



## LIGHT FROM THE TOWER

Late-January – February 2017

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.

*“Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”*

*-Martin Luther King Jr.*



### The Five Developmental Tasks of the Interim Period

1. Coming to terms with our history
2. Discerning our purpose and identity
3. Leadership change and development
4. Reaffirming denominational/ community ties
5. Committing to new leadership and new ministry

## A Letter from Rev. Elena Delgado

For the Hebrews exiled to Babylon as slaves, it had been a long, cold winter of some 70 years. The people needed to hear some good news, some encouraging words. And to that need, the Prophet Isaiah tells them that God is about to make all things new and that “the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating.” [Isaiah 65 17-18] And when bad news fades and good news dawns, “Sing a new song to the Lord!” Isaiah proclaims.

I know of no congregation or group of people who have skipped through the years with ease. Do you? This is true of First Church. It has been experiencing a winter of its own these past few years. Throughout its history, First Church has had times of challenge and times of rejoicing in its witness to the good news of Christ. I don’t know about you but I feel the congregation is starting to “sing a new song to the Lord!”

There’s been a fair amount of good news about the congregation recently. An outstanding article in the January edition of Buffalo Spree magazine describes economic and ministry developments here at the church. An article in The Buffalo News and on WBFO report the award of a NYS grant to begin restoration of the tower. If you’ve read or heard any of these items, you know there is much for which we can sing.

Regular worship attendance, the return of former members, the vitality of stewardship are growing. Let’s sing about that. Let’s rejoice in the faithful ministry of the Food Pantry, Family Promise, the Prayer Shawl ministry and Friends of Night People. Let’s shout out that adult Bible study is resuming and that the Deacons’ ministry of Communion to the Furthest Pew has returned. The Session is starting to hum a new song as it wrestles with the challenges of the five developmental tasks of interim ministry (see “Five Developmental Task” and incorporate them in your prayers). And do you hear a new tune emerging from the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) as it discerns who God is already calling to serve as your installed pastor?

It’s still cold outside and challenges remain for First Church. But for now, let’s declare, “Be glad and rejoice in what I am creating and remember not the former things. Sing a new song to the Lord!”

*Elena Delgado*



Dear Members of First Presbyterian Church,

The Stewardship drive for 2017 was brief, but very successful. We received pledges from most members of our congregation. **We surpassed last year's stewardship drive by \$2,735 with a total of \$186,661.** When we receive pledges still outstanding, we shall be able to achieve more of our mission and worship goals than last year. There is hope for our continued activity as we worship God in our church facilities.

Clean-up time begins this week. Follow-up phone calls will be made. We shall be thanking all of you for pledging, and we shall be requesting pledge commitments from those not yet responding. Although pledge envelopes are not necessary, if you would like to receive general giving envelopes, please contact the Church Office at 884-7250, ext. 10 or [cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org).

If you have any questions, recommendations, or concerns, please contact me.

With Gratitude,


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Armesto".

Mark Armesto, Stewardship Chair



## ANNUAL MEETING

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION of the First Presbyterian Society of the Town of Buffalo will be called on **Sunday, February 5, 2017** immediately following worship in the Sanctuary. The purpose of the meetings 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 2017; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meetings.



First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo presents:

**"WHO IS JESUS?"**  
**BIBLE STUDY**

THURSDAYS  
FEB. 2  
THRU  
MAR. 30  
7-8:30 PM

Locations and facilitators coming soon!

An adult Bible study entitled  
"Who is Jesus?— What a Difference a Lens Makes" will begin next month.  
Each of the study's nine lessons explores the question "Who is Jesus?"  
through a particular theological lens.

Author Judy Yates Siker's explores the response to this question through the lens of the gospel writers and the Apostle Paul, as well as the Abrahamic Faiths and even contemporary interpretations through the lens of Christians around the world. We will consider how each of us who read the New Testament interpret the text before us, too, through our own lives and experience. The goal of the study is for you to find your voice, your own response in dialogue with others including our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers.

The series kicks off on **Thursday, February 2** at the home of Maria Oakley (262 Commonwealth Ave. in Buffalo). Pastor Elena will teach the first lesson. "According to Mark."

You are encouraged to purchase your individual study book for \$8, available by contacting the Church Office at 884-7250, ext. 10 or [cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org). Large print copies can be ordered for \$12 plus shipping, also by contacting the Church Office. You may also purchase either online at [pwpcusahorizons.com](http://pwpcusahorizons.com).

The schedule of hosts and facilitators will be published on our website and in the weekly bulletin as soon as it is complete. Mark you calendar for each Thursday in February and March now!

JANUARY • 29 • 2017  
AFTER WORSHIP

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# 205th Birthday Party!

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO  
ONE SYMPHONY CIRCLE, BUFFALO

FOOD, FUN & FELLOWSHIP!

"GIFTS" TO THE FOOD PANTRY WELCOME.

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884.7250 X 11  
CBANAS@FIRSTCHURCHBUFFALO.ORG





## First Presbyterian Church Receives State Grant to Save Iconic Tower

One Symphony Circle, Inc. (“OSC”) and the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo (“First Church”) are proud to announce the receipt of a State Parks grant totaling \$328,400 to restore and repaint First Church’s iconic E.B. Green-designed tower.

The funding is made available through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation’s environmental protection fund for Historic Preservation Work Detail. The project was competitively applied for through Empire State Development’s annual Consolidated Funding Application process. The grant is specifically to preserve, rehabilitate and restore properties listed on a state or national register of historic places.

In announcing the award in December, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo’s 2016 Regional Economic Development Awards stated that the restoration and repainting of First Church’s historic E.B. Green tower located at One Symphony Circle “will have an immediate, significant and ongoing impact to both the cultural and social fabric of the region.”

“This grant will allow us to complete the most critical phase of the project plan; the restoration and repainting of the E.B. Green tower,” stated First Church Interim Pastor Rev. Elena Delgado.

Dedicated in 1897, the 163 ft. American Romanesque style tower was designed by E.B. Green as an homage to H.H. Richardson’s twin towers located two miles away at the Northern end of Richmond Avenue.

The restoration and repainting is expected to cost \$437,920 with work planned to commence in early 2018. The balance of the costs not covered by the grant will be paid by more than \$100,000 already raised through generous donations and grants to OSC, the 501c(3) whose mission is to assure the ongoing preservation, restoration and maintenance of First Church as a community asset for future generations.

Phase two of the project will be the replacement of the building’s slate roof.

Formed in 1812, the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo is the first and oldest religious organization in Buffalo, pre-dating the incorporation of the City. Recognized as a Nationally Registered Historic Landmark, its building is an architectural icon in the city’s skyline and an important piece in Olmsted’s internationally recognized urban design. Designed by E.B. Green, a member of the congregation and major American architect from New York State, the structure is nationally renowned for its Romanesque exterior, central tower, and inspiring interior. Today, it is home to six community based organizations including the Buffalo Urban Mission Partnership, Explore Buffalo, Houghton College Buffalo, Village Church, Native Offering Crop Share and the congregation of First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, collectively serving more than 12,000 community members annually.





## A Report of the Pastor Nominating Committee



At our meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup>, the PNC took a significant step towards the completion of our Ministry Information Form (MIF), drafting our responses to essay questions about our church's visions for ministry and for the pastor. Once completed, the MIF will be posted to the PC(USA) Church Leadership Connection website, and will become the primary tool for alerting and informing potential candidates across the globe of who we are and for what we search.

As we enter this new year, please be in prayer for us as a committee, for those women and men who will respond to the call this very year, and for the life of First Church. Continue (or begin again) to fully engage with our five interim tasks in the coming weeks, that we might know better who we are, who we've been, and what God is asking of us as a church.

Gratefully,  
Lucas Lloyd, PNC Chairman

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## Change to Communion Schedule

The Worship and Music Committee recommended to Session at its November meeting (December meeting was cancelled due to weather) that following the liturgical calendar was a needed change to the pattern of our services. The liturgical seasons "root us in ancient Christian tradition while at the same time being relevant to the 21st century. Following the liturgical calendar connects us to the larger body of Christ and deepens our spiritual practices as we remember important aspects of the faith" writes Winfield Bevins, founding pastor of Church of the Outer Banks and director of Church Planting, Asbury Seminary.

This recommendation initially means a change as to when communion will be served. Session has approved a move away from first Sunday of the month for communion to generally following the liturgical calendar. This will provide greater meaning to our gatherings at the Table.

The Lord's Supper will be next celebrated February 26 on Transfiguration Sunday and again on Ash Wednesday. Our Presbyterian polity provides that the dates for celebration of the sacraments be announced two weeks in advance (this includes the Sunday of celebration).



Are you free Tuesday mornings from 10 AM to 12 PM? Can you push a button?

If yes, would you consider volunteering to staff the Allen Door entrance during the weekly staff meeting?

Contact Christina Banas to sign up: 884-7250, x 11 or [cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:cbanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org). Thank you!



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



### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN WINTER GATHERING

**Saturday, February 11, 10:30 AM-2 PM**

First Presbyterian Church, East Aurora  
9 Paine Street, East Aurora

Worship Leader: Rev. Geri Lyon

Speaker: Sherry Pomeroy, PhD, RN,

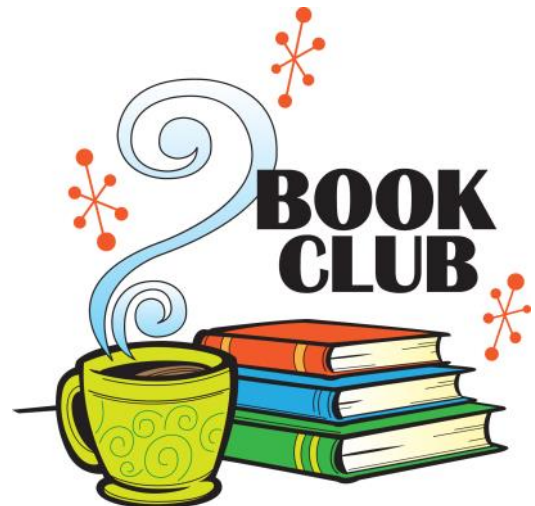
Faith Community Nurse:

"Understanding addiction &  
how to find help."

Bring items to donate to Horizon Health Services:  
hats, gloves, books, crossword puzzles

Cost of lunch is \$7.00

RSVP for lunch to Peggy Fanning 826-7542 or  
[peggyfanning@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfanning@hotmail.com)



The Book Group will gather on **Thursday, January 26** at 6:00 PM at Liz Kamke's home (476 Ashland Ave. in Buffalo). The book to discuss is Canal Town by Samuel Hopkins. Please bring a dish to share for dinner.



A heart-shaped tree stands in a vibrant green field under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The tree's reflection is visible in a body of water in the foreground.

*Moving forward*  
*On a Presbytery-wide*  
*Mission focus*

**Central Presbytery  
Branch Gathering**

**MONDAY January 30<sup>th</sup>  
from 6:00pm-8:00pm**

**Meal is provided**

**Kenmore Presbyterian Church  
2771 Delaware Avenue  
Kenmore NY 14217**

**R.S.V.P.  
[Leslie@firstprestona.org](mailto:Leslie@firstprestona.org)  
by January 24, 2017**





# Building Updates

If you haven't already noticed, be sure to look for the following improvements next time you're at church:

- ◆ The orange and brown tile in the Narthex was removed, and replaced with durable carpet squares that are easy to clean, and complement the space.
- ◆ The Wordsworth entrance original wood doors are out for repair and refinishing. We can't wait to see them looking like new in a few weeks!
- ◆ The Allen Door entrance now has a keypad entrance for tenants and staff to use. This improvement in security has been welcomed by everyone in the building.
- ◆ The food pantry has been moved to the basement kitchen to allow space for a new tenant.
- ◆ Two new tenants have signed leases for the new year. "F Bites," Chef Bobby Anderson will be using a basement office to write grants for an underprivileged youth culinary program. Also, The Serendipity Shoppe, a popular thrift store, will be moving to two rooms in the basement. More on these exciting new tenants in future newsletters!
- ◆ Special thanks to 716 Ministries (formerly Westside Ministries) and Dr. David Bond for coordinating these exciting changes!



## Food Pantry



# News in the Family & Community

## Standing Rock North Dakota

By Virginia McIntyre, Veteran USAF

I remember seeing the videos and reading articles on what was happening on the Standing Rock Lakota (Souix ) Native American Reservation in terms of the issue surrounding their water supply and an oil pipe line, coupled with emerging violence and treaties being jeopardized. I immediately thought that I needed to go out there. I watched my friend Bonnie who is of the Seneca Nation leave for a trip to North Dakota bringing supplies and yet I knew I should go but my financial resources limited such travel. Then I heard of the Veterans For Standing Rock soliciting for veterans and money to be donated for us all to get there from across the United States. I signed up to leave and off I went

In addition, I met this young man at the Army and Navy store who was determined to make sure I was safe and warm within a price range I could afford. His one supervisor was not pleased with his endeavors but I was saved by a man behind me in line that was quite glad that I was going and gave money towards my vortex outer wear purchase when the supervisor sauntered over and negated the young Marine's plan. You see, the Holy Spirit was fast at work even before I left.

My experiences were many and varied. I was involved in three ceremonies with one getting much publicity in *The Huffington Post* and *Fusion*. If I had to pick my favorite ceremony it would be when a Lakota Vietnam Veteran named Brave Bear and a Lakota Medicine Man officially inducted me into the Lakota Nation as a Warrior. I even was given a Red Tail Hawk Feather which they had to appeal to the US. Congress to still be able to use for such ceremonies. After being inducted Brave Bear asked me if I would return in the spring when I am called and I replied I would.

I am not quite certain how many days I was there as they all seemed to roll into together as I was quite busy. Before I left I agreed to serve the ranks as a Chaplain. Our Operations Order explained that our role would be to serve as respite to the praying Water Protectors and stand in front of them as human shields to the rubber bullets being fired at very close range, water cannons, tear gas and concussion grenades. My expectations were to do this from dawn to dusk and perhaps say a few prayers to keep the veterans non reactive. This all was fine with me .

However, things changed rapidly and somehow I am not quite confident how; I was placed into the role of lead counselor at Fort Yates on the Reservation. Then at a briefing it was announced that I would be determining who was qualified to be a counselor and what kind or area of expertise they would be most useful. As I said ,the Holy Spirit was ever present. I remember saying to God, well this is not happening in the amount of time I have to accomplish it so you better take over here. So in quick time God determined who was qualified to do what and I was able to Triage the counselors with only the confidence of Jesus a child of God could possess given the time I was allowed... all was fine!

I was honored to hear many true stories and made sure I told each individual that I was as I have professionally. It is an honor to walk through lives with another individual. At this point I think it would help to note that being back in an environment that resembles their military experience can be triggering of trauma experienced. Also the plan was for 2,100 veterans to arrive while the counting stopped a 5,000 . One veteran who was a Huron Native American from Arizona referred to it correctly as glorious chaos. Also we were stuck in a blizzard and could not travel.

I feel truly blessed to have been there. I received so much more than I gave. Even falling down the hill and losing my glasses was a blessing. It compelled me to go within constantly to align with the Cosmic Christ that only knows good with no distractions. Indeed it was and it was an honor to be among the Lakota and asked to return. I just hope I am able.

### Joys and Concerns

- Ken Madell is home from rehab following his recent surgeries.
- Norm Gibbon is responding to his cancer treatments
- With sadness we share that longtime member Bill Rieth died on December 27. His memorial service was held in early January near his family.

# First Church Calendar Highlights

## Sunday Schedule

11:00 AM Worship in the Sanctuary  
 11:15 AM Sunday School  
 12:00 AM Fellowship Time in the Chapel

Communion will be served on  
 February 26 and March 1.

## Weekly Events

### *Mondays*

6:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry (off site)

### *Tuesdays*

10:00 AM Staff Meeting  
 12:30 PM Food Bag Distribution  
 4:30 PM Literacy Tutoring

### *Wednesdays*

4:30 PM Literacy Tutoring

### *Thursdays*

7:00 PM "Who Is Jesus" Bible Study (off site)  
*Beginning February 2*

## Building Use

Thurs. 2/2 & 16	3-7 PM	Native Offerings Crop Share Pickup
Thurs. 1/26, 2/9, 2/23	7 PM	Explore Buffalo Speakers Series

## Committee Meetings

Wed. 2/8	5:45 PM	Board of Trustees
Wed. 2/14	6:30 PM	Christian Education
Tues. 2/14	6:00 PM	One Symphony Circle
Wed. 2/15	6:30 PM	Session
Sat. 2/11	9:00 AM	Deacons Retreat
Sun. 2/12	12:30 PM	Deacons Retreat

## Church Programs/Events

Thurs. 1/26	6:00 PM	Book Group Gathering
Sun. 1/29	12:00 PM	205th Birthday Party
Tues. 2/21		March Newsletter Deadline
Wed. 3/1	6:30 PM	Ash Wednesday Service & Supper

Please note, the parking lot is reserved by One Symphony Circle during most Kleinhans events to fundraise for the tower campaign. Please call the Church Office with any questions.



## CALL TO THE STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

Saturday, January 28

9:30 am – Registration

10:00 am – Meeting Convenes  
 at North Presbyterian Church

168 Payne Avenue, North Tonawanda

### POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Draft Presentation of 2017 Budget
- Approval of PILP Loan for Maryvale Dr Church
- General Assembly Amendments

LIGHT MEAL: A light meal will be served at a cost of \$5.00 per person. Tickets may be purchased in the registration area.



The Board of Deacons will hold a retreat on Saturday, February 11 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. and Sunday, February 12 from 12:30 to 3:00 PM.



The next date to serve a meal at Friends of Night People is Wednesday, March 29.



### COFFEE HOUR PASTRIES NEEDED

Do you like to bake? Share your favorite cookies, cakes, pies, or breads with your church family during coffee hour! There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.





## 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

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo

"Like" us on Facebook:

"First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, NY"

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

## FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Elena Delgado, *Pastor*  
RevElena@firstchurchbuffalo.org  
Voicemail extension: 13

The Reverend John Long, D.D.  
*Parish Associate for Community Outreach*  
JohnRLong17@verizon.net

The Reverend Jack Smiley, *Pastor Emeritus*

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

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

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*

Church Office, extension 10

### PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (PNC)

Lucas Lloyd, Chair  
Jimmy Martinez, Vice Chair  
Mark Armesto  
Gregg Borland  
Jean Hess  
Liz Kamke  
Karen Lewis  
Quinton Meyer  
Lovelace Quarshie

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

### SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

**Clerk of Session**  
Janet Hill

**Class of 2017**  
Mark Armesto (T) (2)  
Lucas Lloyd (T) (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)

**Class of 2019**  
Don Houck (T) (1)  
Andrew Gaerte (2)  
Stephanie Smith (2)  
Maria Oakley (2)  
Lovelace Quarshie (1)

(T) indicates that the Elder has also been elected to serve as a Trustee.

### BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

**Class of 2017**  
Pat Brown (2)  
Rebecca Whipple (1)  
Madeline Mason (1)  
Lou Ann Luther Riegle (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)

**Class of 2019**  
Jackie Addo (2)  
Gifty Koramoah (2)  
Sam Gaerte (1)  
June McGrath (1)  
Denis Wettlaufer (1)

\*Indicates co-moderator

on empathy

GOD, HELP ME NOT TO BE  
INDIFFERENT WHEN I AM  
CONFRONTED  
BY PAIN,  
BY POVERTY,  
BY MALICE,  
BY ADDICTION,  
BY MARGINALIZATION,  
BY STRUGGLE,  
BY DESPAIR.  
GRANT MY HEART ALL FEELING,  
GRANT MY MIND ALL  
UNDERSTANDING,  
AND GRANT MY SOUL ALL  
COMPASSION.  
LET MY RESPONSE BE THE  
RESPONSE YOU INTEND.  
AMEN.

#40wordprayer @breyeschow