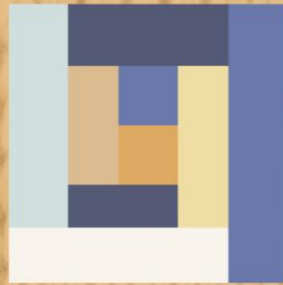




FOR THE BEGINNING

— WE CAN'T GO ALONE —



**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 8, 2024
10:30AM WORSHIP**



**First Presbyterian
Church of Albany**

Welcome!

Whether you are worshipping with us for the first time or have grown up here at FPC,
we are glad you are worshipping here this morning!

The Gathering

**indicates when to rise in body or spirit*

Prelude

Prelude on 'People Look East'

Wayne Wold

Welcome & Announcements

Ringing of the Bell

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

Betsy Hadden & Owen Gilbo

One: In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

All: Let us begin together.

Let us begin arm in arm.

**Let us begin by holding each other up,
instead of tearing each other down.**

Let us begin with words of peace.

One: Yes, let us begin with peace. Today we light the candles of hope and peace.

All: May these lights remind us of what could be.

May these lights mark a new beginning.

May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us.

One: Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side.

May we begin again. Amen

Choral Introit

Let Zion's People See the Lord

Giffen and Pugh

First Presbyterian Chancel Choir

Let Zion's people see the Lord, who comes to set the nation free.

The Lord will sound in glorious voice, your heart will hear him joyfully.

***Call to Worship**

One: In a world that is lonely,

All: we will save a seat for you.

One: In a world that is anxious,

All: we will light candles against the gloom.

One: In a world that is weary,

All: we will sing songs of joy and truth.

One: I am not alone.

All: We are not alone.

One: For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

All: Light the candles! Sing with Joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

***Hymn No. 93**

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

***Prayer of Confession & Words of Forgiveness**

One: I have tried to make my own way.

I have tried to lace my own shoes, to build my own house,
to kindle my own faith

I have said a thousand times, “*turn back,*” as if I am fine on my own.

But the days are long and I am forgetful.

I need your help. Can you remind me?

All: We will remind you of this everlasting truth:

You are not alone. Where you go, God goes.

You are held in grace. Trust in this good news.

One: Thanks be to God! I remember. I believe.

All: Now we need your help.

We, too, have tried to make our way.

**We have tried to lace our own shoes, to build our own houses,
to kindle our own faiths.**

We have said a thousand times, “*turn back,*” as if we are fine on our own.

But the days are long and we are forgetful.

We need your help. Can you remind us?

One: I will remind you of this everlasting truth:

You are not alone. Where you go, God goes.

You are held in grace. Trust this is good news.

All: Thanks be to God! We remember. We believe. Alleluia! Amen.

***The Welcome and Peace**

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

The congregation greets one another with words and signs of peace.

***Gloria Patri No. 583**

Glory to God

GLORIA (TAIZE)

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

The Word

Old Testament Lesson

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 (O.T., pp.616-617)

FPC Youth

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

As Ruth Refused Naomi's Pleas

Peter Pindar Stearns

First Presbyterian Chancel Choir

As Ruth refused Naomi's pleas, instead remaining by her side, so will I walk with you each day, and in your every hope reside.

I taste the tears of your bitterness and know the chasms of your grief;
I am no stranger to your fears nor shaken by your unbelief.

My love for you does not depend on what you feel or what you've done;
Your life is held within my heart, and with you I have found my home.

Old Testament Lesson

Ruth 1 (O.T., pp. 241-242)

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

We Can't Go Alone

Miriam Lawrence Leupold

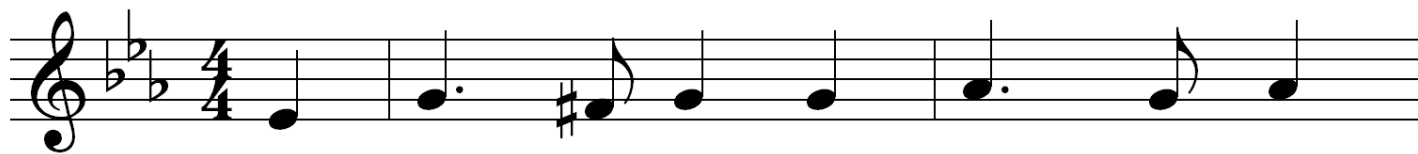
Our Response

***Hymn**

To Be Known

WALTHAM

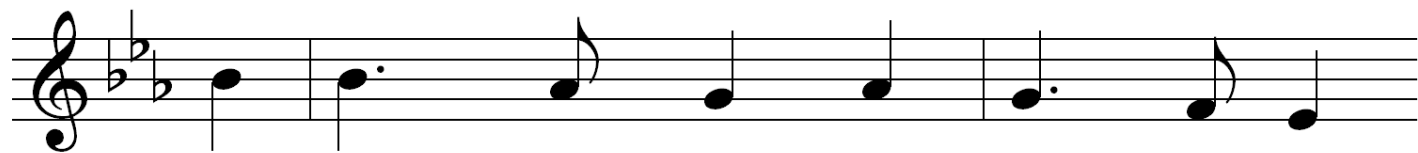
Words by Anna Strickland, 2024 Music by John Baptiste Calkin, 1872



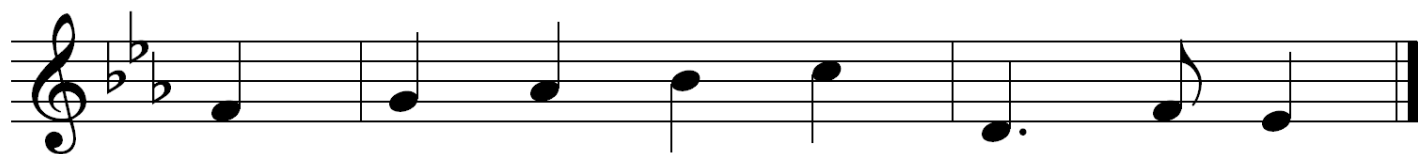
Re - call the truth that we once knew:
For in the gar - den God de - clared
In ev - ery age hu - man - i - ty
Both you and I are in - ter - twined



We were not made for sol - i - tude
That our brief lives on earth be shared
Re - lied on mu - tu - al - i - ty
The warp and weft of hu - man - kind



We need com - mun - i - ties of faith
With part - ners, friends, and fam - i - ly
Our God - breathed spi - rits weren't de - signed
So please don't try to go a - lone



Where we can feel God's warm em - brace
Who hold us in our joy and grief
To be di - vid - ed and con - fined
Your hu - man heart needs to be known

Prayers of the People

Molly Dowell

*There is a “Prayers of the People” book on the table in the back of the sanctuary. We encourage the congregation to write their concerns and thanksgivings in the book before the service so they can be included in the Prayers of the People. Several petitions are offered, each concluding with: O God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts

Ushers will pass the offering plates to each pew. There are also offering receptacles located in the back of the sanctuary. You may place your offering in one on the way into worship or as you leave. You may also donate online at <https://firstpresalbany.org/give/> or scan the QR code to the right.



Offertory

Even So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,
who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.

Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God, who was,
and is, and is to come; sing Holy, Holy Lord.

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell within; rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
for Christ is coming, is coming soon, for Christ is coming soon.

E'en so Lord Jesus, quickly come and night shall be no more.
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their all.

***Doxology (sung in unison)**

***Prayer of Dedication**

The Eucharist (Thanksgiving)

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

All those, including children, who seek the way of Christ and desire fellowship in the church are invited to the Lord's Table to share in our common meal of Thanksgiving.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(prayer continues)

One: ...Hear us now as together we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread and Communion of the People

The congregation is served at the front of the sanctuary, coming forward by the center aisle and returning by the side aisles. Communion is by intinction – take a piece of bread from the loaf or a piece of pita from the plate, dip it into the cup of juice, and eat. When served, you may respond by saying “Amen,” “Thanks be to God,” or another response. You may choose a sealed prepackaged communion element from one of the baskets – the ones with “GF” are gluten-free. If you prefer to receive communion in the pew, you may remain in your seat and signal an usher. Servers will bring you the elements.

Communion Music

Ave Maria Irregular chant mode I

MARGARETA JALKEUS

Rose Hunsberger, soprano

Translation:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Prayer after Communion

All: Gracious God, you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. You have fed us with the bread of life and renewed us for your service. We give ourselves to you and ask that our daily living may be part of the life of your kin-dom. May our love be your love reaching out into the life of the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Sending

***Hymn No. 105**

People, Look East

BESANCON

***Charge and Blessing**

***Response by the People (*in unison*) Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Amen.**

***Responsive Hymn No. 92 v. 1**

While We Are Waiting, Come

WAITING (CASON)

While we are wait - ing, come; _____ while we are wait - ing, come. _____

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el, while we are wait - ing, come. _____

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with blank lines for the end of phrases.

Postlude

Postlude on 'Truro'

Seth Bingham

You may be seated if you wish to listen to the postlude.

Please come to Assembly Hall for Fellowship Time.

For your convenience and as an aid to your worship experience, large print hymnals and Bibles are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

The music is reprinted under CCLI License #2853455 and OneLicense #A-716938.

Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed of A Sanctified Art LLC sanctifiedart.org

All are Welcome in this Place!

New faces and voices are always welcome and add to the spirit of our worship, education, mission and fellowship. Let us know you worshipped with us by either filling in the yellow card in the pew in front of you or by scanning the QR code. Pastors Miriam & Glenn use email addresses to share congregational email and important announcements about the life of the church.



First Presbyterian Church

is a community for all people where apprentices of Jesus seek to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

We are called by God to envision and work toward eradicating systemic poverty, eliminating structural racism and sharing the experience of the good news of God's love, peace and joy.

We welcome children to our worship services. Nursery care for children ages birth through kindergarten is provided on the second floor of the Christian Education Building. Nursery care is available from 8:45am to 12:15pm and is staffed by experienced childcare providers Morgan Odom and Mary Margaret Cabuhat.

Parking is available on Sunday mornings in Washington Park. There is also a parking lot on Washington Avenue just west of Lark Street available during church services on Sunday mornings. The church parking lot on Sunday mornings is reserved for visitors and for those who, for physical reasons, need close access to the church. Please note the spaces reserved for those with disabilities, and please do not block other cars.

We continue to livestream our Sunday worship services on Facebook.

Christian Education on Sunday mornings

9:15-10:15 Education Classes in the Education Building

Godly Play in the Preschool Class on 2nd floor (age 3 thru kindergarten)

Godly Play in The Upper Rooms on 3rd floor (Grades 1-5)

Youth Education in the Youth Room on 2nd floor (Grades 6-12)

Adult Education is the Rose Room



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

REMINDERS FOR NEW SEASONS



YOU ARE A BLESSING



WE CAN'T GO ALONE



**DO THE GOOD THAT
IS YOURS TO DO**



DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH



HOPE IS WORTH THE RISK



THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT



LOVE KNOWS YOUR NAME

**Come explore these words with us each Sunday
during Advent and Christmas**

**10:30am worship service in the sanctuary and
online (Facebook and YouTube)**

11:45am Fellowship Time



for more info

Announcements

Today's **Adult Ed Class** discussed the *Words for the Beginning* theme for the second Sunday of Advent. **Next week** we will look at the *Words for the Beginning* for the third Sunday in Advent

The **paraments** (the cloth on the pulpit, lectern, and communion table) and the **pastors' stoles** (the cloth around their necks) are blue, one of the liturgical colors for the season of Advent (the four Sundays before Christmas Day). Blue is the color associated with Mary the mother of Jesus. As she prepared for his birth, so do we.

Advent Prayer Pause

- Tuesday, December 10, and 17
- 12pm-12:10pm

Join New Breath Spirituality Center for a short time of prayer during lunch time on the 2 Tuesdays before Christmas! We will be praying together via Instagram Live— follow us @newbreathsc and come for a 10-minute prayer pause.

Holiday Photo opportunity! Would you like a family portrait for the holidays? Dwight Cheu has offered to take your holiday portrait on **December 14** at 5pm during the Potluck & Carol Sing and **December 22** after worship during the Cookie Exchange. Please call the Church

office (518-449-7332 or email info@firstpresalbany.org) to schedule a 10 minute time slot during one of the above dates. All photos will be taken on a plain, neutral background, so that you can add your own holiday background, say using the free version of Adobe Express. And then you could print cards, say on Shutterfly, while also adding a holiday border.

Would you like to sponsor a **poinsettia plant** to decorate the sanctuary in Advent and Christmas this year? You may do so in honor or memory of a loved one, and that dedication will be noted in the worship bulletin beginning December 22. There are three ways to make your dedication. 1) By emailing the church office (info@firstpresalbany.org) a note that spells out the dedication as well as the name of the dedicator. Then visit the website (firstpresalbany.org/give/), scroll down to the bottom of the page and make your payment online (\$16 per poinsettia) OR 2) Fill out one of the forms that is located in the pews in the sanctuary and put that and your check in the offering plate or offering box OR 3) Mail a check to the church for \$16 per poinsettia, along with a note that spells out the dedication as well as name of the dedicator. **Deadline is December 15.**

Offering Envelopes are available in the Assembly Hall if you are interested in having them for 2025. These are not dated or numbered and can be used at any time. They are in groups of 12. Please take as many as you need.

Fresh flowers for the chancel on Sundays may be purchased in honor or in memory of a loved one at a cost of \$80. This cost may be shared if two people would like to donate flowers on the same day. The dedication will appear in that Sunday's bulletin. For more information, contact Ellen Kemp.

The Youth of First Pres are hosting a Giving Tree for the Northern Rivers Holiday Giving Campaign. Please visit the Giving Tree in the Assembly Hall. It is laden with gift tags from Northern Rivers' Teen Wish List for youth ages 13-19 served by Northern Rivers agencies. **Simply take** a gift tag from the Giving Tree, purchase the gift, and **return both the tag and gift to the church by Sunday, December 15.** Please return all gifts unwrapped.

Festival Celebration Choir (which rehearses at FPC) and the Capital Community Voices will present “**A Season for Song**” on **Sunday, December 15, at 3pm at Emmanuel Reformed Church in Castleton.** Both choirs are directed by Julie Panke and will resound with holiday celebration. The concert will include the music of G.F. Handel, John Rutter, and others, as well as popular selections and a carol sing with audience participation. Tickets are \$15. Children 12 and under are free. For further information contact:
publicity@festivalcelebrationchoir.org
or <https://festivalcelebrationchoir.org>.

Each month the **FOCUS Food Pantry** requests items from its member churches. FPC's December donation is shampoo. All items must be new and unopened. The **FOCUS Food Pantry** is also requesting one-pound bags of rice, as they are unable to get these from suppliers, as well as cake mix and frosting for the Christmas baskets to be collected by **December 8.** Please leave donations in the box in Assembly Hall. Questions? Call Susan Sneeringer at 518-496-4793.

Serving you on Sunday, December 8

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: FPC Youth, Molly Dowell, and Lillie McLaughlin

Online Worship Assistant: Mary Rogers

Scripture Reader: FPC Youth

Prayer Reader: Molly Dowell

Communion Servers: Ellen Eisenbaum & Sue Haney

Offering Counters: Leslie Cheu & Marc Boucher

Audio Visual Specialist: Bruce Brynolfson & Charles Hunter

Serving you on Sunday, December 15

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: Sue Haney, Lee Helsby, Harriet Seeley, and Alison Stonbely

Online Worship Assistant: Maureen Del Giacco

Scripture Reader: Carla Fisk

Prayer Reader: Jon Rice

Communion Servers: Paloma Luisi & John Myers

Offering Counters: Leslie Cheu & Marc Boucher

Audio Visual Specialist: Dwight Cheu

Come
and
walk

THE
LABYRINTH
at First Presbyterian
Church

Monthly
every
3rd Thursday
Thursday, September 19
11am-2pm
& 5-7pm



Potluck and Carol Sing

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

5:00 - 7:00pm

First Presbyterian Church's Assembly Hall

Contact the church to let us know if you're coming.

Bring a dish to share, if able.

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!

362 State Street • 518-449-7332

info@firstpresalbany.org



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

A SERVICE OF HOPE AND HEALING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, AT 7:00PM

A SERVICE OF THE FOCUS CHURCHES

AT THE FIRST CHURCH ALBANY

110 North Pearl Street



Christmas Cookie Market

Help us raise funds to support the FOCUS Breakfast Program while creating a scrumptious assortment of Christmas cookies for your family & friends!

How does it work?

Please bring 3 dozen (or more!) of your favorite Christmas cookies to worship on Sunday, December 22nd. During coffee hour, you will be able to shop for cookie varieties from some of the BEST bakers in town and create your own Christmas cookie special collection! We'll also enjoy Christmas music and hot mulled cider to get you in the cookie shopping mood!

WHEN: Immediately following worship, Sunday, 12/22

WHERE: Fellowship Hall

WHY: to benefit the FOCUS Breakfast Program

COST: \$4.00 per dozen cookies



FOCUS
CHURCHES OF ALBANY

Brought to you by the FPC Outreach & Mission Committee

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Sunday, 12/08	11:45am Fellowship Time 12:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
Tuesday, 12/10	6:00pm Deacon and Session Dinner and Meeting 7:00pm Anti-Racism Committee Meeting
Wednesday, 12/11	7:00pm Dads' Small Group
Thursday, 12/12	7:00am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, 12/14	1:00pm Piano Recital 2:30pm Children's Gathering 5:00pm Potluck & Carol Sing

Next Sunday, 12/15

9:15am Adult Education
9:15am Children's Education (1st through 5th grade)
9:15am Preschool Education
9:15am Youth Education
9:30am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:30am Worship Service in the sanctuary and livestreaming on Facebook
11:45am Fellowship Time
12:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal



First Presbyterian
Church of Albany

362 State Street, Albany, NY 12210 • Phone: 518.449.7332
Fax: 518.472.0449 • info@firstpresalbany.com
firstpresalbany.org

*Glenn D. Leupold, Co-Pastor • Miriam Lawrence Leupold, Co-Pastor • Michael C. Lister, Director of Music
Trevor Kahlbaugh, Organist • Molly Dowell, Youth Director • Steven Minchin, Office Administrator*

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to

King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
 thee; here, Lord, a - bide. Let me thy in - ner

draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
 heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

Beginning as a paraphrase of Psalm 24:7–10, this text then applies the door imagery to the singer's heart, and concludes with the individual's welcome of the approaching Savior. It is set to a very effective anonymous 18th-century English tune that has served many texts.

105

People, Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more
 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more
 5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who

crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

Peo - ple, look
 a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er.
 hum - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

This text was written to provide a new Advent text for an existing carol tune, here named for the city in eastern France where it originated. The author has imaginatively expressed the cosmic implications of Christ's coming by addressing each stanza to a part of creation.

JESUS CHRIST: ADVENT

east and sing to - day:



Peo - ple, look east:

Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Love, the Star, is on the way.

Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Peo - ple, look east:

(Love is on the way.)

