENSES

The salary we are prepared to offer our new pastor: Salary and benefits commensurate with experience and education. Compensation package will meet or exceed Classis of Albany minimums.

The average annual increase to our pastor over the past three years was –
No change (senior minister and interim senior minister declined salary raises given to other staff).

Is a parsonage provided? Yes ___ No x

The benefits/business expenses we will provide our pastor (please check those provided or give amount, as requested):

- x Pension (RCA)
- x Major medical insurance
- x Life insurance
- x Dental insurance
- x Unemployment insurance
- x Disability insurance
- x Provision for sabbatical
- x Annual vacation
- x Housing allowance*
- x Travel reimbursement
- x Social security
- x Book allowance
- x Continuing education allowance

***Is a minister’s housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage a negotiable option?**
Yes No x

**Amount of housing allowance is negotiable. First Church does not have a parsonage.*

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Community served

- Rural, under 2,500
- Town, 2,500-9,999
- Small city, 10,000-49,999
- Metropolitan - Suburban, 50,000+
- Metropolitan - Inner City, 50,000+
- Metropolitan - Urban, 50,000+



First Church summer drive-in service

What makes your church attractive to people in your community?

1. History and heritage (oldest church in upstate New York)
2. Beautiful sanctuary
3. Worship services – effective ministry of the Word and supportive music
4. Summer drive-in worship services
5. Diverse, welcoming congregation
6. Food pantry (continuous since 1980)
7. Church and parish house fully accessible to handicapped
8. Convenient location by car (near I-787) and by foot (North Pearl Street, downtown)
9. Ample parking facilities
10. Parish house spaces available for special events and uses
11. First Church's Clee Park (next to church) welcomes visitors

Cooperative ministry: In what ways have you cooperated with other churches in your community during the past year?

1. Covenant relationship with FOCUS churches
2. FOCUS joint services (four times a year)
3. Food pantry (affiliated with FOCUS programs)
4. "Pilgrim's Walk" discussion groups in facilities for senior citizens
5. "Non-Violent Communication" groups involving people from several churches
6. Dinners for homeless shelter residents
7. Youth mission trip to Erie, Pa.
8. Scholarships to Camp Fowler (on Sacandaga Lake, associated with RCA)

Community involvement: In what community programs or projects have you participated (as an organization, not as individuals) during the past year?

1. Alcoholics Anonymous weekly meeting location
2. Back to School Program and Christmas Shop for neighborhood children.
3. Thanksgiving food baskets for neighborhood families
4. Albany County Board of Elections polling site

Describe changes currently occurring in the community in which your congregation ministers, and identify ways God is acting among you to meet these new challenges.

1. Deteriorating housing in Clinton Avenue neighborhood near First Church
2. New residential development in downtown Albany (high-end condominiums and apartments, lower-cost housing)
3. Planned pedestrian walkway from Clinton Avenue to Corning Preserve along Hudson River waterfront
4. Proposed gas-fired electric power facility on Sheridan Avenue (prompts debate about renewable energy sources for city)
5. Persistent homelessness evident in downtown Albany
6. Increasing immigrant population in Albany and region
7. Many successes and many problems in Albany City public schools
8. Increasing demand for food from First Church's Food Pantry
9. Albany is one of the least-churched metropolitan areas in the U.S.

Leaders, members, and staff of First Church are aware of changes, progress, and problems in our city and region. We devote attention and resources to those issues where we think we can make a difference. First Church is providing increased volunteer and financial resources to our food pantry, and recently obtained two grants to cover part of the cost of food. The church has hosted public meetings concerning the proposed power facility. First Church tries to make its worship services a comfortable experience for the unchurched while retaining the Reformed liturgy. Our church facilities are made available for occasional ecumenical and community events.

Which denominations or religions are present in the Capital District?

Armenian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, American Baptist, Buddhist, Episcopal, Greek Orthodox, Hinduism, Islam, Jewish, Evangelical Lutheran, Lutheran (Missouri Synod), Presbyterian, United Methodist, Pentecostal, Unitarian-Universalist, United Church of Christ, and others. Roman Catholics comprise about two-thirds of the population of the Capital District that is affiliated with a religious group, according to a newspaper report a few years ago.

Outreach: What percentage of the people who live within a mile of your church are unchurched, and what is your strategy to reach unchurched people in your community?

Percentage is unknown. Anyone is welcome to attend worship services at First Church, and to participate in programs and activities. The “community” from which First Church draws its members is the entire Capital District. Our congregation is more a “destination congregation” than a “neighborhood church.” See also responses to question above, “What makes your church attractive to people in your community?”

The income level of the people in our congregation tends to be:

- about average for our community
- somewhat below the rest of the community
- somewhat higher than the rest of the community

Describe your community and school system:

Albany is the capital of New York State, conveniently located near New York City, Boston, Saratoga Springs, Montreal, and New York’s Adirondack Park. Albany has long been a center of government, finance, higher education, and transportation. Over the past few decades the Capital District has become prominent in high-technology research, development, and manufacturing (computer chips, pharmaceuticals).

Albany is a community of over 98,000 people. Albany combined with the cities of Troy and Schenectady and surrounding suburbs comprise the Capital District, with a population of approximately 881,830. There are multiple colleges and universities in the area including SUNY University at Albany, SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, Empire State College (distance learning), Hudson Valley Community College, Siena College, College of St. Rose, Russell Sage College, Schenectady Community College, Skidmore College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Sage Colleges, and Union College, which includes schools of medicine, law, and pharmacy.

The Albany City School District has 18 schools including 12 elementary, three middle schools, and one comprehensive high school, serving a student body of 9,500. Most of Albany’s 12 elementary schools are neighborhood schools with an open enrollment policy. Three are magnet schools with specialized curricula. All elementary schools offer full-day pre-kindergarten and most offer full-day kindergarten.

Albany High School features four themed academies, the prestigious International Baccalaureate program, and one of the largest selections of Advanced Placement courses offered in the Capital Region. At the elementary level, the district offers full-day prekindergarten at every school and at several community locations, and outstanding school-choice options that include three theme-based magnet elementary schools, the Dual Language Program and open enrollment options across the district.

OTHER INFORMATION

List of the last three senior ministers:

Name:	Dates of service:
John Paarlberg	2003-2017
Gregg Mast	1988-2002
James Van Hoeven	1979-1987

Are there any particular ministers' profile you wish to have sent? (Up to five profiles will be sent at a time. You may request replacements.)

No preference at this time.

Appendixes

1. First Church Budget 2019
2. Sunday worship bulletin
3. Summer worship bulletin
4. Consistorial report
5. "Family" monthly newsletter (current issue)
6. Internet links of interest

The First Church in Albany

2019 Budget

As Of: November

13, 2018

2019 Budget

BUDGET SUMMARY	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
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RECEIPTS

General Operating Receipts	578,700	552,470	450,264	582,570	545,327	601,791	572,453
Other Operating Receipts	14,600	14,600	16,156	15,600	23,991	14,700	13,722
Designated Operating Receipts	235,940	240,000	215,426	171,940	193,797	152,940	153,070
TOTAL	829,240	807,070	681,846	770,110	763,115	769,431	739,245

EXPENDITURES

Administration - Salaries	236,789	252,537	198,635	252,017	246,299	225,795	226,525
Administration - Other	131,900	122,100	95,000	134,948	130,947	137,954	132,690
Office Supplies	10,000	11,000	7,487	11,000	13,386	11,000	10,840
Church Home	108,300	97,700	112,147	107,600	105,697	113,400	111,780
Board of Deacons	33,086	33,943	24,476	33,755	34,582	32,405	31,907
Community Outreach	37,240	37,240	29,543	26,740	36,372	26,740	28,991
Worship, Music and the Arts	23,900	23,500	20,940	23,500	25,299	23,500	25,658
Christian Education	3,400	5,900	7,867	6,400	3,892	9,400	8,254
Membership and Congregational Care	7,350	7,150	7,095	8,900	13,018	13,018	3,389
Stewardship	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	215	2,000	810
Loan Management Account (Merrill Lynch)	228,000	204,000	178,000	162,000	184,000	144,000	144,000
Pastoral Search	10,000	10,000	656	0	0		
TOTAL	831,965	807,070	681,846	768,860	793,707	739,212	724,844

Endowment Fund Draw Downs	Budget	Actual	Monthly
2016	383,000	348,000	29,000
2017	381,000	378,000	31,750
2018	396,000	231,000	33,000
2019	448,000		37,335

2019 Budget

NOTE	COA #	RECEIPTS	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
General Operating Receipts									
	4000	Pledges	140,000	145,000	110,973	156,000	134,498	154,000	162,399
	4000	Other Envelop Giving	27,600	25,470	28,034	20,870	30,452	25,791	22,019
	4010	Plate Offerings	2,000	3,000	1,574	3,000	3,180	3,000	3,405
A	4030	Endowment Fund - Draw Down to Meet Operating Expenses	220,000	192,000	152,000	219,000	194,000	239,000	204,000
	4032	Parking Lot Rent	178,800	175,200	146,000	171,600	171,600	168,000	168,000
	4032	Property and School Tax Refund from Maiden Lane Parking	6,000	7,000	5,776	7,000	5,973	7,000	6,134
		RCA Loan - Interest	1,500	1,500	997	1,500	1,999	1,500	2,253
	4199	Building Use	300	300	2,520	200	465	500	1,244
	4040	Flower Memorials	2,500	3,000	2,390	3,400	3,160	3,000	2,999
		Total	578,700	552,470	450,264	582,570	545,327	601,791	572,453
Other Operating Receipts									
	4090	Youth Ministries Income	0	0	2,000	500	0	500	0
	4100	Community Food Ministry Programs	2,500	2,500	2,783	3,000	1,751	3,000	2,730
	4110	Community Outreach Worker Support - Grant	1,500	1,500	1,814	1,500	750	1,500	1,297
	4150	Denominational Dues	3,000	3,000	2,720	3,000	3,857	3,000	3,017
	4180	Family Newsletter Contributions	600	600	478	600	528	700	565
	4045	Miscellaneous	7,000	7,000	6,361	7,000	17,105	6,000	6,113
		Total	14,600	14,600	16,156	15,600	23,991	14,700	13,722
Designated Operating Receipts									
B	8007/8008	Building Loan Repayment - (Endowment Draw Down)	228,000	204,000	178,000	162,000	184,000	144,000	144,000
C		Food Pantry Supv - FOCUS -Community Ministries Fund (Restricted Acct)	7,440	7,500	7,500	7,440	7,440	7,440	7,440
D		Restricted Account - Draw Down	0	0	4,261				
		Drive-In Ministry (Restricted Acct)	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	2,357	0	0
		Accrued Funds EOY - Checking Account	0	25,500	23,665	0	0		
	6005	Summer Program (Grants/Fees)	500	1,000	0	1,500	0	1,500	1,630
		Total	235,940	240,000	215,426	171,940	193,797	152,940	153,070
		TOTAL RECEIPTS	829,240	807,070	681,846	770,110	763,115	769,431	739,245

2019 Budget

Note	COA #	EXPENDITURES	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
ADMINISTRATION - SALARIES									
1	5000	Senior Minister	0	0	0	45,124	33,843	45,124	45,124
	5000	Interim Minister	45,124	45,124	37,619	0	11,282	0	0
2	5000	Minister for Discipleship and Mission (P/T)	28,587	37,839	26,200	37,839	37,839	37,323	37,323
	5000	Minister of Music (P/T)	34,402	33,066	28,051	33,066	33,066	32,418	32,418
	5000	Communication Coordinator (P/T)	6,630	19,768	4,597	19,768	19,769	19,381	19,381
	5000	Parish Administrator	39,996	30,600	31,959	30,600	30,278	7,400	9,212
	5000	Accounting Manager (P/T)	8,876	8,701	7,382	8,701	8,702	8,531	8,530
	5000	Treasurer (P/T)	4,394	4,223	3,583	4,223	4,224	4,141	4,141
3	5000	Sexton	9,280	35,676	30,397	35,676	36,574	34,977	35,011
4	5000	Sexton (New)	32,000		0				
	5283	Assistant Sexton/Food Pantry Assistant (P/T) (7105)	14,000	27,040	19,299	26,520	20,208	26,000	26,131
	6040	Child Care (P/T)	3,500	3,500	2,580	3,500	3,007	3,500	3,135
	7100	Extra Help (P/T)--incl. Overtime	10,000	7,000	6,968	7,000	7,507	7,000	6,119
		TOTAL ADMINISTRATION - SALARIES	236,789	252,537	198,635	252,017	246,299	225,795	226,525
ADMINISTRATION - OTHER									
5	5013	FICA - Medicare (5680)	21,600	20,000	15,603	25,626	24,999	23,010	27,243
	5010	Pensions	25,000	24,300	16,167	21,910	22,227	23,247	22,661
	5014	Life/Hospital/Disability Insurance	28,000	21,000	18,421	27,612	24,069	31,897	24,189
	5020	Car Allowance - Interim Pastor	1,500	1,500	481	0	394		
	5020	Car Allowance - Senior Minister	0	0	0	1,500	363	1,500	692
	5020	Car Allowance - Minister for Discipleship and Mission	800	1,000	764	1,000	1,153	1,000	1,198
	5030	Housing Allowance - Interim Pastor	36,000	36,000	30,000	0	9,000		
	5030	Housing Allowance - Senior Minister	0	0	0	36,000	27,000	36,000	36,000
	5030	Housing Allowance - Minister for Discipleship and Mission	11,000	13,500	10,000	13,500	13,500	13,500	12,500
6	5030	Housing Allowance - Chaplain to Weathervanes	0	800	800	800	800	800	800
	5040	Professional Development	3,000	3,000	1,993	2,000	358	2,000	1,706
	5060	Discretionary Fund	1,000	1,000	771	1,000	3,368	1,000	1,701
	5262	Sabbatical Fund	4,000	0	0	4,000	3,716	4,000	4,000
		TOTAL ADMINISTRATION - OTHER	131,900	122,100	95,000	134,948	130,947	137,954	132,690
OFFICE SUPPLIES									
	5101	Postage	4,000	4,000	2,923	4,000	5,406	4,000	3,537
	5110	Office Supplies	6,000	7,000	4,564	7,000	7,980	7,000	7,303
		TOTAL OFFICE SUPPLIES	10,000	11,000	7,487	11,000	13,386	11,000	10,840

2019 Budget

Note	COA #	EXPENDITURES	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
CHURCH HOME									
	7000	Light, Fuel, Water	24,000	21,000	18,327	23,000	21,240	30,000	16,957
	7005	Equipment Purchases	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	0	3,000	0
	7010	Insurance--Fire/Liability/Workers' Comp (5016)	22,000	14,000	20,383	18,000	18,641	18,000	16,483
	7020	Repairs	5,000	5,000	13,963	3,000	6,018	3,000	4,835
	7030	Recurring Services	20,000	17,000	16,568	17,000	20,708	17,000	15,533
	7040	Maintenance Supplies	4,000	4,000	2,645	4,000	4,209	4,000	2,829
	7055	Historic Room	200	200	0	200	0	200	0
	7060	Telephone/Internet	4,000	4,000	2,809	4,500	4,638	3,800	5,116
	7080	Contingencies	2,000	2,000	5,220	2,000	1,161	2,000	20,740
	7093	Financial Services-Checking Account	200	200	170	200	90	200	287
7	7094	Accounting Financial Review (formerly Audit)	0	3,800	3,875	7,000	7,400	5,000	7,105
	7095	Property Taxes--Parking Lots	9,100	9,000	9,053	9,200	8,873	9,200	8,850
	7096	School Taxes - Parking Lots	12,300	13,000	12,182	14,000	12,561	14,000	12,798
	8000	ADA Compliance	2,000	2,000	1,000	2,000	0	4,000	0
	8040	Clee Park Maintenance	2,000	1,000	5,952	2,000	158	0	247
		TOTAL CHURCH HOME	108,300	97,700	112,147	107,600	105,697	113,400	111,780
BOARD OF DEACONS									
	5200	Classis Denominational Assessment	15,886	16,743	12,776	16,955	17,782	16,955	16,957
	5202	Regional Synod of Albany - Synod Ministries	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,000	2,000
	5204	Regional Synod of Albany - Fowler Ministries	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	2,000	2,000
	5205	Church World Services	500	500	500				
	5210	New Brunswick Seminary	3,000	3,000	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
	5210	Western Seminary	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
	5210	PIMS - Joshua Vis	3,350	3,350	3,350	3,150	3,150	3,150	3,150
	5210	PIMS - John Hubers	3,350	3,350	3,350	3,150	3,150	3,150	3,150
	5210	Church World Service (RCA)	0	0	0	500	500	400	400
	5250	Capital Area Council of Churches	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
	5260	Deacons Fund	500	500	500	500	500	500	0
	5332	Room For All	500	500	500	500	500	250	250
		TOTAL BOARD OF DEACONS	33,086	33,943	24,476	33,755	34,582	32,405	31,907

2019 Budget

Note	COA #	EXPENDITURES	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
COMMUNITY OUTREACH									
	5280	Community Food Ministries	20,000	20,000	16,972	7,500	16,850	7,500	10,333
8	5263	Neighborhood Ministry - FOCUS Covenant	6,000	6,000	4,500	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
	5281	Food Pantries of the Capital District	500	500	0	500	500	500	500
9	5282	Food Pantry Supervision (FOCUS)	7,440	7,440	6,200	7,440	7,590	7,440	7,440
	5320	Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
	5336	Capital City Rescue Mission	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
	5339	Small Groups Ministry	200	200	35	200	92	200	28
	5610	Media Advertising (incl. Print Advertising and Promotional Material)	1,500	1,500	100	1,500	1,798	1,500	1,148
	5615	Website	600	600	736	600	542	600	542
		TOTAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH	37,240	37,240	29,543	26,740	36,372	26,740	28,991
WORSHIP, MUSIC AND THE ARTS									
	5490	Flowers	4,000	4,000	2,831	4,000	4,429	4,000	4,780
	5413	Choir Soloists	8,000	8,000	5,935	7,500	7,165	7,500	8,332
	5410	Sheet Music	500	400	539	400	534	400	938
	5412	Organ/Piano Upkeep	4,000	4,000	5,112	3,800	952	3,800	800
	5414	Instrumentalists/Guest Soloists	2,900	2,600	3,760	2,800	5,088	2,800	3,570
	5416	Substitute Organists	700	700	300	700	2,975	700	840
	5420	Choir Enrichment	100	100	127	100	44	100	0
	5425	Hymnals/Copyright permissions	300	300	214	300	438	300	274
	5435	Children In Worship	500	500	0	500	639	500	344
	5440	Bulletins	500	500	85	500	279	500	564
	5470	Worship Supplies	1,000	1,000	921	1,500	1,470	1,500	3,046
	5500	Drive-In Ministry	400	400	366	400	536	400	1,120
	5510	Pulpit Supply	1,000	1,000	750	1,000	750	1,000	1,050
		TOTAL WORSHIP, MUSIC AND THE ARTS	23,900	23,500	20,940	23,500	25,299	23,500	25,658
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION									
	6000	Church School / Church Family Events	0	0	0	500	0	500	212
	6005	Summer Program for Children	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	3,088
	6010	Youth Fellowship Groups	1,000	1,500	471	1,500	1,697	1,500	153
10	6014	Youth Fellowship Mission (Formerly Mission-Senior High)	0	1,500	6,140	1,500	450	1,500	3,725
	6020	Summer Camp - Camp Fowler	1,000	1,500	950	1,500	1,075	2,000	438
	6030	Educational Resources	400	400	88	400	506	400	225
	6035	Journeys of Faith	500	500	0	500	0	0	0
	6070	Adult Education (incl.Wednesdays,PostService)	500	500	218	500	164	500	413
		TOTAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	3,400	5,900	7,867	6,400	3,892	9,400	8,254

2019 Budget

Note	COA #	EXPENDITURES	2019 Budget DRAFT	2018 Budget	2018 YTD	2017 Budget	2017 YTD	2016 Budget	2016 Actual
MEMBERSHIP AND CONGREGATIONAL CARE									
	5685	Family Newsletter	3,500	3,500	2,250	3,500	2,000	3,500	2,900
	5120	Post Service Supplies	700	750	141	500	548	500	489
	5705	Audio Ministries (Tape/CD)	500	500	0	500	0	500	0
11		Leadership Development-Congregational	250						
	8050	375 Anniversary Planning Committee	0	0	1,624	2,000	10,470	600	0
	5730	Diversity Team	400	400	0	400	0	400	0
12	5720	Retreats	2,000	2,000	3,080	2,000	0	2,000	0
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AND CONGREGATIONAL CARE			7,350	7,150	7,095	8,900	13,018	7,500	3,389
STEWARDSHIP									
	7085	Stewardship	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	215	2,000	810
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION LOAN									
	2305	Loan Management Account (Merrill Lynch) - Principal & Interest	228,000	204,000	178,000	162,000	184,000	144,000	144,000
PASTORAL SEARCH									
	8055	Senior Minister Search Committee	10,000	10,000	656				

NOTES

Area	Note	Explanation/Recommendation
RECEIPTS	A	Maximum approved by Board of Trustees
	B	Maximum approved by Board of Trustees
	C	Approved by Leadership/Board of Trustees
	D	New Budget Category
EXPENDITURES	1	Budget/Expenditures based on balance of interim minister contract
	2	Position now 1/2 time with salary based on Classis approved 2019 minimums
	3	Retiring End of February 2019
	4	Position approved to start NLT 1/1/19
	5	Increase due to adjusted SECA assistance to ministers
	6	Eliminate from budget and suggested to seek other fund source
	7	Financial Reviews completed through 2016. review reinstated for 2017FY in 2020
	8	Based on written covenant with FOCUS
	9	Based on Memorandum of Understanding with FOCUS
	10	Next mission trip 2020
	11	New Budget Item - to foster leadership development within congregation
	12	Expense offset in most part by attendee payments

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207 ~ (518) 463-4449

Email: info@firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Website: www.firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

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 all are loved.

Creation Season: From the Earth September 23, 2018

Prelude *Variations on Royal Oak (Hymn 256 All Things Bright and Beautiful)*
Raymond Haan

Announcements

Call to Worship

Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 124:8

Amen.

Praise the Lord from the earth

ALL: Praise the Lord, you sea monsters and all deeps,

Praise the Lord, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind!

Men: Praise God, mountains and all hills,

Women: Praise God, fruit trees and all cedars!

Men: Praise God, wild animals and tame,

creeping things and flying birds!

Women: Praise God, rulers and common people,

women and men alike, old and young together!

Let us praise the Lord from the earth,

ALL: for God's name alone is exalted in earth and heaven.

from Psalm 148

*Hymn (insert)

Glory to God Above

WELLINGTON HALL

Prayer of Confession

**When we forget, O God,
That there is no mineral or plant in the ground,
But tells of your goodness,
No creature on earth or life in the sea,
But proclaims your delight,
No star in the sky or anything beneath the sun,
But is full of your blessing,
Forgive us.
Lighten our understanding to your presence all around.
Kindle our will to be caring for Creation.**

The prayer may continue in silence.

Assurance of Pardon

*The Peace

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.
Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

*Response (Tune: #432 - ARGENTINA)

**May the God of hope go with us every day,
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.
Praying, let us work for peace,
Singing, share our joy with all,
Working for a world that's new,
Faithful when we hear Christ's call.**

A Word with Children

THE WORD OF GOD

The Prayer for Illumination

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scripture, may your word be heard; in the meditation of our hearts, may your word be known; and in the faithfulness of our lives, may your word be shown. Amen.

The Old Testament Lesson Job 28:1-11
The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Lesson Matthew 6:25-33
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Anthem *God, You Made All Things for Singing* Harold Friedell

God, you made all things for singing, even canyons carved from stone. Thunder sets the hard rock ringing with the hymn the skies intone. Alleluia! Yours the praise and yours alone. As the clap and roll of thunder give the rocks their note to start, Spirit, free the songs of wonder waiting in the thankful heart. Alleluia! Help each voice to sing its part. Join with us, in all our singing. Make our music, Lord, your own. Be the bass note deeply ringing. Be the highest overtone. Alleluia! Yours the praise and yours alone.

Text: Thomas H. Troeger Used by permission of Onelicense #A-700689

The Sermon Wonder and Worry

The Prayer for Blessing on the Word

THE RESPONSE TO GOD

*Hymn 287 *God Folds the Mountains Out of Rock* REVISION

Offering

Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name; you are mine. When you walk through the waters, I'll be with you; you will never sink beneath the waves. When the fire is burning all around you, you will never be consumed by the flames. When the fear of loneliness is looming, then remember I am at your side. When you dwell in the exile of a stranger, remember you are precious in my eyes. You are mine, O my child, I am your Father, and I love you with a perfect love.

Text: Gerard Markland. Copyright Kevin Mayhew.

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*Doxology (Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, no. 455)
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise, praise Creator, praise the Son,
Praise Holy Spirit, Three in One,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Blessing of the Prayer Shawls

The Joys and Concerns of the Church

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

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, for ever. Amen.

*Hymn 291 *O God of Earth and Altar*

LLANGLOFFAN

*Charge and Blessing

Dear pilgrim,

As you go into the wilderness of the land and of your heart—
May you experience the ever-flowing grace of God's presence!

May you be immersed so fully in God's love that you learn to let go and swim!

May you engage deeply and radically with the natural world,
as steward, co-creator, and friend!

May you drink anew from the divine source, the stream of living water!

And may you be transformed,

may the stagnant waters of your spirit begin to flow,
and may all which is dead in you rise again!

God is here.

The river awaits. Let the adventure begin. Amen.

Written by Lisa Hershey Kutolowski From The River of Life Prayer Book for the Connecticut River
Pilgrimage 2017, available courtesy of Kairos Earth.

Postlude

The Heavens Are Telling

Benedetto Marcello

AΩ

*Those who are able, please stand

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS: Liturgist: The Rev. Susan Vincent Cox; Preacher: The Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden; Minister of Music: Mary Bon.

We welcome all who gather to worship God this morning, especially visitors and friends from near and far. Please sign our guest book or complete a visitor's card (found in the pew rack) and place it in the offering plate. There is an elevator in our building, which makes every floor accessible. Please join us for refreshments and conversation after worship.

First Church is an accessible building: We have an elevator so you can reach every floor.

Hearing assist devices are available for your use. Please ask an usher.

The Confession is based on prayer from Celtic Prayers from Iona by J. Philip Newell.

Children 4 and under are welcome in the Nursery following "A Word with Children."



An Automated External Defibrillator “**AED**” is located in the lobby attached to the wall outside of the **workroom**.

The flowers this morning are given in honor of Joanna Brown and family and her abiding faith, by Cheryl Gowie.

There are **crayons, games and puzzle sheets** available for children. Please speak to one of our ushers.

Pocket Prayer Shawls are available at today’s Worship. Please ask one of our greeters and they can provide a basket of pocket prayer shawls to choose from. Pocket Prayer Shawls are made and filled with prayers and can be given to someone in need of comfort, healing, or a reminder of the closeness of God.

Copies of our newsletter “**The Family**” and information about First Church are available at the Hospitality table in the lobby.

Parking Sticker Reminder: All regular attenders at First Church should have the orange parking stickers displayed in the rear driver side passenger window of your vehicles. If you need of a parking sticker, please fill out the Parking Sticker Registration Application located on the lobby display table and in the Narthex then return it to Valerie Williams, parish administrator, to receive the parking sticker.

Music Note: The offertory *Do Not Be Afraid* is based on four verses from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 43 with references to Matthew 26. The song was a commission that Stopford took in 2010 from Andrew and Kathryn Radley on the occasion of the baptism of their daughter at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Uplyme. It is – like Stopford’s other music – tuneful, melodic, memorable and moving.

URGENT NEED

The Food Pantry has an urgent need for the following personal care items:

- Deodorant
- Razors
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Feminine Products

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

IN HOSPITAL: The Rev. John Bowen (Albany Medical Center), Jeffrey Curry (Albany Medical Center), Betty Pallone (Baptist Health in Scotia), Nate Marable (VA Hospital), Arthur Mickel (uncle of Virginia Giguere), Hudson Park Rehab/Nursing Home), Thora Paton (Teresian House).

AT HOME: Kenneth Jackson, Marge LeFevre (friend of Karen Van Epps), Florine Curry and Jeriesha Coleman (Jeffrey Curry's mother and girlfriend), Paul Ammerman (brother of Marilyn Bradley), Shirley Farrell, Gerard and Angelika Harrington, Steven Hoffman, Sam Dedes (son of Barb & Dave Andrews), Anthony Brown, Archie Burton (great uncle of Kim Gattie), Daniel, Shannon and Logan Reohr, Conor James Bryce (grandson of Craig Bryce) Rebecca Murray (daughter of Barb Andrews), Peter Sheehan (husband of Audrey's friend) Cheryl Gowie, Lin Delaney (cousin of Cheryl Gowie), Jean LaCrosse (friend of Jean Lamere), Joanna Brown, Noel Concepcion, Sheila (daughter of a friend of Caroline Wirth), Laverne Minerbrook (mother of John Minerbrook), Patty Mostowy (girlfriend of John Minerbrook), Deborah Martino (friend of John Minerbrook), John Utley (brother of Judith Utley-Suess), Dottie Backlund (friend of Joyce Recene), Ed Baskerville, Brenton Austin (Wanda and Dave Peters' son), Megan Gilgore, David Duitsman (cousin of Marilyn Bradley), Kristi Jane Romolo (cousin of Shirley Bone), Michelle Thompson (friend of Jennifer Recene-Gallagher), Miriam Stuart (friend of Deb Anderson), Michelle Madretzke (friend of Jennifer Recene-Gallagher), Harriet Stockhoff, Nelson Gillespie, Wim & Mia Westman, Carol Faulkner (friend of Joanna Brown), Olivia Gaydushek (granddaughter of Karen Van Epps), Barbara Papale, Donna Schultz, Carol Connely (friend of Donna Schultz), Mary Poberam (friend of Donna Schultz) Laura Arroyo (relative of Donna Schultz).

IN ARMED FORCES / OTHER FOREIGN SERVICE: Capt. Grant Staats, U.S. Navy SEALS. Hannah Baranski, U.S. Army (great granddaughter of Shirley Farrell)

OUR MISSIONARIES: Joshua Vis (mission engagement in Israel/Palestine). The Rev. Dr. John Hubers, professor and consultant for the Christian/Muslim relations program at the Mekane Yesus ("Place of Jesus") Seminary in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

IN SYMPATHY: Our prayers and sympathy are with Clay, Adrienne and Clover on the death of Clay's father, Robert Butler, Jr., on September 12, 2018.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday	9/23	Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30 am Worship Service - Sanctuary The Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, preaching 11:45 pm Care Callers Meeting – Sue’s office
Monday	9/24	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open 6:30 pm – Leadership Meeting
Tuesday	9/25	12:00 pm Adult Bible Study
Wednesday	9/26	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open 12:00 pm AA Meeting 12:00 pm Prayer at Noon
Thursday	9/27	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	9/30	Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30 am Worship Service - Sanctuary The Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, preaching Children & Worship Open House (during worship) Post Service: Journey Through the Psalms

SHARE PRESENTATION

On October 7 after worship, representatives of SHARE, Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy, will join us after worship as part of our Creation Season. They will present their concerns, and invite attendees into conversation, about the hazards of the proposal to bring the Sheridan Avenue power plant back online using fossil fuels. Rather than using fracked gas, SHARE seeks to encourage a plan to run the power plant slated to heat and power Empire State Plaza and other buildings with clean renewable energy. Come to listen, to learn, and to ask questions about this project that lies 0.3 miles up the street from First Church.

We welcome you to the Drive-in worship at the First Church in Albany and invite you to sign a registration card. The worship leader this morning is the Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff. We thank Peter Subers for her ministry of music.

The Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff is the Interim Campus Protestant Minister at Union College and Minister of Spiritual Formation at Journey UCC. Ordained by the United Church of Christ in 1994, Heather has served congregations in the Boston area and in Columbia, Maryland. She offers pastoral care at the FOCUS Breakfast Club each Wednesday morning.

The special offerings received at the Drive-In Worship will support this summer has 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.

Church offering envelopes and copies of our newsletter, *THE FAMILY*, are available by request; please speak with one of our ushers.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday	7/22	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
	9:00 am	Drive-In Worship
	10:00 am	Worship Service in the Chapel (Main Floor) The Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff, preaching
	11:00 am	Lemonade Lull
Monday	7/23	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open
Tuesday	7/24	12:30 pm No Bible Study
Wednesday	7/25	9:00 am – 11:30 am – Food Pantry Open 12:00 pm AA Meeting
Thursday	7/26	11:00 am – 1:00 pm – CLEEO'S HOTDOGS
Sunday	7/29	Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
	9:00 am	Drive-In Worship
	10:00 am	Worship Service in the Chapel (Main Floor) The Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, preaching
	11:00 am	Lemonade Lull

Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden will be on vacation thru July 23rd. She will back in the office on Tuesday, July 24, 2018. If you have an emergency, please contact Rev. Susan Vincent-Cox at (518) 796-8793.

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207 ~ (518) 463-4449

Email: info@firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Website: www.firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Sunday Drive-in
Worship: 9:00 am

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost July 22, 2018

Musical Prelude Welcome and

Announcements Call to

Worship

Prayer of the Day

Musical Offering

Joys and Concerns of the Church

The Prayers of the People

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, for ever. Amen.

Offering and Offertory

Prayer of Dedication

The Scripture Lesson

Mark 6:30-56

The Sermon

Stepping In, Stepping Out

Blessing and Dismissal



Annual Consistorial Report

REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA • TRANSFORMED AND TRANSFORMING

for the year ending December 31, 2017

The Book of Church Order requires that each consistory shall make an annual report of statistical information and on the spiritual state of their congregation. Information reported by consistories helps RCA assemblies to “equip congregations to follow Christ in mission” and also gives the local church an opportunity to examine and reflect on its mission and ministry.

Parts 1a and 1b ask for quantitative information that is for the benefit of the General Synod, regional synod, and classis.

Parts 2a and 2b are for the benefit of the classis and include open-ended questions to assist the consistory in reflection on the ministry of the church.

First Church in Albany
110 N Pearl St
Albany, New York 12207-2231

The label above reflects the address the Office of the General Synod maintains as your church mailing address. If any of the information above is incorrect, please submit the updated information to your classis stated clerk.

ONLINE FORM

Please fill out this form electronically.
Visit www.rca.org/crf
and follow the instructions found on that screen.

Print a copy of your completed form.

Part 1a

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS: *Revision of membership rolls is to be made at the end of each calendar year. The figures are to be the totals in each category. (If your church is a union or federated church, please supply RCA-related figures only.)*

<p>1. Church Households: <i>Indicate the number of households living as one family at one address, in which there is at least one confessing member. (Include single military personnel and students with their family at the home address.)</i></p>	<p><u>110</u></p>	<p>6. Adherents: <i>Indicate the number of individuals who participate in the life, work, and worship of the church but are not members.</i></p>	<p><u>28</u></p>
<p>2. Confessing Members: <i>Indicate the number of members who have received Christian baptism and have been received by the Board of Elders through profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or presentation of a satisfactory certificate of transfer of membership from another Christian church, and who make faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the use of the Lord's Supper.</i></p>	<p><u>159</u></p>	<p>7. Average Worship Attendance: <i>Indicate the average of the actual count of all persons present for weekly worship service/s. (Give the average for the entire year.)</i></p>	<p><u>75</u></p>
<p>3. Inactive Members: <i>Indicate the total number of members who have been removed by the Board of Elders from the active confessing membership roll.</i></p>	<p><u>187</u></p>	<p>GAINS:</p> <p>8. Received on Confession: <i>Indicate the number of individuals who have been received by the elders upon confession or reaffirmation of faith.</i></p>	<p><u> </u></p>
<p>4. Baptized Members: <i>Indicate the number of members who have received Christian baptism, who may or may not participate at the Lord's Table, and who have not been received by the Board of Elders as confessing members. (This figure must be annually adjusted for baptized children who have been transferred with their parents into or out of the congregation.)</i></p>	<p><u>51</u></p>	<p>9. Received on Certificate: <i>Indicate the number of individuals who have presented a satisfactory certificate of transfer from another church.</i></p>	<p><u> </u></p>
<p>5. Total Membership will be autocalculated (the sum of 2 through 4).</p>	<p><u>397</u></p>	<p>LOSSES: <i>Indicate the number of confessing and inactive members whose names have been removed from the membership roll.</i></p>	<p><u> </u></p>
		<p>10. Transferred</p>	<p><u>2</u></p>
		<p>11. Deceased</p>	<p><u>6</u></p>
		<p>12. All Other Removals from Roll</p>	<p><u>7</u></p>
		<p>BAPTISMS: <i>Indicate the number of individuals baptized.</i></p>	<p><u> </u></p>
		<p>13. Infants</p>	<p><u>2</u></p>
		<p>14. Adults</p>	<p><u> </u></p>

Note: Figures for questions 15, 16, and 17 are no longer required as of 2005.

Membership data collected in this section is for the benefit of the General Synod, regional synod, and classis and is reported in the *Minutes of General Synod*.

Part 1b

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP: *The dollar amounts listed below are in* U.S. Dollars.

INCOME:

(18a) *income from other than living donors (i.e., bequests, investment income, interest income of any type)* \$ 391513

(18b) *special offerings for building expansion, property investment, land purchases, new building construction, major renovation, capital fund drives* \$ 250

(18c) *amount received from RCA assemblies or institutions (i.e., salary supplements, program aid, grants)* \$ _____

(18d) *income from property, programs, or associations that support the church budget (i.e., income from rentals, cemetery, nursery school, bazaars, fellowship clubs, women's groups, etc.)* \$ 172065

(18e) *total offerings received as part of regular or weekly offerings (i.e., checks, currency, stock, etc.)* \$ 228610

18. Total Income will be autocalculated (the sum of 18a through 18e). \$ 792438

EXPENSES:

(19a) Assessments: *total assessment amount paid for General Synod, regional synod, and classis* \$ 17782

(19b) RCA-Related Contributions: *church's giving in support of the programs of the RCA (i.e., RCA Care Network/RCWS, Partner-in-Mission shares, Mission of the Month, denominational fund drives, undesignated gifts, etc.); New Brunswick and Western Theological Seminaries; the Ministerial Formation Certification Agency; RCA colleges Hope, Central, and Northwestern; the Board of Benefits Services; RCA camps and conference centers; Words of Hope; etc.* \$ 18996

(19c) Other Contributions: *church's giving in support of non-RCA programs (i.e., councils of churches, food pantries, prison ministries, non-RCA missionaries, other organizations, etc.)* \$ 57190

19. Total Contributions will be auto-calculated (the sum of 19a through 19c). \$ 93968

20. Resources used for congregational ministry and mission will be autocalculated (the difference of 19 subtracted from 18.) \$ 698470

Financial data collected in this section is for the benefit of the General Synod, regional synod, and classis and is reported in the *Minutes of General Synod*.

Part 2a

THE LIFE AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE CONGREGATION:

These questions encourage reflection as a consistory and are intended for the use of the classis.

1. What signs of transformation have been visible in the life and ministry of your congregation this year?

Pastor retired after 14+ years; Interim Pastor begins
Celebration of 375th anniversary of the church

2. How is your congregation actively ...

- a. developing passionate and reproducible disciples who live and love like Jesus?
- b. mobilizing emerging leaders for service in the church and in the world?
- c. embracing your mission to the world and sharing the good news of the gospel with everyone?
(Please share specific stories, experiences, and examples.)

- a. Small groups (non-violent communication, Pilgrim's Walk, bible study);
serve meal monthly for overflow homeless shelter
- b. Pilgrim's Walk; youth mission trip
- c. Food Pantry; FOCUS churches (ecumenical group sharing worship, food pantries,
breakfast program); support international missionaries

3. In what ways can your congregation more intentionally live out the call to cultivate transformation in Christ, equip emerging leaders of today and tomorrow, and engage in Christ's kingdom mission in the coming year?

Attend Synod workshops for leaders; encourage more participation with FOCUS

4. What challenges, concerns, or celebrations does your congregation have right now?

Challenges: Search for new minister; articulate goals and identity
Celebrations: 375th anniversary

5. How does your congregation reflect the racial and cultural context in which you conduct your ministry? What are you doing to build bridges that develop and deepen mutual ministry that is multiracial and multicultural?

A member attended a workshop on racial diversity and shared her learnings with Consistory; we are reaching out to neighborhood concerned about the restart of a power plant near us; we have some members who reflect our multi-racial, multi-cultural neighborhood; our congregation is multi-racial and multi-cultural; we could do more to reach out and some members are interested in doing this

Question 5 was added by the General Synod in 2017 and responses to this question only are collected for the benefit of the General Synod and will be shared with the Commission on Race and Ethnicity.

Annual Consistorial Report for 2017

First Church in Albany

church name

Albany, New York

city, state/province

Part 2b

INDEBTEDNESS:

The following information is collected for the use of your classis in order to fulfill the directive from the Book of Church Order regarding indebtedness, which states, "the consistory shall not incur a total indebtedness which exceeds two-thirds of the prior year's expenditures for congregational purposes, as reported to the General Synod, without the approval of classis" (BCO, Chapter 1, Part I, Article 2, Section 13).

- 1. Does your church have any indebtedness? yes no
- 2. If yes, what is the total indebtedness? \$ 2716035
- 3. Is your church delinquent in any of its debt payments? yes no
- 4. If yes, what is the amount of the delinquency? \$ _____

Information regarding the spiritual health of the congregation and congregational indebtedness is collected to assist the classis in its supervision of the churches within its bounds.

Elders and Deacons

The information below will not be shared with any entity outside the RCA. It will be used by the Office of Ministry Services to send information to elders and deacons. Because the General Synod requires that gender statistics of ordained officeholders be reported (*MGS 2002, R-32, p. 54*), please use the check box to convey that information.

List only those elders and deacons elected in 2017.

Name	Phone	Email	Office	Gender	Address
Bill Kendall	518-857-3470		Deacon	Male	215 Albany Shaker Road Albany NY 12211
Theresa Brewer	518-694-6549	tbrewer0722@gmail.com	Deacon	Female	4 O'Connell St Albany NY 12209
Norma Jean Ballou	518-427-0113		Elder	Female	87 Ten Broeck St. Albany NY 12210
Rebecca Mondore	518-482-2302		Elder	Female	19 Pheasant Ridge Dr. Loudonville NY 12211

Youth Ministry Contact

The information below will not be shared with any entity outside the RCA. It will be used to provide support for youth ministry in RCA congregations, in keeping with the call articulated in Transformed & Transforming: “increasing the awareness that God is calling youth and young adults to become leaders” and “developing youth intention-ally for missional, congregational, and pastoral leadership.”

Primary Youth Ministry Contact

Please provide information for the person who is the primary contact for youth ministry in your congregation. This person could be a paid staff member such as a youth minister or director of youth ministry, or he or she could be a volunteer if your congregation does not have youth ministry staff. If your congregation has more than one person in this role, please designate one as the primary contact.

We have no youth ministry contact

Name: Monica Marsh

Title: Elder

Address: 572 Pearse Road
Schenectady New York 12309

Phone: 518-374-1983

Phone Type: Home

Email: Mlms32@aol.com

The First Church **FAMILY**

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

October 2018

WORSHIP:

- 7 **World Communion Sunday**
10:30 am Worship – Creation Sunday 3: God’s Longing
Post Service: SHARE Presentation in the Parlor
- 14 **Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 am Worship – Creation Sunday 4: Enough
 The Rev. Al Janssen, preaching
Post-service: Journey through the Psalms
 Coffee & Conversation
- 21 **Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost**
10:30 am Worship – Stewardship 1: Wanting Glory
Post Service: Journey through the Psalms
 First Church Readers
- 28 **Reformation Sunday**
10:30 am Worship – Stewardship 2: Wanting Restoration
Post Service: Coffee & Conversation

Dear pilgrim,

*As you go into the wilderness of the land and of your heart—
May you experience the ever-flowing grace of God's presence!*

*May you be immersed so fully in God's love
that you learn to let go and swim!*

*May you engage deeply and radically with the natural world,
as steward, co-creator, and friend!*

*May you drink anew from the divine source, the stream of living
water!*

*And may you be transformed,
may the stagnant waters of your spirit begin to flow,
and may all which is dead in you rise again!*

God is here.

The river awaits.

Let the adventure begin.

Amen.



FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Members and Friends,

This pilgrim's blessing prayer written by Lisa Hershey Kutolowski, and published in [From The River of Life Prayer Book for the Connecticut River Pilgrimage 2017](#) is a good frame for the two seasons of worship and contemplation we will experience this month.

God comes to our world first as Creator, inviting us into relationship, into deepening of spirit, and into the adventures of faith. We celebrate this invitation as we deliberately spend time in Creation Season. And we take seriously God's call to us to be mindful stewards of the gifts and wonders of creation.

As we bask in the truth that God is here, we also take time this month to acknowledge the ways that God, through First Church, opens ways for us to experience the joys of grace, the opportunities for transformed lives, and the gift of fellow pilgrims on our journey of faith. First Church provides us worship in which God's glory is made known, education to open new vistas of thought and meditation, fellowship for encouragement and enjoyment, care in good times and hard ones, service opportunities to reach out in Jesus' name to those in need of comfort and aid.

We want much for ourselves and our world, and God is generous, challenging and enriching us body and soul, mind and heart. So we take seriously God's call to be generous with all we have received, as we contemplate our financial support of First Church's mission and ministry.

My prayer for you, First Church in Albany, is that you will engage "deeply and radically" during October with the natural world and with the Holy One – and that you will be led to deeper investment in your personal faith pilgrimage and the future of this church's life and ministry in Jesus' name.

God is here. Let the adventure begin!
Lynn

AT HOME WITH THE WORD

**Daily Bible Readings from the Common Lectionary - www.rca.org/athome
October 1st – October 31st.**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Job 1:1, 2:1-10 | 16. Isaiah 53:4-12 |
| 2. Psalm 26 | 17. Psalm 91:9-16, 104:1-9, 24, 35 |
| 3. Genesis 2:18-24 | 18. Job 38:1-7 |
| 4. Psalm 8 | 19. Hebrews 5:1-10 |
| 5. Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12 | 20. Mark 10:35-45 |
| 6. Mark 10:2-16 | 21. Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost |
| 7. Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost | 22. Job 42:1-6, 10-17 |
| 8. Joel 2:21-27 | 23. Jeremiah 31:7-9 |
| 9. Job 23:1-9 | 24. Psalm 34:1-8, 19-22 |
| 10. Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 | 25. Psalm 126 |
| 11. Psalm 90:12-17 | 26. Hebrew 7:23-28 |
| 12. Hebrews 4:12-16 | 27. Mark 10:46-52 |
| 13. Mark 10:17-31 | 28. Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost |
| 14. Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost | 29. Ruth 1:1-18 |
| 15. Job 38:1-7 | 30. Deuteronomy 6:1-9 |
| | 31. Psalm 119:1-8 |

SENIOR MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE - UPDATE

The search committee for a new senior minister is now preparing the church profile for First Church. The profile is the key document that will inform prospective candidates of who we are as a congregation, and what we do in worship, congregational life, and outreach ministries. The profile will state what talents and gifts in a senior minister will help lead us into the future filled with faith, hope, and love.

The church profile follows the format provided by the Reformed Church in America, and it will be a long document. It will include general information about First Church--our membership, leadership, and employees; our worship, education, and ministry; our physical facilities and financial situation; and also about the larger community of which we are a part. The profile states our expectations and requirements of a senior minister and the projected salary range and benefits package.

Most of the profile is now drafted, compiled by the search committee working together, and drawing very much on data assembled by the transition team in "cottage meetings" and other occasions. We expect that the church profile will be ready to share with the joint boards for information, comment, revision, and approval by mid-October. The profile will then be formatted with pictures and be ready to send to the RCA within weeks after that.

The search committee appreciates the interest many in the congregation have expressed in our activities. We welcome questions about our responsibilities and process, and we will continue to keep the First Church family informed.

Monica Marsh, Chair
Norma Jean Ballou
Imani Brewer
Janet Conti
James Folts
Jean Lamere
Andrew Mondore
Jay Reohr
Ross Westhuis



CLASSIS ASSESSMENT

Each year, RCA churches are assessed for the work of the General Synod, the local synod and the classis of which they are a covenant partner. Assessments are made per active confessing member. This year's Individual Assessment Amount is \$97.34, with the following break-down:

\$53.75 – General Synod
\$32.00 – Synod of Albany
\$ 9.40 – Albany Classis
\$ 2.19 – Benevolences

As you consider your pledge for 2019, please consider adding this amount to what you hope to give for local church mission and ministry.

JOINT BOARDS RETREAT

On September 22, eleven members of the Joint Boards, both pastors and one of our Classis supervisors gathered for a retreat at Delmar Reformed Church. The purpose of the retreat was:

1. To engage our joint work on God's behalf at First Church
2. To foster community among us for this next year of the transition
3. To explore together one of our transitional goals:

Does our current governance structure help us fulfill our mission?

- *Does the wider congregation, especially newcomers, understand how things work?*
- *Do those who accept roles have meaningful work to do?*
- *Are we right-sized for the current congregation?*

The Rev. David Jones, pastor of Greenbush Reformed Church, led us in an opening devotion. The group then spent time in group building exercises before delving into developing a common understanding of First Church's governance structure. We shared current perceptions, heard from Jim Folts about the way the structure is intended to work, as well as about religious corporation law, and from Pete Pagerey about how the Book of Church Order defines RCA church governance and how most other RCA churches work. Lynn Carman Bodden gave her take on the impact of the history behind our current Trustee Board and the Joint Boards. There was honest sharing about what works well and what has created some friction in the past.

After a tasty lunch, the group wrestled with how we want to function practically, looking at power dynamics, clarity of roles (Trustees, Consistory, Elders, Deacons, Joint Boards, pastors), communication, and the matching of gifts of members to the needs of the church. Several short-term goals were surfaced and responsibility for follow-up assigned. More on these later!

The Joint Boards will meet next to approve next year's budget as well as the church profile. Consistory will meet on October 3, and Trustees at the end of October.

JOINT BOARDS

<u>Deacons (5)</u>	<u>Elders (6)</u>	<u>Trustees (9)</u>	<u>Supervisors/Pastors</u>
Andy Mondore (Sr)	Norma Jean Ballou	Jim Folts (Pres)	Rev. David Jones
Theresa Brewer	Pete Pagerey	Ross Weshuis (VP)	Nancy Landrigan
Bill Kendall	Joeanna Brown	Shirley Bone	Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden
Bob Dorn (Asst. Sr)	Chip Welge	Ray Van Epps	Rev. Susan Vincent Cox
Richard Gardner	Becky Hudak	David Bradley	
	Becky Mondore	Joyce Recene	
		Ned Monthie	
		Wayne Sivaslian	
		Andy Mondore	

* Leaders to be elected in October

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 Avenue in Albany. Anyone can join us starting at 12:15pm and stay until you wish to leave. Each person pays for their own meal. Contact Donna E. Schultz at deschultz07@aol.com or (518) 429-1255.

JEFFREY CURRY UPDATE

Jeff Curry spent several days at his new home in Rensselaer, receiving Occupational and Physical Therapy and visits from Visiting Nurses, as well as outpatient treatment. Recently, he had additional surgery at Albany Medical Center to improve the circulation in his leg. Jeff appreciates our prayers, and cards can be sent to him at 1311 Third St. Rensselaer, NY 12144.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

During the month of August, the First Church Food Pantry served eight new households and a total of thirteen new people, in addition to the 145 repeat households of 224 people. Each person was provided with 18 meals each. The Food Pantry was open for 9 days in August, thanks to the work of all our volunteers and staff.

Hotdogs from the Food Pantry were used at Thursday's Cleo's Hotdogs. Thank you again to all who provided rolls, chips, condiments, cookies and cupcakes as well as countless bottles of water for our Thursday luncheon guests!

Did you know that Food Pantry guests who come on Wednesdays are able to receive counselling from Ross Westhuis if they want it?

We thank God that the First Church Food Pantry has been serving our neighbors for fifty years!

FOCUS CHURCHES

After worship among the FOCUS churches in July, August and September, members of FOCUS churches and interested people were invited to share their experiences with FOCUS ministries and their ideas for where we might engage in Albany in the coming years. The Board is gathering this information to help in setting goals and in clarifying staffing needs as we look to hire a new Executive Director. Thank you to the handful of First Church people who took part in these conversations.

In September, FOCUS volunteers gathered at Henry Hudson Park in Bethlehem to receive thanks and celebration of their generosity of time and spirit. Over a shared meal and a beautiful cake, these sentiments were shared: "From our early morning risers that work the FOCUS Breakfast Programs and serve our guests with care and compassion, to the folks who help operate the FOCUS Food Pantry with smiles and open hearts, we treasure you and would not exist without you! From our dedicated FOCUS board members to the generous donors and community members who volunteer at our special events and fundraisers we thank you. YOU are the life and breath of FOCUS Churches of Albany."

FOCUS once again will be at IGNITE, Albany's Volunteer Festival, to help folks find their fit among opportunities from 30 nonprofits and be part of making Albany a stronger community. Join us at the Albany Capital Center on Thursday, November 8th!

FIRST CHURCH READERS MEETS OCTOBER 21st AFTER SERVICE



Like to read? First Church Readers are a group of people who love to read. Each month we read a different book and get together on a Sunday after worship to discuss it.

We will be meeting again on October 21 after service. Come join us. Books for the fall are:

- **October** *The Rosie Project: A Novel (Don Tillman Book 1)* by Graeme Simsion. A brilliant but socially inept professor decides he needs a wife. In the orderly, evidence-based manner he designs the Wife Project, a sixteen-page, scientific survey to find his perfect partner identifying and filtering out drinkers, smokers, and people who are not punctual. Rosie fits none of the criteria but, nonetheless, she keeps turning up in his life with hilarious consequences.
- **November** *Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II* Liza Mundy. More than 10,000 girls were recruited to do the secret work of breaking codes in WW II. Their work was forgotten and their sacrifices were unsung until this highly readable, well researched and documented story.

FUTURE BOOKS FOR 2019

- *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans* by Eve Laplante. - Expelled from 17th century Puritan Massachusetts for heresy, sedition and behaving in a manner “not comely for [her] sex,” Hutchison goes on to be the only woman to co-found a state - Rhode Island.
- *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown, noted preacher, theologian and author of many books on faith, doubt and re-visioning religion. In her new book she explores darkness and why light is associated with goodness and darkness with evil “teaching us how to find our footing in times of uncertainty and giving us strength and hope to face all of life’s challenging moments.”
- *Days of Awe and Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the Twenty-first Century* by Marcus J. Borg. The late Marcus Borg was a influential 20th century theologian and this collection of his writings explores what it means to be a Christian in the 21st century.



Embark on a Journey Through the Psalms

Find light for your path, wisdom for your way, and inspiration for your days

Bible Study and Conversation

Starting September 30, after worship

Will also meet October 14th & 21st, November 4th & 18th, and December 2nd & 16th.

Sign up for a study resource in the church lobby or call Valerie

Church office 518-463-4449

For more information contact Pastor Sue Cox

SHARE PRESENTATION

You may have been reading about the Sheridan Avenue Power Plant in the news lately. On October 7 after worship, representatives of SHARE, Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy, will join us after worship as part of our Creation Season. They will present their concerns, and invite attendees into conversation, about the hazards of the proposal to bring the Sheridan Avenue power plant back online using fossil fuels. Rather than using fracked gas, SHARE seeks to encourage a plan to run the power plant slated to heat and power Empire State Plaza and other buildings with clean renewable energy. Come to listen, to learn, and to ask questions about this project that lies 0.3 miles up the street from First Church.

CHILDREN & WORSHIP

We are excited about another year of Children & Worship which starts Oct 7th. Children & Worship is an amazing program that provides a worship service just for children.



As we enter another year of offering this great program to families we want to get the word out about it. We have just launched a Facebook page which can be found here at:

<http://www.facebook.com/ChildrenandWorshipatFC>.

We hope you will consider "liking" the page and sharing this with families and friends you know with young children. We offer a program for children 4-7 and 8-12 and we want the community to know about this amazing program right here at First Church!
Kim Gattie.

WEATHERVANES - NEPAL

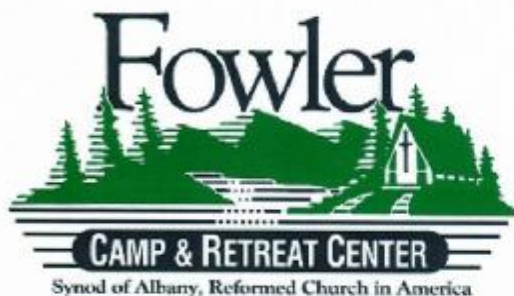


Join the Weathervanes on Wednesday, October 17th at 12:30 p.m. in Zimmerman Hall. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverages will be served. Sara Welge will share with us some of the things she saw and experienced on her recent hiking trip to Nepal.

Please contact Audrey Ming (518-456-5485) to let her know you are coming.

INTERGENERATIONAL WEEKEND AT CAMP FOWLER

October 26-28, 2018



Camp Fowler in the Adirondacks is the site for an inter-generational church retreat for singles, pairs, youth, and families. Autumn foliage at Fowler offers beautiful seasonal surroundings for walks, hikes, or outdoor exploration and activities. Join in a variety of group activities or reserve time for silence and solitude. Rooms are double occupancy and all meals are included.

Applications are due by October 1st

Cost: \$40.00 - \$160.00 per person

Please pay at the highest level you can afford.

Children under 5 years are free.

A minimum of 50% of your total cost is required with the application. Final payment must be received by Friday October 19th. If you have questions regarding fees, please call Pastor Susan Vincent-Cox at (518) 596-8793 or Joeanna Hurston-Brown at (518) 244-5396. Applications are located on the display table in the lobby and may be given to Valerie Williams weekdays or mailed to:

2018 Intergenerational Retreat
First Church in Albany
110 No. Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12210

**\$1 DONATION TO FIRST CHURCH
WHEN YOU BUY A REUSABLE SHOPPING BAG**



*Wolf Road Hannaford
Through the end of October*

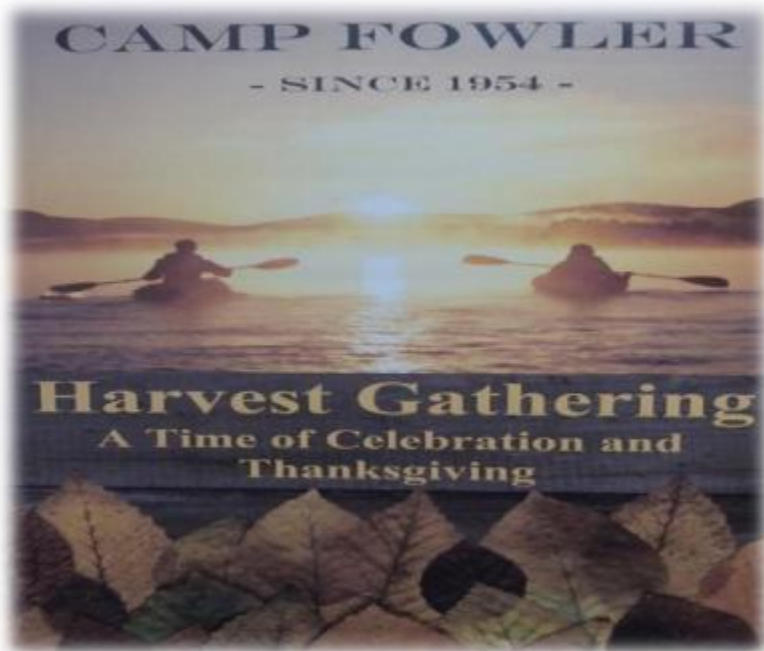
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

With today's busy schedules, October isn't too early to think about Christmas, and there is a special reason to do so this year. Our congregation and the folks at Emmanuel Baptist Church are joining together to produce a Christmas pageant. Two performances are planned, one on Saturday, December 14, at Emmanuel and one on Sunday, December 15, at First Church. Everyone from the youngest to the oldest can take part. We'll try to keep rehearsals and meetings to a minimum, but we will need planners and other participants and many other willing volunteers to handle all the details of the pageant.



Ian Leet will be coordinating for First Church, but if you want to help, please contact Ian at 518-482-6612 or by email ian.leet@outlook.com. Together, we can make this the best Christmas pageant ever!

10TH ANNUAL HARVEST GATHERING



**MONDAY,
NOVEMBER 5, 2018
@ 6PM
GLEN SANDERS
MANSION
SCOTIA, NY 12302**

Contact Jay Reohr if you would like to be apart of the First Church table.

Email: jayr3@aol.com

HELP FIRST CHURCH

PROVIDE OVERFLOW HOMELESS SHELTER MEALS!

For ten years First Church has been providing meals for the Overflow Homeless Shelter from November to April. **The Shelter opens in November and to continue the ministry we need people willing to provide a dish and help deliver the food.**

Sign-up on the Shelter sheet on the Hospitality Table or talk to Mary Bon at maryebon@verizon.net. or Patty Salsbury at gogold111@aol.com. It is 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 be eligible for other shelters because of addictions or mental health issues. It is open during the winter months and turns nobody away.

FIRST CHURCH FACILITIES ARE USED AND AVAILABLE FOR USE

First Church has a large facility with various spaces that are convenient for groups of various sizes, with ample parking and a convenient location in downtown Albany. Each year several groups receive permission to use our facility. Such requests are approved by the Building Use Committee, composed of members of Leadership and the Treasurer. First Church charges fees to cover out-of-pocket expenses, though the fees are waived for an RCA or FOCUS-related event. A higher fee schedule applies to for-profit organizations. In addition, tours are offered to groups that are interested in First Church's history and architecture. And many individual visitors from places near and far come to First Church unscheduled, and are welcome to take a self-guided tour of our historic sanctuary.

Here is a list of significant building use during the year 2018 so far:

1. S.H.A.R.E - Sheridan Hollow Association for Renewable Energy - February 20, 2018.
2. National Preservation Trust - historical architecture tour - May 5, 2018.
3. Dutch Settlers Society - historical tour - April 12, 2018 (Society has met at First Church since its founding in 1924).
4. ABC Studios - television cast assembly point - July 17 thru July 20, 2018.
5. Swartwout Family Association - historical tour - September 1, 2018.
6. Albany County Board of Elections - polling place - September 13, 2018 and November 6, 2018.
7. Alcoholics Anonymous - Wednesdays at noon.
8. Taste of Troy Food Tours, LLC. - most Fridays 1:30 pm-1:50 pm - May thru October 2018.

If you know of a group that would like to use our facility, please refer them to Valerie Williams, Parish Administrator, for further information. Making our facilities available for varied uses and groups is part of good stewardship and our outreach to the community and city of Albany.

JOINING FIRST CHURCH

Does it feel like First Church could be your church home? Might you consider membership? If so, please talk with Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, Rev. Sue Vincent-Cox, or one of the Elders to find out more. We'll be holding our next new member class this fall. We'd love to welcome you officially!

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE
NOVEMBER ISSUE OF *FAMILY* IS THE OCTOBER 16TH.**

THANK YOU

- Monica Marsh and Andy Mondore for organizing and leading this summer's Youth Work Camp to Erie, PA. It was a pleasure to see pictures and hear stories after worship on September 16 over lunch. Thanks as well to all our workers, and those who hoped to go and were unable due to last minute obligations. Your ministry gives life to the faith of First Church! Thank-you for making our joint venture a huge success!
- Larry Underdue for cleaning the rugs.
- Tanya Hollie for cleaning the pews.

IN HONOR

- In honor of Shirly Bone's birthday a gift was received from Helen Goldenberg and Stephen Barr for the Clee Park

MEMORIALS

- In memory of the Rev. Lynn Joosten a gift has been received from the Joosten family for the Lynn T. Joosten Fund.
- In memory of Erma J. Nelson a gift has been received from the Rev. LeRoy Suess and Judith Utley-Suess.

IN SYMPATHY

- Our prayers and sympathy are with Clay, Adrienne and Clover on the death of Clay's father, Robert Butler, Jr. on September 12, 2018.
- Our prayers and sympathy are with Theresa Brewer on the death of her brother, Donald Emory.
- Our prayers and sympathy are with Bill Kendall on the death of his second cousin, John Siefert.
- Our prayer and sympathy are with Helen Otterness and family on the recent death of Helen's sister, Dorothy Brandon.



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518.463.4449

www.firstchurchinalbany.org

Email: info@firstchurchinalbany.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUIRED

Suggested Internet Links to Further Explore the Capital District Area Active as of November 2018

Visitor Bureaus

Albany County Visitor and Conventions Bureau: <http://www.albany.org>

Berkshire Visitors Bureau: <http://www.berkshires.org>

Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau: <http://meetinsaratoga.org>

Lake George New York Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.lgchamber.org>

Lake Placid, NY Adirondacks Visitors Guide: <http://lakepladd.com>

Online Newspapers and Other General Information Sources Albany

NY Times Union (newspaper): <http://timesunion.com>

Capital-Saratoga Region of New York State: <http://www.capitalSaratoga.com>

Capital Connections: <http://www.capitalconnections.com>

Albany Events Online: <http://www.albanyevents.org>

Albany NY (About.com): <http://www.albany.about.com>

Performing Arts Centers Boston Symphony Orchestra (see Tanglewood Links):
<http://www.bso.org>

Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC): <http://www.spac.org>

Theater Capital Repertory Theater: <http://www.capitalrep.org>

New York State Theatre Institute: <http://www.nysti.org>

Shakespeare & Company: <http://www.shakespeare.org>

Music Albany Symphony Orchestra: <http://artsitedesign.com/aso>

Troy Savings Bank Music Hall: <http://www.troymusichall.org>

Albany Pro Musica: <http://www.albanypromusica.org>

Mendelssohn Club of Albany: <http://www.mendelssohn.org/>

Museums

New York State Museum: <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov>

Albany Institute of History and Art: <http://www.albanyinstitute.org>

Norman Rockwell Museum: <http://www.nrm.org>

Visual and Performing Arts

Proctors Theater: <http://www.proctors.org/>

The Empire Center At The Egg: <http://www.theegg.org>

MASS MoCa (contemporary art): <http://www.massmoca.org>

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival: <http://www.jacobspillow.org>

Education

Numerous public school districts have won National recognition for excellence. Numerous private elementary and secondary schools and numerous colleges providing undergraduate and graduate education add to the climate of the region.

Albany Public School District: <http://www.albanyschools.org/>

University at Albany: <http://www.albany.edu>

The College of Saint Rose: <http://www.sttose.edu>

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute: <http://www.rpi.edu>

Union College: <http://www.union.edu>

The Sage Colleges: <http://www.sage.edu>

Siena College: <http://www.siena.edu>

Shopping

Crossgates Mall: <http://www.crossgatesmall.com>

Stuyvesant Plaza: <http://www.stuyvesantplaza.com>

Colonie Center: <http://www.shopatcoloniecenter.com>

Sports

Times Union Center: <https://www.timesunioncenter-albany.com/>

Tri-City Valleycats: <http://www.tcvalleycats.com>