



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO

Winter 2020

# NEWSLETTER

## YOU'RE A BORN LEADER!

By Rev. Dr. Ken Hughes

*"A rabbinical student, it is said, had a dream, and in his dream the Almighty appeared to him and told him he would become an influential rabbi. The student told this to his teacher.*

*'Pray,' said his teacher, 'that the Almighty appears in the dreams of others and persuades them to become your followers.'"*

—Rabbi Lionel Blue, Kitchen Blues

That clever and amusing little story says a lot of things about leaders and the circumstances of communities of faith. Faith communities struggle with two things right now – anointing leaders, and attracting followers.

And it's on that premise that I open the first newsletter of 2020 with an appeal to the congregation to do both – to step into leadership, and to follow those who lead. The paragraphs below describe some specific areas of leadership that lie open to the good people of First Church this year.

But before I get to that, let me underscore that leadership in the church does not necessarily involve being the person who heads committees, speaks in public, and corrals volunteers (think the 'herding cats' image!). These are facets of leadership – some of the most dreaded – but they are not leadership in its entirety.

In fact, Christian leadership following the example of Jesus often occurs out of the limelight and reveals itself in a thousand different "small strokes" that taken together form the faithful community and the spirit of commitment that our church seeks.

So, maybe you consider yourself a "born leader." Or, like our imaginary rabbinical student above, you've heard the voice of the Almighty urging you to take up a calling. Either way, please think hard and long, and prayerfully, about how your gifts could take First Church to a new place in 2020, as a leader *and* a follower. The Nominating Committee will be active in the coming weeks in connection with the following. Be blessed.

At the beginning of each year, the Nominating Committee begins its search for new officers of the church by seeking candidates for various church offices. This leads to a congregational meeting later in the year at which a slate of candidates is presented to serve three-year terms (or fill unexpired terms) on the Session, the Board of Deacons, and the Corporate Board.

Serving in leadership is a significant commitment of time and talent—but it also allows individuals to move deeper into service and further along their faith journey, and creates stronger ties within our beloved community. The responsibilities of these varied offices are described on the next page.

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### Elders

Each year four new Elders are called to join the Session and the clergy to exercise leadership, government and discipline for the life of the church. With primary responsibility for nurturing and overseeing the spiritual and theological life of the congregation, the Session meets monthly during the program year. Each Elder serves on at least one committee, with periodic meetings and tasks. Elders participate in worship by serving as liturgists and serving communion .

### Deacons

Likewise, candidates are called each year to join the Board of Deacons, serving as the church’s primary resource for pastoral care. Deacons meet periodically during the program year and serve on an ongoing basis in home and hospital visitation, celebrating communion, and responding to crucial life needs as they arise in the congregation. Deacons sponsor special celebrations during the year, including meals, and participate in worship by greeting, ushering, and collecting offerings.

### Corporate Board Officers

Four Corporate Board members are called (or renewed) each year to assume responsibility for the financial and business affairs of the church, reporting to the Session. The number, timing, and content of Corporate Board meetings may be tied to budget cycles, strategic planning goals, and endowment and investment review schedules.

## WORSHIP

### LIVESTREAMING

Can’t make it to church? Going to be out of town? You can still “worship” with your First Church family via the Internet! Log onto our website at [www.firstchurchbuffalo.org](http://www.firstchurchbuffalo.org) to view the service live each Sunday at 11:00 AM, or view the archives of previous services.

### LITURGISTS

### WANTED

Would you like to participate in worship from time to time by serving as liturgist? This speaking part usually involves the call to worship and several other prayers up to and including the first reading. A script is provided. If this ministry is calling you, speak to Rev. Ken to volunteer.

## CHURCH LIFE — COMING ATTRACTIONS!

By Elder Jean Hess

Church Life has been busy planning activities for this year! Souper Bowl Sunday will take place on January 26 after worship. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter – come and support the food pantry and enjoy wonderful homemade soups and fellowship!

Two new music series are on the calendar! Jazz on The Circle and a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Celebration of the Noehren Organ are beginning in February! The Jazz series will take place Sundays from 6-8 PM with the following artists:

- 2/23 – Bilal NuGravee
- 3/29 – Walter Kemp – Gruvology
- 4/26 – TBA
- 5/31 – Wendell Rivera

Information about the Noehren series is in Dr. Bond’s article in this newsletter. Tickets for both series are \$5 for church members, \$7 for students and \$10 for others.

Spread the word! Make a night of it with dinner at a local restaurant and great music at First!!

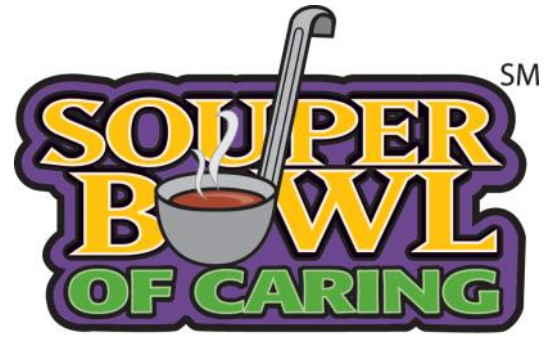
**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION** of the First Presbyterian Society of the Town of Buffalo will take place Sunday, February 2, 2020 immediately following worship in the Sanctuary. The purpose of the meeting is to receive reports of the staff, boards, committees and organizations of the Church; to elect a church Nominating Committee, to receive the Session’s budget for the year 2020; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

# SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

On **Sunday, January 26**, you will have a chance to share in fellowship and support our Lyon Food Pantry at the same time! The Souper Bowl of Caring raises funds and supplies for local charities and we can help stock our own pantry by bringing canned or dry goods or monetary donations to this meal.

If you aren't able to stay to share some of the delicious home cooked soups, you may still take part by donating foods or funds as you leave worship.

Join the Church Life Committee on Sunday, January 26 in Historical Hall for a time of fellowship and helping to feed others!



## PRAYER SHAWL GROUP

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.

## FRIENDS OF NIGHT PEOPLE

Join us on **Wednesday, January 29** at 4:30 PM to serve meals to the hungry at Friends of Night People (corner of Wadsworth and Hudson). Wear First Church gear if you have it!

## BOOK GROUP GATHERING

**Thursday, January 23**

6:00 PM at the

home of JoAnn Doerr

Book to discuss: The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew—Three Women Search for Understanding by Ranya Idliby,

Suzanne Oliver,

and Priscilla Warner

Potluck meal, please bring a dish to share.

Epiphany Sunday

Photo by Liz Kamke



# FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

By Dr. David Bond

The Noehren organ was completed 50 years ago – January 1970. (Not really old for an organ. There are numerous ones in Europe that are over 200!) The event was celebrated with a dedication recital and the organ was featured in performances as part of the national convention of the American Guild of Organists held in Buffalo in June 1970.

The builder, Robert Noehren, was a Buffalo native, growing up on Main Street in a house next to what is now the Anchor Bar. He was organist for a number of years at St. John's Grace on Colonial Circle. (Roch Harmon was a boy soprano in his choir as well as Betty Kinnen's first husband, Gene Drullard). Noehren eventually became professor of organ at the University of Michigan and opened a small organ building shop in Ann Arbor. He made numerous trips to Europe to study old organs and incorporated much of what he learned into his 2 dozen instruments. Ours was the last and largest one he made.

In appreciation of this unique instrument, we will be offering several organ recitals this spring and probably into next Fall as well. The first two are:

March 22 @ 5 p.m. – David Bond, Organist @ First Church Buffalo

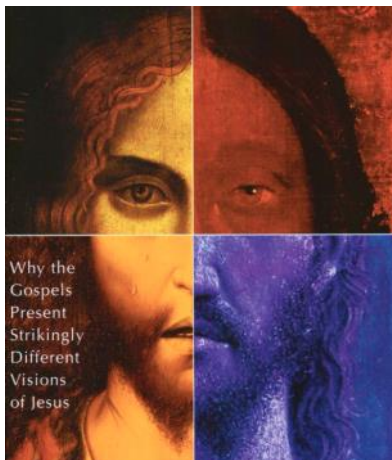
May 24 @ 5 p.m. – Stephen Price, Professor of Organ @ Ball State University

Other performances will be announced as they are confirmed.

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## THE FOUR GOSPELS COURSE

Why do we have four Gospels? This new course taught by Rev. Ken Hughes will study what sets each gospel apart from the others, but we'll also look at the common threads and themes among them. Classes begin today **Sunday, January 19** at 9:30 AM, repeated on **Wednesday, January 22** at 6:00 PM. The six-session course will continue in that pattern -- the lead class on Sunday followed by a repeat class on Wednesday. While attendance at each class is encouraged, drop-ins into any class are welcomed. Questions? Contact Rev. Ken at [RevKen@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:RevKen@firstchurchbuffalo.org) or 884-7250, x 203.



## FEBRUARY ADULT FORUM

Houghton College Buffalo: Hope House

Sunday February 16 after service in the Houghton Library

Numerous studies show that higher education reduces the likelihood of returning to jail/prison after being released. Despite this fact, federal and state funding for college-in-prison programs is virtually nonexistent--and pursuing higher education post-release is challenging. **Houghton College Buffalo: Hope House** opened in 2017 to address these challenges; **offering an Associate of Arts degree program for justice-involved and at-risk students in Erie County.** Individuals with criminal convictions face a multiplicity of issues and case management services are provided for those in the program through Peaceprints of WNY.

Come learn about efforts to bring back funding for college-in-prison programs and the work being done at Houghton College Buffalo: Hope House! We will also hear a bit about national and local concerns relating to the "revolving door" of prison. Our presenter is Rebekah Kimble, the former Program Director at Hope House. Ms. Kimble recently became a research associate at Via Evaluation. This company helps nonprofits, foundations, schools, districts, and universities understand and use data for program development, community building and grant writing.





Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western New York

## Come to the Winter Gathering!

*LOVE THY NEIGHBOR?*

*Opening Our Hearts and Minds to Others*

**Saturday, February 1, 2020** - 10 a.m. Registration

First Presbyterian Church

One Symphony Circle, Buffalo New York

### **Panel of Speakers:**

**Rev Dr Ken Hughes**, Pastor, **Dr Charlene Vetter**, Counseling Center

SUC Buffalo and **Andrea Cammarata**, Journey's End

Followed by Questions and Answers

### **Worship Leader:**

Rev. Ken Hughes, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo NY

### **Action Piece:**

New or Gently Used Winter Coats/Jackets w/Hoods for Teenaged Boys

Sizes Sm. & Med. (no Lg or Ext.Lg)

**Lunch** is \$7.00 at Registration. **Please RSVP** to

Olga Rico-Armesto at 648-2081





# MEAT RAFFLE

**SATURDAY**  
**February 29, 2020**  
**TO BENEFIT**

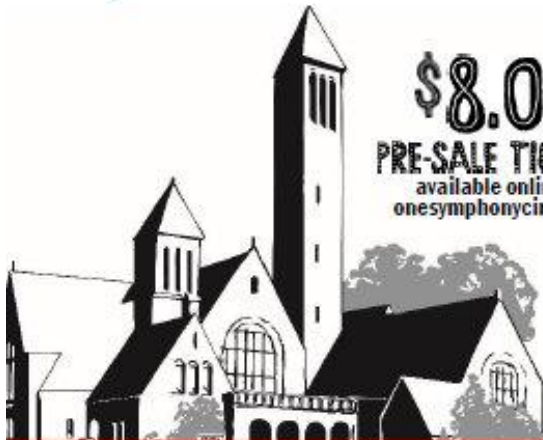
**One Symphony Circle, Inc.**  
**100% of proceeds will go to**  
**restoration of the Landmark**  
**First Presbyterian Church**

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](http://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! ★



# ANNUAL REPORT & CHURCH DIRECTORY

The 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Church Directory will be available on Sunday, January 26. To have a copy emailed or mailed to you, please contact the Church Office.

## ARE YOU ON OUR EMAIL LIST?

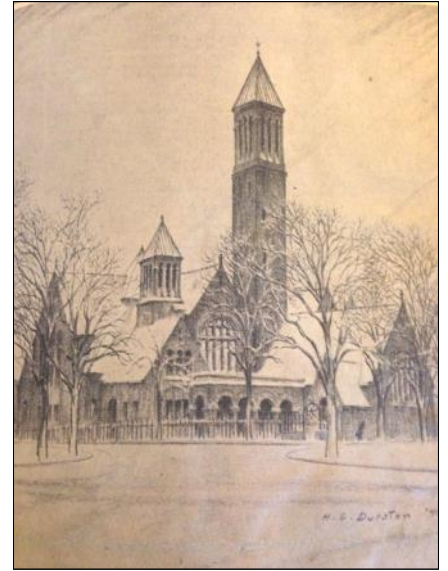
Each week an informational "First Things First..." email from the Church Office and worship-specific note from Rev. Ken are emailed to the congregation. Are you on our mailing list? Contact the Church Office to subscribe.

## COFFEE HOUR SQUAD

Sign up in the Narthex to bring homemade or store-bought treats for fellowship time after church on Sundays. Pastries, cookies, casseroles, quiche, cakes, pies, fruit salad all sound delicious and would be enjoyed by many. There is also the option of financially sponsoring a coffee hour. To coordinate, speak to Elder Jean Hess.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN

Please note, if the building is closed or worship service canceled due to weather conditions, announcements will be made through the following outlets: the church website, email from the pastor, social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), extension 200 on the phone system, and local TV news outlets (when applicable).



*The cover header is a portion of this original 1940's wintertime sketch by H. G. Durston.*

## EXPLORE BUFFALO WINTER GALA

**Saturday, January 25**

7:00-10:00 PM at the Twentieth Century Club

The Winter Gala is an elegant winter cocktail party that includes live music throughout the evening and features an extensive silent auction of many unique Buffalo-themed experiences and items.

Buffalo's Twentieth Century Club is considered to be one of the oldest and most historic private women's clubs in the United States. Its elegant clubhouse was designed by prominent local architect E. B. Green.

Tickets are \$80 each and available at [explorebuffalo.org](http://explorebuffalo.org) or by calling 245-3032.

## 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.*