

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS



SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Clerk of Session
Janet Hill

Class of 2016
Ian Bradford (T) (2)
Andrew Gaerte (T) (1)
Stephanie Smith (1)
Ryan Nadbrzuch (T) (1)
Maria Oakley (1)

Class of 2017
Mark Armesto (T) (2)
Lucas Lloyd (1)
Henry Porter (T) (1)
Sue Snyder (1)
Roger Woodard (1)

Class of 2018
John Darby T (1)
Tim Hess (2)
Lauren Hill T (1)
Susan Koeppe (2)
Virginia McIntyre (2)

(T) indicates that the Elder has also been nominated or elected to serve as a Trustee while on Session.



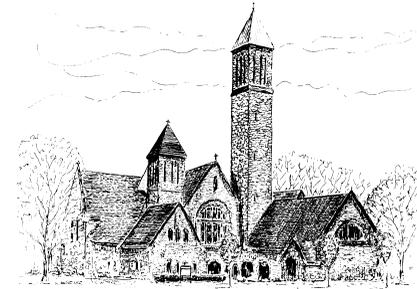
BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2016
Jackie Addo (1)
Cleo Alexander (2)
Mark Juan Armesto (2)
José Gomez (2)
Gifty Koramoah (1)
Ken Madell (2)

Class of 2017
Pat Brown (2)
Rebecca Laubenstein (1)
Madeline Mason (1)
Lovelace Quarshie (1)
Olga Rico-Armesto (2)
Nolan Whipple*(1)

Class of 2018
Christina Banas* (1)
Mary Field (1)
Liz Kamke (2)
Sheila Miller (1)
Tina Osei (2)

** Indicates Co-Moderator*



First Presbyterian Church

(716) 884-7250 • Fax: (716) 884-7253
email@firstchurchbuffalo.org • www.firstchurchbuffalo.org
“Like” us Facebook: “First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, NY”
Follow us Twitter @1stChurchBflo

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

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME SEPTEMBER 27, 2015

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

- PRELUDE Prelude on *Slane* Craig Phillips
- ♦CALL TO WORSHIP: *(responsive)*
Upon this gathering of your people, **pour out your Spirit, O Lord.**
Be near to us and speak to us, **and we will proclaim your glory.**
Let us worship God!
- ♦HYMN 483 “Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above” Mit Freuden Zart
- PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(unison)*
God, our strength and savior, you know our great transgressions, our hidden faults, our secret sins. With our hands we grasp at power; with our feet we stumble into evil; with our eyes we look out for ourselves. Forgive us, gracious God, and lead us in your holy way of life and love and peace; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS *(responsive)*
Though we wander from the truth, God brings us back and saves our souls from death. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**
- ♦CANTICLE “Glory to the Father” Richard Wetzel
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as in the beginning, so now, and forever. Amen.
- ♦PASSING OF THE PEACE
- CHILDREN’S MESSAGE Maria Oakley
- ANNOUNCEMENTS
- LITANY OF SHARING Andrew Gaerte
- FIRST READING: Psalm 19:7-14 OT page 499
- ANTHEM It Is a Good Thing to Give Thanks Paul Bouman

It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; To tell of Your loving kindnesses early in the morning and of Your faithfulness in the night season; And on the psaltery, and on the lyre, and to the melody of the harp. For You have made me glad by Your acts, O Lord; and I shout for joy because of the works of Your hands. Lord, how great are Your works! Your thoughts are very deep. It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to the Lord Most High.
— Psalm 92:1-5

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Your Word is our salt; without it, we lose our being, our joy, and our ability to endure. Open our hearts and our minds to listen, to really listen, to your Word today. **Amen.**

GOSPEL READING: Mark 9:30-37

NT page 45

SERMON

“Us and Them”

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings

◇HYMN 339

“Be Thou My Vision”

Slane

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER (*unison*)

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.

OFFERTORY

I Sat Down Under His Shadow

Edward Bairstow

I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. I sat down under His shadow.

— Song of Solomon 2:3-4

DOXOLOGY 591

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

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 (*responsive*)

Generous, transforming God, thank you for the blessing of honest labor, through which you have provided these gifts for our hands to share with those in need.

We dedicate them now as an expression of your love for the world, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

◇HYMN 361

“How Firm a Foundation”

Foundation

◇CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings

POSTLUDE

Finale on *Foundation*

Janet Linker



Sunday School Registration forms are available in the September newsletter and on the information table in the Narthex.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, September 27

9:30 a.m.

Adult Christian Education — Pastor's Study

11:00 a.m.

Worship, Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings preaching — Sanctuary

11:15 a.m.

Sunday School — Classrooms

12:00 p.m.

Fellowship Time — Chapel

Monday, September 28

Church Closed

Tuesday, September 29

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Staff Meeting — Pastor's Study

12:30 p.m.

Food Bag Assistance — Historical Hall

Wednesday, September 30

12:30 p.m.

Bible Study — Pastor's Study

4:30 p.m.

Gather to serve at Friends of Night People — Historical Hall

Thursday, October 1

3:00 p.m.

Native Offerings Crop Share Pickup — Courtyard

Friday, October 2

No events

Saturday, October 3

No events

Sunday, October 4

9:30 a.m.

World Communion Sunday

11:00 a.m.

Adult Christian Education — Pastor's Study

Worship & Communion,

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings preaching — Sanctuary

12:00 p.m.

Fellowship Time — Chapel

6:00 p.m.

Jazz Vespers Potluck — Chapel

7:00 p.m.

Jazz Vespers Service — Chapel

PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING

Next week our congregation will participate in our denomination's special offering. The enclosed brochure offers more information.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The 9:30 AM Adult Sunday School is in the midst of "What is Your Issue?" Each week members will be encouraged to share one issue facing us today that they would like to discuss. We'll talk about Biblical ideas on the theme, and each of us can share our own personal perspective on ways we can live out our faith in today's often troubled times. Everything is fair game for discussion in this class, and we are expecting lively discussion. Here are a few issues that may well be brought up:

- Raising Spiritually Healthy Children in Buffalo in 2015
- Christian Faith and Politics
- Stewardship of the Environment
- Spiritual Health for Christian Adults
- Are We Even Close to the End Times

But remember, YOU get to pick your issues. So come and tell us what concerns you and we'll talk about it.

A NOTE FROM ELDER JOHN DARBY

In the same spirit as our successful summertime guest preacher program, the Session thought that it might be fun to arrange a Youth Service that could be developed and presented by our youth on **November 22, 2015**.

Since this is the Sunday before Thanksgiving, the universal topic of Thanksgiving, in all its various forms, seemed like a timely and appropriate theme that our youth could sink their teeth into.

The purpose of this note is to let you know about this service and to see if your child (or children) would be interested in contributing their talents to making this a successful event. There are a variety of different roles that each member of our

youth could participate in depending on age and interest, but to make it a really fun event, we need as many youth as possible to say "Yes".

I have volunteered to get this process off the ground and help organize the Sunday service. If you want to participate, I need the following information from you **by October 1, 2015**.

You can send this information to Christina at the Church who will help collate the information for me.

- Child's name:
- Contact information (with a heavy preference on email, please):
- Interest area:

Once we have those identified who want to participate we can begin assigning various roles for the service. In the interests of making this a smooth and well received event, we will need a couple of meetings to bring the event together, so just be prepared to attend these mandatory meetings if you say "Yes".

I know that my three kids are super excited about this and are already brimming with ideas, and I hope yours will be too!

This is also an opportunity to get the word out to friends and family in the community (with a heavy emphasis on kids who do not attend Church at all or do not attend Church regularly) about this special Sunday and lets see how many new faces we can get to Church on "Youth Day".

I have a bet with Maria Oakley that we can get 50 new kids at this service on November 22, so I will need all of your help to make this a reality and win my bet! **Wouldn't that be great – 50 new kids in Church?!**

Household Prayer: Morning

May the first words in my mouth today be the sound of the name of Jesus. Lead me to reflect on his power as I seek to live my day, honoring the One who gave me salvation and a new life. In his powerful name I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

God, was I an agent of hope and salvation to others as you have been to me? As the day winds down, help me to think about those times during the day when I lived in your grace and the times when I failed to be salt in your world. Keep on working in my life, through the power of your Holy Spirit, so that I can become more like you want me to be. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

DEACON PRAYER LIST

We want to know if you are sick, have a joy to share, or need a prayer. To add a prayer to the list, please contact a Deacon or the Church Office by Noon on Thursday of each week. Your prayer needs may remain anonymous if you wish.

PRAYER LIST FOR THE WEEK OF 9/27/15

- For Paula Standart, who returned to the hospital this week for another operation.
- For Ruth Hunter, one of our homebound members, who received Communion to the Furthest Pew this week and wishes everyone at First Church well.
- For Maria Oakley's grandson, Gino, who had emergency surgery this week.

FIRST CHURCH STAFF LIST

The Reverend Dr. Philip S. Gittings, *Interim Pastor*
RevPhil@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension 13 / Cell: 548-0466

Christina Banas, *Business Manager*
CBanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension 11

The Reverend John Long, D.D.,
Parish Associate for Community Outreach
johnrlong17@verizon.net

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*
Church Office Voicemail extension 10
email@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Dr. David Bond, *Organist/Choirmaster, Bookkeeper*
DBond@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension 17

Weddings Voicemail extension 15
weddings@firstchurchbuffalo.org

2015 Season of Peace, Peace & Global Witness Offering
Week 4: We are Stronger Together—Considering our Systems and Structures

Isaiah 65:17 Submitted by Rev. Matt Gaventa
For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
The former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.—Isaiah 65:17

Reflection: The former things

Inside of an unremarkable storage room at the national headquarters of the Khulumani Support Group in Johannesburg, South Africa, you will find thousands upon thousands of stories, filed away just in case anybody ever has the time to read them. They are the untreated wounds of victims of South Africa's apartheid regime, unheard by the official process of reconciliation that followed its collapse. Khulumani collects them, in case the day comes when those former things might come to mind; but, for now, they gather dust.

God's words to Isaiah speak of a wondrous time yet to come when our own brutal histories won't matter, but the reverse implication is that those who would seek God's justice in this present age have an even more forceful obligation to storytelling and memory. However, in the United States, so many of our most haunting and wounding stories are locked away, ignored, gathering dust. We debate the appropriateness of a Confederate flag as if it could be divorced from the untended wound of slavery. We debate immigration policy as if it could be divorced from the untended wound of the genocide committed against Native Americans. We act as if the former things have already been forgotten.

But biblical Israel does not forget. Scripture tells the stories again and again of Israel's conquests as well as its profound failures. Scripture uses storytelling as an act of healing and of justice. Perhaps we, too, can enter a season of simple, honest, and confessional remembrance. Truly it may be the first real step towards peacemaking.

Action: Find a slave narrative online. Read and share with a friend. Remember.

Prayer: Almighty God, help us to confess who we truly are, and remind us that we are truly loved. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2015

Today's Liturgist is Stephanie Smith.

Today's Acolyte is Mark Juan Armesto.

The flowers in the chancel are given to the glory of God, and in honor of my Grandfather's brother, Pvt. George Hunter Brand, Royal Scots Regiment, killed 100 years ago, September 25, 1915, at the Battle of Loos, France, as the poem says, "In Flanders Fields" by James E. Lee.

Welcome to all visitors— you have a friend at First Church! If you would like to learn more about our diverse, welcoming faith community, please speak to a Deacon after worship.

If you have a prayer request to include during Prayers of the People, please use one of the blue prayer cards available in the Narthex or by asking a Deacon. Please write neatly and give your card to a Deacon.

Additional parking is available in the Gateway-Longview lot on Wadsworth Street Sunday mornings from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM, courtesy of Carl Paladino.

NEXT SUNDAY IS FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY

The first Sunday of the month is designated "Food Pantry Sunday." Donations of canned goods can be placed in the chancel. Monetary donations to the Lyon Food Pantry are also appreciated. First Church feeds an average of 20 hungry people every Tuesday, right here in our neighborhood. This is an opportunity for hands-on mission that helps many. Thank you!

HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Join us on **Wednesday, September 30 at 4:30 p.m.** to serve meals to the hungry at Friends of Night People (corner of Wadsworth and Hudson). Wear First Church gear if you have it! Sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

JAZZ VESPERS SERVICES

Sunday, October 4
6:00 PM Potluck Supper
7:00 PM Worship service with Jazz music

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

"Waters of Justice"
Saturday, October 3 / 10:30 AM to 2:00 PM
at Orchard Park Presbyterian Church
See poster on the information table in the Narthex for more information.

ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION FALL FEST

Saturday, October 3 / 11 AM to 7 PM
Live music, children's activities, marketplace.
See the poster on the bulletin board in the Narthex for complete details.

FINN FEST VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

An exciting, once in a lifetime festival is coming to Buffalo October 2-11 called "Finn Fest." It's a celebration of Finnish heritage, and First Church is playing a big role. **Visitors from all over the world will be on Symphony Circle for special cultural events on Saturday, October 9 and Sunday, October 10. Many events will take place at First Church on these days. Volunteers are needed to greet visitors, direct cars in the parking lot, and generally be helpful and hospitable. Can you help? If so, please contact Christina Banas in the Church Office.**