



# First Presbyterian Church

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www.firstchurchbuffalo.org

*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.*

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*Wherever “◇” appears, you are asked to stand if you are able to do so.  
Text in **bold print** indicates congregational responses.*

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 28, 2024

PRELUDE

Prelude on *Warham*

*Healey Willan*

WELCOME & NEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

◇CALL TO WORSHIP

In the wilderness, water brings life.

**Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.**

In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

**Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.**

In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior nourishes everyone.

**Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.**

Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the food of eternity.

Come and praise the vine that gives all goodness.

**Come, let us worship God.**

◇HYMN 376

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

*Hyfrydol*

◇PRAYER OF THE DAY

*Catherine of Siena*

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray:

And from what source, O tree—

since of yourself you are dead and barren—

do you get these fruits of life?

From the tree of life—

for unless you are engrafted into him

you would have no power to produce any fruit at all,

because you are nothing.

So through you who are life,

we will produce the fruit of life

if we choose to engraft ourselves into you.

**Amen.**

◇ CONFESSION AND PARDON

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess to God and to one another our failure to love our neighbor.



Lord, have mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer-cy up-on us. Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.

Let us pray:

**God of mercy, we confess that we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

We have already been cleansed by the word that God has spoken to us. In baptism God claimed us and joined us to Christ, as branches to a vine. Believe the promise given to us: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

◇ CANTICLE

“Glory to the Father”

*Richard Wetzel*



Glo - ry to the Fa - ther and



to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir - it, as in the \_ be -



gin - ning, so \_ now, and for - ev - er. A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

◇ HYMN 298

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

*In Babilone*

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

PRESENTATION

*To the congregation:*

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Smith by word and deed, with love and prayer? **We do.**

Will you encourage him to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of his church? **We will.**

◇ CONGREGATIONAL PROFESSION OF FAITH *(Please stand if you are able to do so)*

With the whole church, let us confess our faith

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again; He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

**The Lord be with you.**

And also with you.

**Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE BAPTISM

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

WELCOME

Smith, you have been received into the one holy catholic and apostolic church through baptism. By the power of the Holy Spirit, you have become a member of the household of God, to share with us in the ministry of Christ. With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into the body of Christ. **Alleluia! Amen!**

◇ PASSING OF THE PEACE

In Jesus Christ, we know God's forgiveness and peace. Let us share that peace with one another. The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Come, Holy Spirit, that through your word we may be guided into the love of God for all the world. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Acts 8:26-40

*NT page 127*

ANTHEM

Behold, I Make All Things New

*Robert J. Powell*

*Behold, I make all things new. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, and I will give to those who thirst of the water of life freely. Come, come, come, let any one who will take the gift of the living water. Those who overcome shall inherit all things, and I will be their God. I will be their God, and they will be my children.*

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: John 15:1-8

*NT page 109*

SERMON

“Not so autonomous after all”

*Kurt Froese*

◇ HYMN 302

“I Danced in the Morning”

*Simple Gifts*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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, forever. Amen**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God is our rock and our fortress. Let us celebrate our salvation by fearlessly giving a portion of what has already been given to us, through our tithes and gifts.

OFFERTORY

Prayer for the City

*Richard Proulx*

*May the Lord who lives in light come near your lives with radiant brightness of His undying love. May the Lord who does not diminish as the shadows bring the night, protect you under His eagle wings. May He give vision to your striving for peace, May He give you the strength to be kind, May He give you the will to be just, May He open your hearts to His Holy Word. And at last when you come to rest, may He give you unending rest. So be it.*

◇DOXOLOGY

*Old Hundredth*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; Praise triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

◇PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Through our offerings, O God, give your loving Spirit to a world in need of comfort. Make our many gifts one offering for the world; in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

◇HYMN 439

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

*St. Peter*

◇CHARGE AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Postlude

*Healey Willan*

***Household Prayer: Morning***

God of all beginnings, you bring a new day, and you promise to journey with me through the hours. I thank you for the breath and strength I have, and I beg your help that I may use my powers wisely and with compassion toward everyone I meet. Let my questions today be a form of pruning to bring forth in me new understandings, healing, and good fruit; in Jesus' name. Amen.

***Household Prayer: Evening***

Sweet Jesus, in this night of rest, heal my broken places and restore my faith. You are my vine; only in you am I strong enough to face the darkness of this world. I thank you for the safety of my home and pray for those who have no bed tonight. Make me grateful, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all. Amen.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024

Today's liturgist is Suzanne Pilon.

### COFFEE HOUR

Please join us for coffee hour after worship today.

### UPCOMING CONVERSATIONS

“The Undiscovered Country” Preparing for Our Final Passage

Church Life will be offering several opportunities for conversation surrounding our ends of life.

Topics will include:

- Wills and end of life directives
- End of life care: physical, spiritual, and the like
- How to talk plainly with your family about your wishes, and how to plan your Service of Witness to the Resurrection
- What to do with your stuff

Dates in spring and early summer will be announced soon.

### CHURCH LIFE EVENTS

Save the date for Shakespeare in Delaware Park—Sunday, July 28, 2024. Church Life has reserved the event platform for the evening. Cost will be \$10 per person to cover the rental. Details regarding payment, time, etc., will follow closer to the date.

### JOYS & CONCERNS

- For Gregg and Anna Kay.
- For Johanna & Terry, living with dementia.
- For Alan and Bob, residing in a skilled nursing facility.
- For Gino to continue walking on the right road.
- For Karl fighting lung cancer.
- For Olga recovering from knee surgery
- For all First Church members who are homebound or residing in adult living facilities.
- For the nesting congregations in our building—El Shaddai Buffalo & Holiness Mennonite
- For the people of the United State and its elected leaders & representatives
- For the people of and in Ukraine.
- For the people of Gaza, Israel, Jordan, and Syria.

Prayer requests: [dbond@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:dbond@firstchurchbuffalo.org) or call 716-884-7250, Ext. 204.

# THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

*from whose bourne no traveller returns... Hamlet, III. 1, Wm. Shakespeare*

***A series of brunch workshops on preparing for our deaths,  
directly after church***

May 5: **Planning Your Memorial Service**, led by Rev. Leslie Latham

We'll talk about the various elements you need to know to plan your service, including what the service will look like, when it will be, hospitality, and other elements.

We'll provide you with a form to formalize your wishes.

\*\*\*\*\*RSVP to [revleslie@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:revleslie@firstchurchbuffalo.org), or 716.884.7250 x203\*\*\*\*\*

Feel free to invite others, but make sure they also register!

Upcoming conversations include

- May 19: **What to Know Before You Die**: a medical perspective
- June 2: **The Paperwork of it All**
- June 30: **Difficult Conversations** with family and loved ones

# CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

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<b>Sunday, April 28, 2024`</b> 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	<b>5th Sunday of Easter</b> In person and livestreamed - Kurt Froese preaching Turkish delights—Community Room
<b>Monday, April 29, 2024</b>	No events
<b>Tuesday, April 30, 2024</b> 12:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Food Bag Distribution—Courtyard Friends of Harmony rehearsal—Hindman Chapel
<b>Wednesday, May 1, 2024</b> 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Serendipity Shoppe open — Basement
<b>Thursday, May 2, 2024</b> 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Serendipity Shoppe open — Basement
<b>Friday, May 3, 2024</b> 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Serendipity Shoppe open — Basement
<b>Saturday, May 4, 2024</b> 12:00 - 5:00 p.m. 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.	Serendipity Shoppe open — Basement Buffalo Opera Unlimited Rehearsal—Sanctuary
<b>Sunday, May 5, 2024`</b> 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	<b>6th Sunday of Easter—Holy Communion</b> In person and livestreamed - Rev. Leslie Latham preaching Coffee Hour in the narthex

Please visit our updated website at [www.firstchurchbuffalo.org](http://www.firstchurchbuffalo.org).

That's where you'll find:

- The link to Sunday worship on-line and previous services in recording.
- Weekly bulletins
- Newsletters
- Photos—we'd love to have some of your church-related pictures
- News about church life
- Upcoming events

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

### SESSION BY CLASS AND TERM

#### ***Class of 2024***

James Gardner (2)  
Jean Hess (2)  
Maria Patrick-Roberts (1)

#### ***Class of 2025***

Pat Frey (1)  
Pat Harmon (1)  
Suzanne Pilon (1)

#### ***Class of 2026***

Mark Armesto (1)  
Tim Hess (2)  
Quinton Meyer (2)

### OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

James Gardner, President  
Don Houck Vice President  
Tim Hess, Treasurer  
Janet Hill, Secretary

### Transition Team

Mark Armesto  
David Bond  
Ilsa Cooper  
Jean Hess  
John Long  
Eli Van Brunt

### BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

#### ***Class of 2024***

Gail McKeel (1)  
Jim McKeel (2)  
Madeline Mason-Brandon (1)

#### ***Class of 2025***

Olga Rico-Armesto (2)  
Nikia Jenkins (1)  
LouAnn Riegler (1)

#### ***Class of 2026***

Marsha Baker (1)  
Ilsa Cooper (2)  
Mary Field (1)

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

### **The Reverend Leslie Latham**

*Pastor, Head of Staff*  
Revleslie@firstchurchbuffalo.org  
Voicemail extension 203

### **The Reverend John Long, D.D.,**

*Parish Associate for Community Outreach*  
johnrlong17@verizon.net

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

*Bookkeeper, Facilities Manager*  
DBond@firstchurchbuffalo.org  
Voicemail extension 204

### **Cory Connell, Maintenance Coordinator**

Connelljamescory@gmail.com  
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### **Kurt Froese, Director of Family Ministries**

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### **Contact Information**

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#### **Presbytery of Western New York**

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