



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO

ADVENT 2019

NEWSLETTER

THE HEART OF ADVENT

By Rev. Dr. Ken Hughes

"Advent is dedicated to the last things, to death, judgment, heaven and hell, but above all to Jesus' glorious coming to complete his Easter work. The church goes so far as to set aside an entire liturgical season to the end of the world and the final coming of the Lord, so important a part of the faith does she consider these truths."

Rev. Charles K. Riepe, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic educator

With a church season as muddled as Advent sometimes is, it's a good thing to get a crystal clear description of what the season is all about. The four weeks of Advent often are defined by virtues – hope, peace, joy, and love. But even these, depending on your church tradition, may have alternatives, such as hope, faith, joy, and peace. What this suggests is that there are some things that are variable about Advent, and some things that are not.

The thing that is not "negotiable" is the horizon of Advent, which encompasses Christmas, but goes well beyond to the ultimate vision of the Second Coming of Christ. This movement from the present day to the end time is illustrated by the scriptures traditionally selected to define Advent worship services.

The prophet Isaiah is always prominent among these selections. For example, week one of Advent this year features Isaiah 2:1-5, which includes this stirring prophecy: *"In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and...all the nations shall stream to it. ...They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks..."*

And so the Isaian visions continue throughout Advent: *"The wolf shall live with the lamb...and a little child shall lead them" (11:6). "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return...they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (35:10).*

Not to be outdone, though, is the witness of the New Testament, which in Advent always features the familiar figure of John the Baptist, as in: *"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you" (Matthew 11:10).* And indeed the Baptist does appear on the scene, early in Matthew, with a message intended for his immediate audience, and for the distant future: *"I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me...his winnowing fork is in his hand and he will...gather his wheat into the*

granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:11-12).

Matthew's other testimonies in the Advent season reinforce the vital seasonal message: *"The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel ("God with us") (Matthew 1:23).* In the course of his life he will proclaim the kingdom of God and be present at its eventual fulfillment; hence, this warning: *"Keep awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming...for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour" (Matthew 24:42-44).*

In this way Advent covers time, and faith, from beginning to end. Which I've always found beautifully expressed in this closing stanza of "Advent," by Cardinal John Henry Newman:

*This then is to watch:
to live in the thought of Christ as he
came once,
and as he will come again;
to desire his second coming,
from our affectionate and grateful
remembrance of his first.*

Season's blessings,
Ken

Advent

HOPE PEACE JOY LOVE

WHAT IS ADVENT ABOUT?

By Maria Oakley

The season of Advent is the first season in the church calendar. It is a time of expectation and hope. Advent means "arrival" or "coming," and it prompts us to pause each day in December and remember why Jesus came at Christmas. We are all waiting, watching and preparing. As Isaiah (9:6) foretold "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming." Scholars believe that during the fourth and fifth centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the feast of Epiphany. Epiphany is the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1) and his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (John 1:29). During this season of preparation, Christians

would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

By the 6th century, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. The "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas. Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas.

No matter how we choose to celebrate the season of Advent, let's remember the beauty and grace of Jesus. He entered our dark, broken world on the first Christmas long ago, and He is working even now to restore light, peace, and life. May you and yours find rich blessings in your celebration of this season.

ADVENT WREATHS

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. The wreath is created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added. Their red color points ahead to Jesus' sacrifice and death. Pinecones can symbolize the new life that Jesus brings through His resurrection.

The wreath includes four candles. A new candle is lit on each of the four Sundays before Christmas. The first candle symbolizes hope and is called the "Prophet's Candle." The prophets of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, waited in hope for the Messiah's arrival. The second candle represents faith and is called "Bethlehem's Candle." Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, which is also the birthplace of King David. The third candle symbolizes joy and is called the "Shepherd's Candle." To the

shepherd's great joy, the angels announced that Jesus came for humble, unimportant people like them, too. In liturgy, the color rose or pink signifies joy. The fourth candle represents peace and is called the "Angel's Candle." The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace—He came to bring people close to God and to each other again. The (optional) fifth candle represents light and purity and is called "Christ's candle." It is placed in the middle and is lit on Christmas Day.

Some families enjoy saying prayers and blessings as they light a candle on the wreath each Sunday. Here is an example of an interactive family prayer:

Parent: Lord, you are the light of the world.

Child: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Parent: Heavenly Father, we long for your plan of rescue and redemption to be realized. Give us hearts that see Your beauty and wait in hope for You to make all things good and new again.

Child: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

Parent: May Your light and love shine brightly in our hearts, spreading hope and peace to those around us.

Child: Amen.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

Devotionals for daily prayer and reflection during the four weeks of Advent are available in the Narthex and Church Office. "Straw in a Manger," based on Matthew 25 of Praise and published by *Presbyterians Today*, this devotional features beautiful artwork and inspiring texts. To have a copy mailed to you, call the Church Office at 884-7250, x 200.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Sunday, December 1 the traditional "hanging of the greens" will be done during the 11:00 AM worship service, through scripture readings, hymns, and a reflection.

Join us for a hanging of the greens service as we make this place glad for Advent and Christmas. Brief reflections, passages from Isaiah and hymn stanzas accompany the hanging of various types of decorations, emphasizing the meaning of the colors associated with the season. Rejoice and be glad as the church becomes more festive and the celebration of our Savior's birth nears.

CHURCH LIFE CELEBRATES THE SEASON

Church Life has planned lots of activities for this Advent! Please join us as we anticipate the arrival of the Christ Child!

December 1 - help finish decorating the sanctuary after worship! Lunch provided.

December 8 - join us for the annual reading of "A Christmas Carol" in the Historical Hall. Find your inner Tiny Tim, Ghost of Christmas Past or even Scrooge!

December 20 - join us at 6:30 PM at church to carol in the neighborhood and then share refreshments at the Hess' home (290 Pennsylvania St.)

December 22 - Share some of the Christmas cookies that you have made or purchased for the last Sunday in Advent Coffee Hour! You may bring them ahead of time to store in the freezer!

FRUITCAKE & PECAN SALES

Famous Claxton fruitcakes for sale! Women's Association is selling them for \$8.00 in the Narthex before and after church, and in the office during the week. Leave a check made out to "Women's Association" in the envelope in the basket.

The annual CMO pecan sale to benefit VOICE Buffalo is here! Available in the Narthex after worship, the cost is \$12.00 per one pound bag. This is a popular item that usually sells out quickly.

The Holiday Season @ 1st Church

From Advent to Epiphany



A Christmas Carol
reading after worship

Dec. 8

2nd Sunday of Advent



Consolation & Care
Chapel service at 6:30

Dec. 18

Blue Christmas service



Candlelight & Communion
service at 7 pm

Christmas

Eve



1st Sunday of Advent

Dec. 1

Hanging of the Greens
worship service at 11



3rd Sunday of Advent

Dec. 15

Deacons' festive
Christmas luncheon



4th Sunday of Advent

Dec. 22

Carols & Lessons
worship service at 11



Epiphany

Jan. 5

Worship Service of
Light at 11





Don't be a Scrooge!

28th
Annual!



Be part of our annual reading of Dickens'
"A Christmas Carol" after church.

Sunday, December 8

Mulled cider and cookies will be served

Sponsored by the Church Life Committee





Again this Christmas season, we will decorate the chancel with poinsettias, beginning Sunday, December 22. To purchase a poinsettia honoring the memory of a loved one or celebrating someone special, please complete this form. The cost is \$8.00 per plant. Orders can be placed in the offering plate or left in Christina Banas's mailbox in the church office.

Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church with "poinsettias" indicated on the check. Reservations can also be made by calling the church office at 884-7250, x 201 and mailing your check.

NEW THIS YEAR! Pay online at <https://tinyurl.com/fpcpoinsettias>. Choose General Fund and type "poinsettias" in the Notes section.

Dedications will be printed in the bulletin on December 22nd and Christmas Eve. If you would like your dedication to be anonymous, please indicate below.

Your Name: _____

Number of plants: _____

Name of person(s) memorializing/celebrating: _____

Special wording: _____

I would like my dedication to be anonymous: YES NO (Please circle one)

I will be taking my plant(s) home on Christmas Eve: YES NO (Please circle one)

FEELING OUT OF SYNC WITH THE HOLIDAYS?

STRUGGLING WITH A LOSS OR SORROW?

NEED A TIME FOR QUIET REFLECTION?

Join us for...



BLUE CHRISTMAS

A Service of Remembrance and Hope



Not everyone is excited and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Many of us are dealing with death, separation, addictions, health concerns and any number of human situations that make the holidays a time of mixed emotions and challenge. Join us for this Blue Christmas service near the darkest day of the year to remember, to pray and to gather in hope.

All are welcome.



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

6:30PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1 SYMPHONY CIRCLE

(Across from Kleinhans)

716-884-7250 www.firstchurchbuffalo.org



WHAT IS EPIPHANY ABOUT?

By Maria Oakley

Epiphany was introduced into Western Christianity in the 4th century. The name comes from the Greek word *Epiphania*, and means "to show, make known, or reveal". Epiphany is linked in Western churches with the visit of the Magi (wise men/kings) to the Christ child (Matthew 2:1-12). The significance behind the visit of the Magi is the revelation of Christ as Lord and King. The Wise Men were the first Gentiles to recognize the divinity of Jesus, by way of their offerings. The gifts were symbolic of the importance of Jesus' birth, the gold representing his royal standing or kingship on earth; frankincense (an incense or perfume) honoring his divine birth; and myrrh (an oil for treating wounds and embalming) his mortality.

The Bible does not name the Magi or even specify how many came. By tradition, there are three gifts given by three Magi and named Melchior, Kaspar and Balthazar. Epiphany is also known as "Three Kings Day" and "Twelfth Day" because it falls on the twelfth day after Christmas, and signals the conclusion of the Christmas season.

There are many cultural traditions around the world to celebrate. In Hispanic communities, gifts from the Magi are given to children. First Church participated in Three Kings Day events by sending members of our congregation dressed as the Magi to distribute gifts to the students at Buffalo school #36. In many German and Eastern Europe communities, children dressed as the Magi carry a star representing the one followed by the biblical magi and sing Christmas carols as they go door to door. After singing, the children write the three kings' initials on the doorframe in exchange for charitable donations to local food pantries or other charitable organizations.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not celebrate Epiphany as a season; we use expressions such as "Fifth Sunday after Epiphany" to indicate the passing of time, rather than a liturgical season or the term "Ordinary Time". For many Christians, the definition of Epiphany is a reminder of God the Father's unlimited love and mercy, which He has extended to all people through the revelation of His Son, and of the hope of salvation for all who come to him in faith.

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Thank you to everyone who donated socks, hats, gloves and more to our multi-committee collection. This week the items were delivered to Harvest House, Friends of Night People, Pilgrim-St. Luke's, our own food pantry, and our friends at the Holiness Mennonite Church.

SPECIAL THEATRE PERFORMANCE

On November 18 in the chapel of First Church, Red Thread Theatre presented "A Conversation with OxyContin," a one-hour play in which OxyContin appears on a popular talk show to challenge his reputation. This new play, written and directed by Eileen Dugan, examines the Opioid epidemic with humor, humanity, and hope. The public was invited to the free performance, which was enjoyed by many.

Red Thread Theatre is a small professional theatre company formed in response to the historical under-representation of female theatre artists in our community. We look forward to the possibility of more performances by this group in our building!

STEWARDSHIP 2020

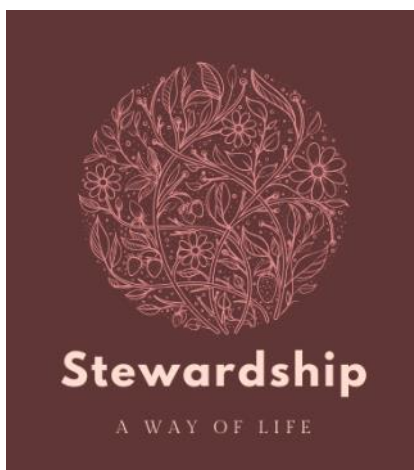
I want to take this opportunity to thank those who were in worship on Stewardship Sunday, November 3 and for placing your pledge card in the community stewardship basket. If you were not in church, but you mailed in your pledge to the church office, we missed you! Your support makes the vital difference for the success of our mission.

If you maintained your pledge amount from last year, thank you for your response. For those who increased their pledge over last year, I send a special appreciation. Your increased amount will be doubled for 2020! In either case, you have indicated your approval of the direction our church is headed. You are a contributing participant in the life of First Presbyterian Buffalo.

For the few that decreased your pledge from last year, I'm sorry. I hope, that we might provide you with a solid reason for reconsidering your decision. Feel free to contact me or Ken to voice your reason for the reduction. We want to hear from you.

We are inching closer to last year's budget support promise, but we need your pledge to remain constant or, better yet, to improve our stewardship support for the 2020 budget. The church works, because you provide. If you have not already done so, please provide us with your financial commitment as soon as possible. Pledge cards are available in the church office. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mark Armesto



ONLINE GIVING NOW AVAILABLE

Pledge payments, gifts to special funds, and general donations may now be made online on our website, through a secure system provided by the Presbyterian Foundation.

To access, visit www.firstchurchbuffalo.org and click the "Donate" button located in the footer.

CHURCH LIFE PLANS IN THE WORKS

By Jean Hess

Activities to look forward to in the New Year include:

- ◆ January 26 - The Souper Bowl Of Caring - enjoy fellowship over a bowl of homemade soup and support our Food Pantry. Bring non perishable items or a monetary donation.
- ◆ Noehren Organ 50th Anniversary - A series of 4 organ recitals throughout the year by our own Dr. Bond and others.
- ◆ Jazz/Art series - stay tuned for details!

Looking forward to seeing you at these events!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl ministry group gathers each Monday at 6:30 PM at the Eggertsville-Snyder Library (4622 Main St. in Snyder just past Harlem Rd.) Anyone is welcome, and needles and yarn can be provided.



ESCALATE PEACE WNY

ONE WEEK WITH AN INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKER
OCTOBER 1-6, 2019

REFLECTING ON OUR WEEK WITH AN INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKER

First Church had the pleasure of hosting Rev. Thang Van Lian from Oct 1-6 through the PCUSA's International Peacemaker program. Rev. Thang, native to Myanmar, spoke about peace and reconciliation, particularly around the crisis in his home country. Rev. Thang had a very busy week visiting Presbyterian congregations in Williamsville, Lewiston, Jamestown and right here at First Church! He also taught a class at Houghton College Buffalo.

On Wednesday October 2nd, First Church held a public forum to discuss the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar and the challenges facing Burmese refugees

living in Buffalo. The event started with a cultural hour with tables of information from local organizations, a henna painter and a food truck. The panel then took place with representatives from community organizations. Joining Rev. Thang were representatives from Journey's End Refugee Services, UB School of Social Work and Burmese Community Services.

On October 6th, World Communion Sunday, First Church held a joint worship with Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church. Rev. Thang gave a sermon about global peace, harmony and

goodwill. He spoke about his life in Myanmar, growing up in a rural village experiencing significant challenges, racial and religious discrimination and life threatening situations. We were all inspired by his message of peace and reconciliation.

Throughout the week Rev. Thang got to see and experience new things in Buffalo, including a tour of Buffalo and Niagara Falls. We thank Rev. Thang for his visit and all of the memories and powerful messages we gathered throughout the week!

Photo captions (from left to right):

1. *After preaching on World Communion Sunday, Rev. Thang was gifted a custom stole and handmade cross. Special thanks to Women's Association for funding these gifts; and to Sis Holland for making the beautiful blue silk Buffalo-themed stole; and to Andrew Hess for crafting the solid wood cross.*
2. *Rev. Thang presenting his message to the students at Houghton College Buffalo.*
3. *Seeing Niagara Falls and riding the Maid of the Mist may have been the pinnacle of Rev. Thang's time in WNY!*



A Celebration of Advent Friendship and Community



Psalm 133:1
How good and pleasant
it is when God's people
live together in unity

The Board of Deacons
Church Life and Membership Committees

Cordially

Invite

All Members, Non-Members, and Visitors

To an Advent Catered Dinner

Sunday, December 15, 2019

Immediately following the 11am Worship Service

The gifts we are sharing:

- Jesus love for each one of us
- Sharing that love with one another
- Building old and new friendships
- Building a stronger faith community
- The ministry of Rev. Ken Hughes
- Renewal of life and ministry in our church family

PLEASE JOIN US

PIECE TOGETHER THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT!

First Church jigsaw puzzles will be available for sale for \$25 each in early December. Details will be posted on our website and announced during worship when available.



NEWS IN THE FAMILY

Ilsa Cooper and her sisters would like to thank everyone at First Church who contributed to their mother's beautiful memorial service, especially Ken, David, Christina, and Rama, Liz, Ingrid, JoAnn who helped so much with the reception. And also Alan Ross and Denise Blackmore for their beautiful music which added so much to the service. It is very comforting to be a part of such a wonderful church family and we will always be grateful to all of you.



First Church and One Symphony Circle tireless volunteer Liz Kolken was awarded the 2019 Service to Community Award by the Forest District Civic Association on October 24th. It is a fitting award, and several First Church people were in attendance, including Ken, who delivered the event's invocation. Congratulations, Liz!



Welcome First Church's newest members, Dani Chapman, Nick Militello, Eli Van Brunt, & Kailee Van Brunt! An extensive interview is available on our website in the News section. Tim Hess profiles Eli on the following page in the first of a series of member profiles he plans to do (thanks, Tim!). And welcome New Members!



FELLOWSHIP PHOTOS

First Annual Oktoberfest at the Kamke's waterfall in Angelica



See more Oktoberfest pics on our website in the News section!



Bowling at Voekler's

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MEMBER PROFILE INTERVIEW

by Tim Hess

Name:

Eli Tyler Van Brunt

Born:

Pittsford, NY outside of Rochester NY

Schooling:

Pittsford Southerland and UB Mechanical Engineering

Occupation:

Energy Conservation Engineer at General Motors

Church life:

Started attending church in 2016, previous to the start of church attendance Eli considered himself an atheist

Life changing event:

Meeting his wife Kailee at a rock climbing event

Books that had an impact:

Darwin's Doubt by Stephen C. Meyer and *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel

Books read for fun:

Fiction and Sci-Fi

Aspirations in life:

Happy life with his wife Kailee, buying a home and starting a family

Sports:

Badminton

Take a minute to say hello to Eli and Kailee!



DATES & DEADLINES



NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Winter 2020

Deadline: Monday, Jan. 13

Lent 2020

Deadline: Monday, Feb. 17

Spring 2020

(includes Pentecost)

Deadline: Monday, April 27

Summer 2020

Deadline: Monday, June 8

Fall 2020

Deadline: Monday, Aug. 31



BOOK GROUP GATHERINGS

All dates are Thursdays at 6:00 PM

Potluck meal at each gathering.

December 5

The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead

Host: TBA

**Christmas book exchange*

January 23

The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew

by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver &

Priscilla Warner

Host: JoAnn Doerr

February 27

Aging As a Spiritual Practice

by Lewis Richmond

Host: TBA

March 26

The Ungrateful Refugee by Dina Nayeri

Host: Christina Banas

April 23

Where the Crawdads Sing

by Delia Owens

Host: Liz Kamke

May 28

Book TBA


Host: Ingrid Meyer

June 25

The Angola Horror

by Charity Vogel

Host: Joyce Young



VOLUNTEER DATES @ FRIENDS OF NIGHT PEOPLE

Wednesday, January 29

Wednesday, April 29

Wednesday, July 29

Wednesday, September 30

Wednesday, December 30



Sunday School in the New Year

Truth. Creativity. Love. Faith. Fun. Connection.

Do you want your kids to learn about their walk with Jesus and the power of the Scriptures in a fun environment on Sunday mornings with others their age and teachers who care? We have classes designed specifically for kids ages 4 and 5, 1st grade through 4th grade, and 5th grade through 8th grade. We also offer great nursery care for your toddlers and infants, and for youth above 8th grade, we'd love to develop an engaging set of programming just for them. Wherever they are in their walk with God, we want to walk with them!

Sunday School Registration Form

Please complete the following form and return it to the Church Office or place it in the offering plate. Questions? Call 884-7250, ext. 200 or email email@firstchurchbuffalo.org.

Parent or Guardian Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: (home) _____ (cell) _____ (work) _____

Email: _____@_____

CHILDREN IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Name: _____

Date of Birth _____

School: _____

Current Grade ____

Name: _____

Date of Birth _____

School: _____

Current Grade ____

Name: _____

Date of Birth _____

School: _____

Current Grade ____

Requests/Notes: _____

BUILDING NEWS

By Dr. David Bond

Building updates

There have been numerous upgrades and changes to the building in the last several months that you might not have noticed. Here is a list of current and upcoming projects:

- ◆ Panic hardware has been installed on all exit doors including the chapel side door, the three doors in the narthex, and the Wadsworth street door. This will allow for quick exits in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ The lanterns in the sanctuary have been updated with LED bulbs and the wiring repaired where needed. I'm in the process of getting parts for the one missing lantern. (Can anyone identify where it's missing?)
- ◆ New light fixtures have been installed in the staircase in Allen Hall, including one immediately in front of the doors. (It matches the other three so you probably didn't even notice it!)
- ◆ A new freezer has been purchased for the main kitchen downstairs so items belonging to FPC or OSC can be locked up and kept separate from F-BITES supplies.
- ◆ The sprinkler system in the basement had some much-needed repairs to ensure that it remains dependable. These were discovered during our annual test/inspection of the system. NY state is now requiring more extensive tests that should be done every five years. Our contractor will be completing those shortly.
- ◆ New soap, toilet tissue, and paper towel dispensers have been installed in all the restrooms. They use less paper and are now consistent throughout the building so ordering supplies is much more efficient.

Tower restoration

You might have noticed that the lifts and scaffolding are gone. Unfortunately, work had to stop because of the cold weather. It will resume again in the spring. However, the good news is that they were able to repaint the entire west face (the one toward the parking lot) which had the most problems. In addition, they "stitched" up the cracks on the north & south faces, installed the lead caps on the sloping area just under the belfry on the west, north, & south sides, and

finished the new copper flooring in the belfry. This makes the tower water-tight. In the spring, they will hang a swing stage out of the belfry to access the east side lead caps and get a close up of the needed repairs on that side. I will be applying for another NY state grant for next year to complete the pointing and continue the investigation to solve the remaining underlying gaps behind the stone face on the west side.



Upcoming projects

- ◆ Our electrician will be installing a lantern on the arch in the Wadsworth Street entrance, similar to the one on Pennsylvania. They will also install new photoelectric switches on all the exterior lights that are currently operated by timers. (All the lights are now LED so they use less energy).
- ◆ The second floor kitchenette is being renovated with a new sink, small dishwasher, new flooring and repainting. This will make it much more useable for our second floor tenants.
- ◆ Tentative plans are in place in conjunction with Explore Buffalo to renovate the larger area outside their current offices to make it more useful for them as they continue to expand.

CLERK'S CORNER

The following actions were taken by Session at its meetings in August, September, and October.

- ✓ Authorized Mike Henry, Mark Armesto, and Dr. David Bond to represent FPC to transact business with UBS and RBC as document signers.
- ✓ Approved \$2,500 for second floor kitchen renovations.
- ✓ Approved hiring of Marykate Waringa as Director of Engagement and Outreach, and a waiver of 90-day waiting period to begin church-sponsored health insurance coverage.
- ✓ Approved Class of 2022 deacons and elders, subsequently elected by the congregation on August 4, and installed/ordained on August 11: Gifty Koramoah, Mark Armesto, Don Houck, Denis Wettlaufer, Olga Rico-Armesto, and Russell Carlson (elders Liz Kamke and James Gardner to be installed/ordained at a later date).
- ✓ Approved seeking sponsorship for the Peacemaker program.
- ✓ Approved, if the way be clear, purchasing a portable labyrinth (not to exceed \$3,000).
- ✓ Approved September 8, October 6, November 3, November 24, December 1, and December 24 for communion.
- ✓ Granted permission to hold a collection of new underwear, socks, etc. for Friends of the Night People on Hunger & Homeless Sunday – November 17.
- ✓ Granted permission to proceed with planning and execution of two music series: one to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Noehren Organ, and the second, a jazz/other music and art series. Admission of \$5 for church members/affiliates and students and \$10 for general public offset to costs.
- ✓ Agreed to hold the Souper Bowl of Caring on February 2, 2020 after the annual meeting to raise funds and collect food items for the Food Pantry.
- ✓ Received into membership Dani Chapman, Nick Militello, Eli Van Brunt and Kali Van Brunt and approved baptisms for Dani Chapman and Eli Van Brunt in Sunday worship in October.
- ✓ Approved Christina Banas as new One Symphony Circle Board member.
- ✓ Approved holding a memorial service for Jane Turner Hansen and to serve wine at the postservice chapel reception on November 9.
- ✓ Agreed to include the chapel on the "Secrets of Allentown" tour on Sunday, December 8, sponsored by the Allentown Association.
- ✓ Approved the request of Rev. Dr. Hughes for his absence on Sunday, November 24.
- ✓ Elected Jayne Rand and Beth Kauffman to the Board of One Symphony Circle

Janet Hill, Clerk of Session

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A meeting of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Society of the Town of Buffalo has been called for Sunday, December 1 immediately following worship in the Sanctuary for the purpose of approving the sale of the manse, updating purchasers.

OUR NEW WEBSITE!

We invite you to the all new www.firstchurchbuffalo.org. It has been thoroughly redesigned, contains a news section, calendar, blog, the ability to donate online, sleek graphics and photos, and much more! It is updated multiple times a week. We hope that you will utilize it as a major resource for church activities

2019 ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE

Monday, January 13

CHURCH DIRECTORY

An updated church directory will be printed in soon. If your address, phone number, or email has changed, please notify the Church Office this week.

TENANT NEWS



Winter Gala

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020

7:00-10:00PM

TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB
595 DELAWARE AVENUE

Live Music | Silent Auction | Raffles & more!

TICKETS: General Admission \$80 | VIP Admission \$125

www.explorebuffalo.org



WINTER SALE

50% OFF THE ENTIRE STORE!

HOURS

WED 12-5 | THUR 12-5

FRI 12-5 | SAT 12-5

IN THE BASEMENT OF 1ST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1 SYMPHONY CIRCLE

ENTRANCE ON WADSWORTH ST



NATIVE OFFERINGS FARM POP UP MARKETS

4:00-7:00 PM

in the courtyard at First Church
Organic vegetables, local apples
& grass-fed beef for sale.
Open to the public.

December 5
December 12
December 19
January 9

F-BITES MAKES HISTORY

Resident partner, F-BITES, launched America's first barista training program for high school students—an idea born within our walls!

In this six-week training course taught at Niagara Falls High School students (many of whom have special needs) are trained to be baristas with Starbucks coffee, learn how to manage a business, and develop everyday skills such as self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, and respect for others.

An in-depth article about this exciting program is available on the church's blog at firstchurchbuffalo.org/blog.



MEAT RAFFLE

SATURDAY
February 29, 2020
TO BENEFIT

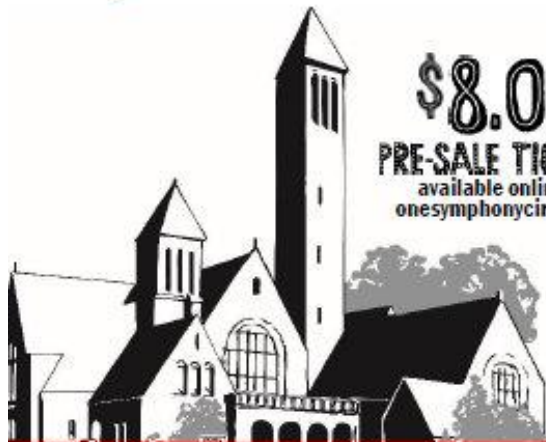
One Symphony Circle, Inc.
100% of proceeds will go to
restoration of the Landmark
First Presbyterian Church

Elmwood Village Charter School
40 Days Park
Buffalo, NY 14201

DOORS OPEN AT 6:00pm

FIRST ROUND STARTS 7:00pm

(Tickets include beer & wine-no outside drinks allowed)



\$8.00
PRE-SALE TICKETS
available online at
onesymphonycircle.org

\$9.00
TICKETS AT
THE DOOR

\$60.00
ADVANCED SALE FOR
TABLE OF EIGHT

★
BRING YOUR
OWN SNACKS

★ ★
★ ★
PIZZA WILL
BE AVAILABLE
FOR SALE!

★ ★
★ ★
FUN FOR ALL!

50/50 RAFFLE and DOOR PRIZES

★ **Special AUCTION SURPRISES** throughout the evening! ★



One Symphony Circle, Inc.

1 Symphony Circle ▪ Buffalo, NY 14201-1213
(716) 884-7250

November/December 2019

Dear Friend of One Symphony Circle,

Traditionally, this time of year is one of reflection and thanksgiving that prepares us for a season of celebration. Among the many reasons to celebrate this year at One Symphony Circle, one reason is highly visible to everyone who passes by our landmark E.B. Green building – and this visibility is thanks to you!

Four years ago members of the Western New York community partnered with the members of First Presbyterian Church to reinvigorate the One Symphony Circle organization and restore focus on a vision to preserve the historic church structure. This Romanesque masterpiece is not just home to the three congregations that worship in the church. Rather, because of the many mission oriented programs that take place under the historic roof, One Symphony Circle belongs to all of us.

Because of your generosity, the cranes and scaffolding were just here, beginning the long anticipated project to restore the church tower. Your past support is the reason why we are able to begin this critical phase of restoration. Your belief in our mission has helped us demonstrate to foundations and grant makers that this project is important to the broad community of WNY.

Gifts to the Annual Appeal have paid for all of the initial work in preparation for the project that is now underway.

THANK YOU!

The tower is not just bricks and mortar. It is a symbol of compassionate service, visible throughout much of the West Side and even from the harbor in Lake Erie. The work that you make possible will not only restore the structural integrity of the tower, it will ensure that it stands tall for many generations to come as a beacon of hope and comfort for the community.

Your support of One Symphony Circle allows First Church to continue its mission, as it has since organizing as Buffalo's first faith community in 1812. The church building serves the community in a multitude of ways, including hosting Houghton College's Associate of Arts program designed for recent immigrants and refugees. It hosts the Explore Buffalo tour program. It provides facilities for F-BITES, a tenant that provides hands-on culinary programs that include training in multiple food-service related jobs. F-BITES provides targeted populations with skills that move students directly into jobs. The building also houses The Serendipity Shoppe thrift store, all of whose proceeds go directly to provide support for local individuals with HIV/AIDS. It provides nourishment to families through the Lyon Food Pantry and helps families eat healthier through the summer crop share distribution, among many other mission-focused activities.

That means **we can't stop now!**

We ask during this season of reflection that you consider a donation to One Symphony Circle toward our goal of restoring and preserving the landmark E.B. Green designed structure known as First Church.

Please be as generous as you can be. As a volunteer led board, every dollar, no matter how much - \$25, \$50, \$100 or even \$1,000 - is a direct investment toward our mission of preserving this important community asset for years to come. One Symphony Circle Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is tax deductible as allowable by law.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Armesto, President

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Ken Hughes, *Pastor*

RevKen@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Voicemail extension: 203

The Reverend John Long, D.D.

Parish Associate for Community Outreach

JohnRLong17@verizon.net

The Reverend Jack Smiley, *Pastor Emeritus*

Christina Banas, *Communications & Office Manager*

CBanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Voicemail extension: 201

Dr. David Bond, *Organist/Choirmaster, Bookkeeper*

DBond@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Voicemail extension: 204

Cory Connell, *Maintenance Coordinator*

CConnell@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Voicemail extension: 200

Rama Salim, *Custodial & Security Assistant*

RSalim@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Voicemail extension: 202

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

11:00 AM Worship in the Sanctuary
11:15 AM Children's Sunday school
12:00 PM Fellowship time

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

*Staff meetings are held each
Wednesday from 10:00 to 11:30 AM*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

One Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY 14201-1213
(across from Kleinhans)

Phone: (716) 884-7250

Fax: (716) 884-7253

www.firstchurchbuffalo.org

email@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Facebook.com/1stChurchBuffalo

Instagram: @1stChurchBflo

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2020

Lucas Lloyd (2)
Janet Hill (1) *Clerk*
Henry Porter (2)
Sue Snyder (2)

Class of 2021

John Darby (2)
James Gardner (1)
Jean Hess (1)
Tina Osei (1)

Class of 2022

Mark Armesto (2)
Don Houck (2)
Liz Kamke (2)
Gifty Koramoah (1)

BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2020

India Asplundh (1)
Barry Farmer (1)
Madeline Mason-Brandon (2)
Suzanne Pilon (1)
Lou Ann Luther Riegler (2)

Class of 2021

Mary Field (2)
Jim McKeel (1)
Sheila Miller (2)
Shannon Rogers (1)

Class of 2022

Russell Carlson (1)
Olga Rico-Armesto (1)
Denis Wettlaufer (2)

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

Michael Henry, President
[Vacancy], Vice President
Mark Armesto, Treasurer
Janet Hill, Secretary



The mission of historic First Church is to bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ through worshiping God, fostering spiritual growth and serving the community.