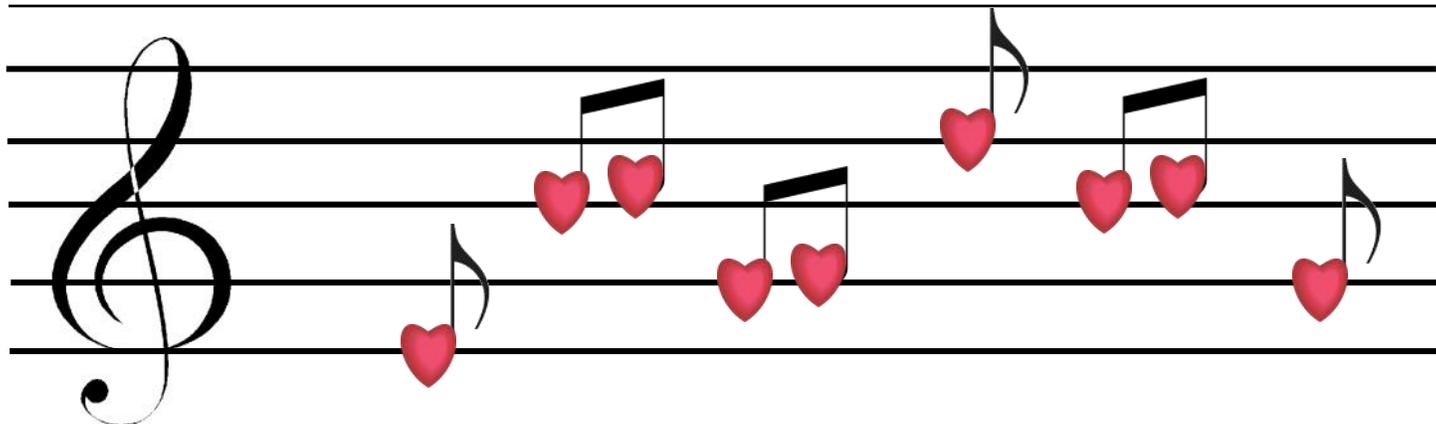




LIGHT FROM THE TOWER

January/February 2014

*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.*



*The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra  
presents*

*"Love Letter to Buffalo"*

*a benefit concert for*

*One Symphony Circle's tower restoration*

*Friday, February 21 at 8:00 PM in the Sanctuary.*

*Paul Ferington conducting*

*A champagne reception will follow, hosted by Quaker Bonnet.*

*General admission - \$40*

*Tickets for sale at the BPO Box Office, [www.bpo.org](http://www.bpo.org),  
and at the Church doors on concert night.*



**AN EPISTLE FROM PHIL  
TO ALL THE SAINTS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO**

Happy New Year!

The New Year is a time that brings a sense of starting over and new life to many people. While not a Christian holiday per se the hope of a new start as the year changes numbers is certainly not unlike the central idea of Christian faith that everyone can have a chance to start over and to be made new. As I write this I find myself praying that all of us will experience a renewal and newness of life during 2014. I hope that is your prayer as well.

This year will begin with more changes in our church and in our life together. On Sunday, February 2 we will celebrate our 202<sup>nd</sup> anniversary as a congregation by opening our building to a church that only a few years old. This group, Village Church, will be using our Chapel on Sunday mornings before we gather to worship. They will also be renting the second floor of Allen Hall the rest of the week. Our Session and many of our members have discussed this possibility and all its ramifications for some months as they decided on whether or not to move forward. First Presbyterian will realize significant revenue from this arrangement, but more important we believe that sharing with a new congregation will help us all as we work to turn our ministry around and grow our church. Your Session has done, and continues to do, wonderful and faithful work as we continue to seek God's will for our ministry.

This year is often called the "Matthew year" in the Christian lectionary. This means many of our gospel lessons in worship will come from the gospel of Matthew. One of the interesting things about Matthew is that he consistently tries to hook up the actions of Jesus with the prophetic sayings about God fulfilling divine promises for salvation and new life. In one way Matthew shows us the consistency between old and new, the connection between what has gone before, what is going on now, and what God may be doing as the future unfolds.

During 2014 I am going to try to keep those connections in mind as I minister among you. Our past does impact our present and future. We should be aware that God uses what was to help us get ready for what is to come. As we continue in our ministry together this year I hope and pray that you will join me in thinking about the ways God is working in us today to prepare for tomorrows yet to come. Our God is a God of the past, present and future. Let's move faithfully into that future. We will surely find that God is already there to welcome us.

May God bless us all in 2014!!!

Phil

# Winter Worship at First Church

Each week we gather together to listen for God's Word, to praise God for another week full of blessings, and to ask God to continue to bless and guide us. During January and February of 2014 we will share in some delightful experiences of worship together as we seek the warmth of God's love during the cold months of winter.

January 26<sup>th</sup> — We hear of Jesus making his first moves in developing his earthly ministry as he moves out of Nazareth and calls his first disciples in the fourth chapter of Matthew.

February 2<sup>nd</sup> — We will celebrate the 202<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of our founding by welcoming Village Church to our building and moving our worship service to 11:15 a.m. in order to accommodate their earlier service and give them all time to get out of the building and parking lot. Sharing our space with another congregation is a truly Christ-like way to celebrate our own anniversary, and we know that God will bless us all as we open ourselves to other Christians who journey together in mission.

In February we will share in a series of worship services centered on the lessons of the **Sermon on the Mount** that Jesus gives in Matthew 5-7. Many people have said that all you need to be a Christian is to follow the Sermon on the Mount. If you join us for worship together in February you will learn what is true and what is not true about that claim. We hope you'll share in the special worship experiences we have planned for February.



## Membership News

### New Members' Classes

New Members' classes will be held after worship on **Sundays, February 9, 16, & 23** in the Pastor's Study. If you are interested in attending, contact Phil Gittings at [revphil@firstchurchbuffalo.org](mailto:revphil@firstchurchbuffalo.org) or 884-7250, x 13.

### Membership Starts with You!

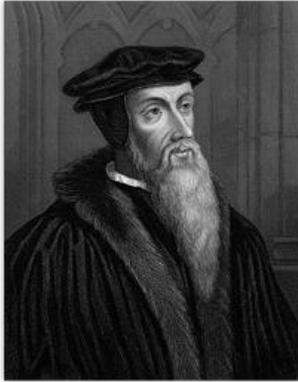
We have an amazing church family here at First. Can you remember what initially brought you here? Can you think of someone in your life who might not have a church home? We probably assume people know that they are welcome. But do they? How much more welcome might they feel if you go out of your way to make sure they know? Simple things like sharing something you appreciate about our church, letting someone know what time our service is, or offering a ride can go a long way to making the warmth of our congregation accessible. Can you help us welcome someone new this year? There is a love, a connectedness, and a sense of belonging that draws you to our church... Pass it on!

-A note from Stephanie Smith,  
Membership Committee Co-Chair



THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION of the First Presbyterian Society of the Town of Buffalo will take place on Sunday, February 2, 2012 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 2014; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

# YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY



Couchside Calvin

## Young Adult Lunch Club continues...

...with pancakes! **Sunday, January 26**, the young adults will be cooking brunch together right at the church. Stephanie Smith will be coordinating brunch ingredients. Contact her if you would like to bring something to contribute (531-3450/[smithstephanie@gmail.com](mailto:smithstephanie@gmail.com)) New parents, this includes you— children are welcome!



The Young Adult Couchside Calvin group will meet at Phil Gittings' home (54 Irving Pl, in the back) on **Tuesday, January 21** 17th at 7:00 PM. Street parking is available. Copies of the chapter to be discussed can be picked up today by seeing Phil.

In February, the group will gather on **February 18th**; location to be determined.

## Clerk's Corner

The following actions were taken by Session at its regular meeting on December 18, 2013.

- ✓ Approved the request from One Symphony Circle to host the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra for a benefit concert on February 21, 2014 and to serve wine and beer at the event.
- ✓ Approved the request to serve alcohol at an event hosted by Brad Hahn of Explore Buffalo on January 24, 2014, without tours of the basement, and according to building use fees.
- ✓ Approved the request from Presbyterian Women of Western New York to hold their annual meeting, including a worship service with communion, in the Sanctuary and Chapel on Saturday, April 26, 2014 from approximately 10:00 A.M. into the afternoon.
- ✓ Approved the lease between First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo and Village Church, subject to final Session approval of renovations and conformation of indemnification.
- ✓ Approved the lease, including amendments from 12/15/13, with Explore Buffalo.



# Adult Christian Education

For the early months of 2014 we will enjoy some exciting things in our adult education ministry. Here are three things we hope you'll consider joining.

## SUNDAY MORNINGS

The Sunday morning adult class meets in Phil's office at 9:30 a.m. each week. This lively group is always looking for more members or all ages, and during the months of January through April they will be holding some fascinating discussions.

### January/February "From Resurrection Community to Christian Church!"

How did the early Christian movement, a loose knit group of disciples sent into a hostile world, become the Christian church as we have come to know it? From twelve disciples scattering with gospel to share, the message of Christ became an institution accepted by Emperor Constantine within just a few centuries. The books of the Bible were picked, doctrines were developed and church hierarchies evolved. How did all this happen, and what lessons should we learn that can help us in our faith journeys today?

Join Phil Gittings and the Adult Sunday school class every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. to learn more about how God worked in the lives of many faithful people to bring Christianity to the place we are in today. We'd love to see you!

### March/April "What Does it Mean to be Saved?"

In the Bible a man comes to Jesus and asks, "What must I do to be saved"? This is just one of the many questions about salvation and being saved that have arisen over the centuries. You might also have heard some of these: "What am I saved from?" "Who saves?" "What are we saved for?" "How do I know if I'm saved?" These and many other questions will be discussed from the Biblical, theological, and practical perspectives during the Sundays of Lent in the class "What does it mean to be saved?"

Lent is a time when all of us can stop to reflect on our faith, and we hope you will do just that in Lent of 2014 by joining this unique class on Sunday mornings in Phil's study.

## WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

Every Wednesday a wonderful group gathers in Phil's office to study the Scriptures together. The group is studying the Letter of Paul to the Romans. This unique letter lays out a number of things about our Christian faith that we all should grapple with if we are going to be faithful disciples of Jesus together. We hope you'll join us on Wednesdays to share in this delightful group. We meet at 1:00, and there's always coffee and tea for those who join us.



## FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY

February 2 & March 2

The first Sundays of the month are designated "Food Pantry Sunday." Donations of canned goods can be placed in the shopping cart near 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!

## WINTER GLOVES & HATS

Donations of new and gently used hats and gloves are being collected for our food pantry patrons. Donations may be left in the basket on the stairs in the chancel. Thank you!

Can you help stock our shelves for the Lyon Food Pantry with the following items?

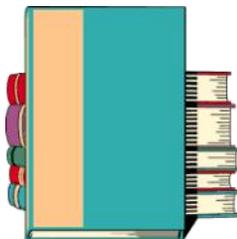
- Cereal
- Pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Canned veggies
- Canned soup
- Canned pork and beans
- Ramen noodles
- Individually wrapped toilet paper



## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Women's Book group will meet on **Thursday, January 23rd** at 6:00 p.m. for a pot luck meal, and discuss the book *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan. The gathering will be at Karen Stephenson's (52 Bondcroft, Eggertsville).

Women's Book group will also meet on **Thursday, February 27** at 6:00 p.m. for a pot luck meal, and discuss the book *Orange is the New Black* by Piper Kernan. The gathering will be at Ingrid Meyer's home.



## MISSION OPPORTUNITY:

Join us on

**Wednesday, January 29**

**at 4:30 p.m.**

to serve meals to the hungry at  
Friends of Night People  
(corner of Wadsworth and Hudson).

Sign-up sheet in the Narthex.  
*Sponsored by the CMO Committee.*





Explore Buffalo is excited to be calling First Presbyterian Church its new home! Explore Buffalo is a non-profit architecture and history tour organization, with a mission of providing opportunities to discover Buffalo's great architecture, history, and neighborhoods. We are the official tour partner of the Buffalo Architecture & History website, [www.buffaloah.com](http://www.buffaloah.com), created by Chuck LaChiusa, who is Explore Buffalo's board president. We think having our 'home base' at the historic and architecturally significant First Presbyterian Church is a perfect fit!

In February, we will be starting a monthly 'Behind-the-Scenes' building tour series of buildings not normally accessible to the public - confirmed locations include the Electric Tower and the Twentieth Century Club. This summer, we will be offering a regular schedule of walking tours of downtown, the waterfront, and many different neighborhoods. We will be giving many of the tours at Silo City, including the tour that takes you to the top of the grain elevators! We will also have boat tours, bike tours, and bus tours available, and we will happily make arrangements for custom tours for groups, including schools.

We are looking forward to helping to promote First Presbyterian Church's beauty and history through our presence here. On **Friday, January 24th**, from 5-8 PM, Explore Buffalo will have a Launch Party here at First Presbyterian to announce our plans for 2014. You're welcome to attend! Tickets can be purchased online through our website, [www.explorebuffalo.org](http://www.explorebuffalo.org). We are also excited to announce we will be bringing a Speaker Series to the chapel here at First Presbyterian in February, March, and April, with an outstanding lineup of speakers already committed.

Check out our website for more information on specific tour and event offerings. If you have any questions, please email Brad Hahn, Executive Director, at [brad@explorebuffalo.org](mailto:brad@explorebuffalo.org), or call 245-3032.

# Community News

THE WESTMINSTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (WEDI)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS INVITES YOU TO

## WEDI Winterfest

At the Hotel @ The Lafayette

FEBRUARY 7, 2014 AT 6:30-9:30 PM

BUFFET, CASH BAR, LIVE AUCTION, GIFT BASKET RAFFLE,  
AND MUSIC BY LES DAVIS QUARTETTE FROM COLORED MUSICIANS CLUB

HOTEL @ THE LAFAYETTE  
391 WASHINGTON STREET IN DOWNTOWN BUFFALO  
FREE RAMP PARKING OR VALET

PURCHASE TICKETS BY JANUARY 24. A SIGNUP SHEET FOR TICKETS IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE GALLERY ROOM ON THE INFORMATION TABLE  
TICKETS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT [WWW.WEDIBUFFALO.ORG](http://WWW.WEDIBUFFALO.ORG)



## VIVE, INC.

*Because everyone should know freedom.*

VIVE, Inc.  
Annual Recognition Dinner  
**Thursday, February 27th**  
6:00 PM  
at Salvatore's Restaurant

For more information, call 208-1064 or email [tracy@tracydiina.com](mailto:tracy@tracydiina.com).

### Advocacy Training Weekend 2014

MARCH 21-24, 2014 IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



Many types of violence afflict our world. Come to the Advocacy Training Weekend to address the causes of that violence and to seek hopeful solutions. Training will kickoff March 21, 2014 with **Compassion, Peace and Justice Training Day** for Presbyterians. Learning will continue with our ecumenical sisters and brothers during Ecumenical Advocacy Days the remainder of the weekend.

For more information, see the poster on the bulletin board outside the church office, or visit [pcusa.org/Washington](http://pcusa.org/Washington).

# News in the Family

Our Pastor Emeritus, Rev. Jack Smiley, writes, "A Happy New Year to all our friends in First Church! ...Let's hope this will be a great year for the church! Best wishes to all!"



Ramona Brown thanks everyone for the cards and prayers received after her hip surgery. They were much appreciated!



Women's Association was pleased to contribute year-end gifts to the Smiley Fund, the Haskin Music Fund, and the Prayer Shawl Ministry.



Many thanks to all who took part in the Dickens celebration in December, including Hilary Bradford, Rebecca Laubenstein, Pat Quinlan, Roch Harmon, Mark Juan Armesto, and others—and also to Mae Hairston for the delicious desserts!



Our dear Contemporary Musician Jason Bravo, will be leaving us to head to Los Angeles for a bit to give song writing a try on the West coast. We wish him the best!



Our deepest sympathies go out to the McCausland family. Alan's sister and Bruce's aunt, Phyllis Newbury, passed away in January. Phyllis was a former member of First Church. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

## Welcome Village Church!

We are excited to announce that beginning in February of 2014, 202 years after our founding, we will be honoring our history as the mother of churches. Village Church will be leasing worship and community space from the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo. We are enthused that we are able to support this growing spiritual community. We feel it fits our mission to "bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ by worshipping God, fostering spiritual growth, and serving the community." We are blessed with this space and blessed to offer it. While it will entail some minor changes to our habits, this is part of the plan of growing the congregation and becoming the spiritual body that we strive to be.



# Jan/Feb 2014 First Church Calendar Highlights

## Regular Sunday Schedule

9:30 AM	Adult Christian Education
11:00 AM	Worship
11:15 AM	Sunday School
12:00 PM	Fellowship Time

### *Beginning February 2:*

9:30 AM	Adult Christian Education
<b>11:15 AM</b>	<b>Worship</b>
11:30 AM	Sunday School
12:15 PM	Fellowship Time

Communion is generally served the first Sunday of the month.

There is no Sunday school on Communion Sundays.

## Church Programs/Events

Sun. 1/19	12:00 PM	Village Church Open Forum
Tues. 1/21	7:00 PM	Couchside Calvin
Thurs. 1/23	6:00 PM	Women's Book Club
Sun. 1/26	12:30 PM	Young Adult Pancake Brunch
Wed. 1/29	4:30 PM	Friends of Night People
Sun. 2/2	12:15 PM	Annual Meetings
Sun. 2/9	12:15 PM	New Members' Class
Sun. 2/16	12:15 PM	New Members' Class
Tues. 2/18	7:00 PM	Couchside Calvin
Sun. 2/23	12:15 PM	New Members' Class
Thurs. 2/27	6:00 PM	Women's Book Club

## Weekly Events

### *Tuesdays*

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

### *Wednesdays*

1:00 PM	Bible Study
4:30 PM	Literacy Tutoring

## Committee Meetings

Wed. 1/22	6:00 PM	P&A
Tues. 1/28	3:00 PM	Membership
Tues. 2/4	5:30 PM	Worship & Music
Tues. 2/4	7:00 PM	Lands & Buildings
Tues. 2/11	6:30 PM	Christian Education
Wed. 2/12	5:45 PM	Trustees
Thurs. 2/13	7:30 PM	CMO
Thurs. 2/13	7:30 PM	One Symphony Cir.
Wed. 2/19	7:00 PM	Session & Deacons

## Special Events

Fri. 2/21	8:00 PM	BPO Benefit Concert
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## Building Use

Thurs. 1/23	9:00 AM	Houghton Breakfast
Fri. 1/24	5:00 PM	Explore Buffalo Launch Party
Wed. 1/29	8:30 AM	Houghton Breakfast
Fri. 2/7	7:00 PM	Buffalo Opera Unlimited Auditions
Sat. 2/8	12:00 PM	Explore Buffalo Speakers' Series
Wed. 2/12	6:30 PM	Kleinmans Community Association Meeting
Sat. 2/22	12:00 PM	Explore Buffalo Speakers' Series



# 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"

## FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings, *Interim Pastor*

RevPhil@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

Quinton Meyer, *Volunteer Assoc for Pastoral Visitation*

Meyer405@aol.com

Liz Kamke, *Outreach Assistant*

EKSK476@gmail.com

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*

Church Office, extension 10

Weddings, extension 15

weddings@firstchurchbuffalo.org

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

### SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

#### *Clerk of Session*

Janet Hill

#### *Class of 2014*

Mark Armesto (T) (1)

John Darby (T) (2)

Lauren Hill (T) (2)

Marv Riegle (2)

Erica Wichtowski (1)

#### *Class of 2015*

Jean Hess (2)

Tim Hess (1)

Janet Hill (2)

Don Houck (T) (2)

Susan Koeppel (1)

Virginia McIntyre (1)

#### *Class of 2016*

Ian Bradford (T) (2)

Mike Henry (T) (2)

Stephanie Smith (1)

Ryan Nadbrzuch (T) (1)

Maria Oakley (1)

### BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

#### *Class of 2014*

Pat Brown (1)

Russell Carlson (2)

Mary Field (2)

Karen Frieder (2)

Olga Rico-Armesto (1)

Lou Ann Luther Riegle (1)

#### *Class of 2015*

Liz Kamke (1)

Tina Osei (1)

Judith Paradzai (2)

Phil Sims\* (2)

Denis Wettlaufer (2)

#### *Class of 2016*

Jackie Addo (1)

Cleo Alexander (2)

Mark Juan Armesto (2)

José Gomez\* (2)

Gifty Koramoah (1)

Ken Madell (2)

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

\* Indicates Co-moderators

**To reach Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings,  
Interim Pastor,  
call 884-7250, ext. 13 (Office)  
548-0466 (Cell)**

**To reach Quinton Meyer,  
Volunteer Associate for Pastoral  
Visitation  
909-2259 (Cell)**

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY	Closed
TUESDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
WEDNESDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
THURSDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
FRIDAY	9 AM to 12 PM