

**The Covenant of Our
Congregation
Adopted in 1962**

We do hereby set forth the principles of the Christian faith as commonly held among us, believing that no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

It shall be our aim to bring joy to little children, instruction and high ideals to youth, inspiration to men and women in the midst of life, and comfort to those in life's later years; and to labor together for the betterment of humankind.

Our fellowship shall not be dependent upon identity of theological opinion, or of outward circumstance, or of denominational concern, but shall grow from a common loyalty to Jesus, a common commitment to serve the world we touch, and a common purpose to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

Our ideal is a church of the open mind, the warm heart, the hopeful spirit, and the social vision which ever seeks to express, in all walks of life, the mind of Jesus.



Unexpected light shines the brightest.

December 21, 2014



First Reformed Church
8 North Church Street
Schenectady, New York 12305
(518) 377-2201 www.1stReformed.com

Welcome to First Reformed Church

We are a welcoming and affirming congregation and absolutely everyone is invited to our worship, activities, and service.

If you are a first time visitor we hope you feel at home here. Please fill out a little white pew card and place it in the offering plate and join us after the service for coffee and refreshments.

Non Emergency Number

Schenectady Police: 518-382-5200

Parking

You may park in **any** of the lots around the church or the Stockade Inn on Sunday mornings.

Need Help?

Large print bulletins and audio receivers are available to assist you. Please ask an usher. Special bulletins for children are also available. Restrooms are located out the front right doorway of the sanctuary; a baby changing station is in the women's bathroom.

Elders in Worship

Past and current leaders we call 'Elders' walk in together at the beginning of worship and sit in the front pew. This is to identify them as servants of the mission of the church and make it easy to see who you might talk to about the life of our congregation.

Joining the Congregation

To become a member of the congregation, there is a one-time orientation, a meeting with the governing board, and a reception in worship. If you are interested in the next orientation please fill out a white pew card.

Communion

Our congregation celebrates the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the month. All followers of Christ are invited to share this meal.

Hearing Assistance

We have hearing reinforcement units that will make it easier to hear. Ask an usher.

Child Care on Sunday

Childcare for babies through age four is available from 10am and noon in Kinderwyk, which is located in the building near the church office entry.

Church School

All children in grades K-8 are welcome to join in our Church School activities by leaving immediately after the Children's Message. Parents can pick up their children after worship on the 2nd floor at the top of the stairs.

Church School on Communion Sundays

On Communion Sundays (the first Sunday of the month) youth in grades 3-8 remain in the service to participate in Communion while those in grades K-2 are welcome to go upstairs after the Children's Message for music and crafts.

Children's Worship Bulletins

Special bulletins for children, ages 3-6 and 7-12 are available each Sunday. If the ushers are not handing them out, just ask for one.

After Worship

Typically after worship, people stop for a chat and refreshments in Assembly Hall before going to a learning opportunity that lasts until noon. Visitors are welcome to join in.

Service Online

A recording of each of our worship services is at 1stReformed.com one or two days following the service.

Lost and Found Basket

We have a lost and found basket in the Narthex at the Union St. entrance of the church. If you have lost/misplaced an item at church, please check there.

Prayers of the People

Requests for prayer may be noted on a pew card and placed in the offering plate. We pray regularly for those who are ill, those who serve their country, those who hunger, and those who are our enemies. As part of our prayers this morning, we remember with thanksgiving members of FRC & UPC who entered eternal rest in previous years about this time:

*John Young, Robert Brown, Clarence Gillespie,
Helen H. Masjoan*

If you are aware of a departed member, whose name has not been noted near the anniversary of their death, please speak with one of our ministers or contact the church office.

Celebratory or Memorial Flowers

A flower calendar is posted on the right side of the Poling House entrance to the sanctuary wherein you can choose a date for donating flowers to remember a loved one or to honor a special event. Please inform the church office of your wishes. The cost of the flowers is \$30 for two bouquets. You may send your check payable to Chancel Guild, c/o Marlene Risseuw, 2140 Niskayuna Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309.

Music Notes: We thank the Route Fifty 5 brass quintet for today's music. Members are Ben Richards and Judson Hoffman, trumpets; Kara Pangburn, horn; Ryan Pangburn, trombone and Barret Germain, tuba.

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Advent, Christmas, Epiphany Church School

Today: Regular church school grades K-5, Advent class for grades 6-8.

December 28: Regular church school grades K-8.

Faith Bookshop

"Blizzard" and "The Book With No Pictures," notable new childrens' books, are available in the Bookshop as well as pop-ups celebrating the season.

Just arrived: hand crafted items from La Palma, El Salvador.

Advent/Christmas Resources

Seasonal table prayers and evening devotions for the home are available on the Adult Ed. & Nurture bulletin board (next to the Faith Bookshop).

Post Service Refreshments

Everyone is invited to have refreshments in Assembly Hall right after worship. We are always looking for volunteers to bring in treats of any kind. It can be cookies, cheese and crackers, fruit, or anything you want. Please contact our Taart Baas, Karen Gonda, via email at gonda6@aol.com or at 607-725-4521, to indicate the dates you are available. Please also see our announcement for Christmas Eve Refreshments.

Forum

After worship most Sundays at 11:15am in Poling Chapel, suggestions for programs are welcome from any committee or member; simply contact Amy Brule 785-8201, Peggy King 370-1885, Olivia Mancuso 381-8860, or Joe Doolittle 384-1700.

Today: Christmas Offering

Mission & Benevolence Committee

December 28: Christmas Caroling Frolic

January 5: Green Market – Amy Brule

introducing speaker Leesa Perazzo

Jazz Vespers Every Sunday ~ 5pm

Today: A Blue Christmas Jazz Vespers; The Peg Delaney Trio: Peg Delaney, piano; Bill Delaney, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums

December 28: Mike Lamkin, piano

Youth Activities

Youth group will meet every Sunday at 5pm for dinner, discussion, games, etc. All youth in grades 6 – 12 are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Stacey.

Today: Living Nativity, 6pm. Performers should arrive by 4:30pm.

December 28 – January 4: No meetings, enjoy the holiday break!

The Link - Saturday, 5pm Worship Service

This is a family-friendly opportunity to worship through contemporary music and casual liturgy. All people are welcome, but we especially invite families with Sunday sports activities, those who work Sunday mornings, and anyone who is seeking a supportive Christian community in a modern worship setting. Contact Stacey with any questions about this new service.



Living Nativity

The senior high youth group will act out the story of Jesus' birth on the front lawn, with the help of some four-legged friends, on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 6pm. Gather around the fence to watch the drama and sing along to beloved Christmas carols, and then join the youth groups inside Assembly Hall for hot cocoa and donuts.

Christmas Offering

Our Christmas offering this year will go to the Salvation Army to help with the renovation of their kitchen that serves 300 lunches daily, Mon. – Fri., for needy people in our community. Make checks payable to the church with *Christmas Offering* in the memo line. Checks eligible for the GE match should be made out to *The Salvation Army*. Learn more at First Forum this Sunday.

The Chrismon Tree

We encourage everyone to stop in the Dirck Romeyn room to admire the tree between Sunday, December 21 and Sunday, January 4.

Christmas Eve Refreshments

We need volunteers to bring finger food, and helpers for set-up and clean-up for shared fellowship after the 9pm service on Dec. 24. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the Taart Baas, Karen Gonda, at 607-725-4521, gonda6@aol.com.

Narthex Display Cases

“And a little child shall lead them.” Take a moment to view the Narthex display cases this Christmas season. Nancy Teichner’s arrangement of the beautifully hand carved ARI Kuolt wooden figures of the David Coons Van Voast Memorial Crèche may be seen along with other special Christmas items.

Horizons Bible Study

Starting January 6, we will be doing a 6 week study of the first half of the book of Psalms (Psalms 1-72) using a study guide that will be available from the office for \$9 each. Anyone interested is welcome to join us Tuesdays at 10am. **Note:** We will **NOT** be meeting Dec. 23 or 30, we resume Jan. 6.

What's Your Story?

Everyone has significant life stories to share and doing so with the context of a small group committed to gently holding such stories in the light of God’s love enables us to come to better know and appreciate others and ourselves! The 7pm session will meet on January 12 and the 10am session will meet on January 19 in the Dirck Romeyn room. All are welcome.

Group VII

On Friday, January 16 we will meet at 10am in the Dirck Romeyn Room. Program: Visit with the Covenanters. Co-hostesses: Linda Witkowski and Ronnie Bartholic. Any questions, contact Ronnie Bartholic at 393-7679.

Group V

Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 5 at 11:30am in the Dirck Romeyn room. Any questions, contact Barbara Piper, 399-3620.

Senior Pastor's Open House

Join Dr. Levering on Friday, January 2 from 4 – 9pm, 923 Northumberland Drive.

Tuesday Ladies

Tuesday Ladies will have their winter salad supper on January 20 at 6pm. at Connie Youngs house, 1400 Keyes Ave. All women are welcome! Regular meetings are every third Tuesday at 7:30pm at Connie Young's home. All ladies are welcome to join us on Tuesday, January 20. Please call Connie, 393-7061 with any questions.

Readers Discussion Continuation

Come join us on Sunday, December 21 at 12pm for continued discussion of Matthew Vines book, *God and the Gay Christian*. If you are interested in joining us or have questions, please contact Jeanne Shoulder, 781-724-5030 or Mary Jewett, 355-8059.

Flash Fiction Writers Group

A Flash Fiction critique group meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm in the Walton Conference Room. Flash Fiction is a COMPLETE story, fiction or nonfiction, written in 1,000 words or less. For more info and signups, contact James Gonda at jamesgonda63@yahoo.com or the church office.

Church Directory Photos

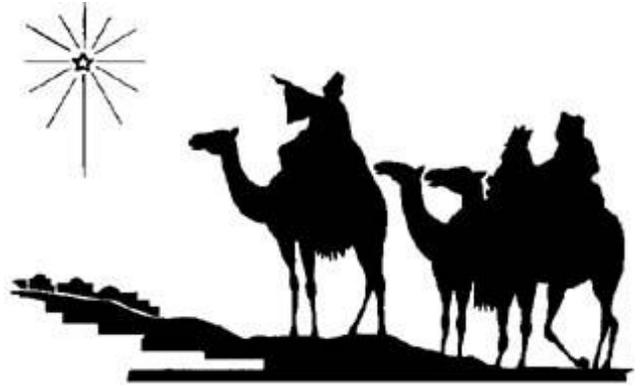
Ralph Rosenthal will continue to take pictures for our next church directory every Sunday after worship in the Heritage room (off the Dirck Romeyn Room). No appointment necessary

Stitch Group

Our church stitch group meets every Thursday at 10am in Poling Conference room. All are welcome! For more info, contact Joan Lindsay, 399-3153.

Church History for Sale

Three Centuries: The History of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady is for sale in the Faith Bookshop and is a great gift idea. Share the story of our congregation; its place in the founding and formation of Schenectady, Consistory, Ministers, six houses of worship, Covenant, issues, solutions, and how we have kept our "inheritance" in order.



Epiphany Party

January 3rd - See details on the Christmas events schedule later in the bulletin...Follow that star!

Prospective Member Class

Interested in a closer relationship with this congregation? Dr. Levering will be leading a membership orientation meeting that includes a tour of the church and a chat about who we are. It lasts 90 minutes and is held in the church office at 3pm on the first Sundays of October through February. Our next class is January 4.

Fellowship Luncheon

Friday Fellowship Luncheon will not meet in December. Our next luncheon will be Friday, January 16, with hostesses Peg Miller and Sally Bestgen. Fellowship Luncheon is a pot-luck event open to all. Please contact Amy Brule, 785-8201; or Sally Bestgen, 346-0304, with any questions or suggestions. Most importantly, it is a time of Fellowship, so do join us. Enjoy this Christmas season! A sign-up sheet will be available in Assembly Hall.

Prayer Shawl Knit Group

We will not be meeting in December, but we will resume on Thursday, January 22 at 9:30am in the home of Ronnie Bartholic.

Kinderwyck

We need church members who are 18 and over to help our professional staff care for our youngest members during worship. Fill out a white pew card and place it in the offering plate to let us know you would like to be a part of this ministry. The church staff will contact you to schedule the Sundays you are willing and available to serve.

Daily Devotional Books

Group V has their Devotional books available again this year. These make great holiday gifts, hostess gifts, and just thoughtful gifts for friends and family. There are copies available in the book shop. These books can be used over year after year. The quotes come from religious and non-religious sources. If you any questions, contact Maria G. Todd, 372-9522, who will also have books. The cost is \$7 each or 3 for \$20.

Offering Envelopes

2015 Offering Envelopes are available for pick up in the church office. If you did not sign up for envelopes on your pledge card, we have extra envelopes available for anyone who would like some.

Merry Christmas

Sunday, December 21

9:00 am..... Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary
9:00 am..... Kirk Singers rehearsal
10:00 am..... Worship
10:15 am..... Church School K-5
11:15 am..... Forum
11:15 am..... Kirk Ringers
11:15 am..... Orff Rehearsal
4:30 pm..... JH&SH Youth Group
5:00 pm..... Jazz Vespers
6:00 pm..... Living Nativity

Monday, December 22

9:00 am..... Men's News Group
6:15 pm Yoga
7:00 pm Klokken Tower Ringers
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal/ Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 23

10:00 am..... Morning Prayer
10:00 am..... Horizons Bible Study

Wednesday, December 24

5:00 pm..... Family Service
8:30 pm..... Music of the Season
9:00 pm..... Carols & Candles Service
10:00 pm Refreshments
11:00 pm Candlelit Service

Thursday, December 25

Office Closed

Friday, December 26

Office Closed

Saturday, December 27

5:00 pm Link Service

Sunday, December 28

9:00 am..... Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary
10:00 am..... Worship
10:15 am..... Church School K-5
11:15 am..... Forum
11:15 am..... Kirk Ringers
5:00 pm Jazz Vespers

Advent & Christmas Events Schedule

Sunday, December 21

5 PM Blue Christmas Jazz Vespers

The season brings memories and associations that aren't always so bright. This bluesy service will help. Peg Delaney, piano; Bill Delaney, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums

6 PM Living Nativity Display

The senior high youth will perform the story of Jesus' birth, complete with readings from the Bible narrative, sing-a-long carols, and live animals. The Living Nativity will happen on the front lawn of the church at 6pm on December 21. Join us for this fun all-ages event, followed by donuts and hot cocoa in Assembly Hall.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday, December 24

5 PM Family Service

See the story of Jesus' birth lived-out by children and youth, includes joyful music and personal testaments from high school students.

8:30 PM Music of the Season

This extended prelude to the 9pm service will present a variety of Christmas music for choir, organ, harp and handbells.

9 PM Carols and Candles Service

Our Christmas celebration will include the warm hope of tiny candles and familiar songs.

11 PM Candlelit Service

Peaceful reflections with carols and communion.

Sunday, December 28

11:15 AM Here We Go A-Caroling

Those of every age are invited to join the moving, melodious frolic after worship on the Fourth Day/First Sunday of Christmas, December 28. We'll carpool and carol to some members especially in need of "good tidings this Christmas and a happy New Year!" There will be treats along the way and the option of lunch afterwards.

Saturday, January 3

5 PM Epiphany Party

This year our annual celebration will be held on Saturday, Jan. 3, 5-8 PM at the Hjelmars' home: 9 Homestead Rd., Glenville. Everyone is invited! We'll share snacks and sweets, sip on tasty drinks, sing a few carols, recall the sacred story, and process with the Magi. The hale and hearty, all bundled up, will go outside to share in the house blessing, followed by prayers around the blaze of a bonfire. All attending should bring a favorite beverage and an appetizer or desert to share. Also, bring slippers to wear and plan on leaving shoes/boots at the door. A signup sheet is posted in Assembly Hall. Contact Daniel Carlson if you have any questions. Follow that star!

Sunday Volunteers	This Sunday	Next Sunday
Counting Deacons	Fred Daniels, Ellie Brudos	Dave Hjelmars, Claire Hugues
Faith Bookshop	Linda Witkowski	
Liturgist	Daniel Carlson	Bill Levering
Preacher	Bill Levering	Daniel Carlson
Processing Elders	Jeanne Shoulder, Robert Dickson, Joyce Griggs, Don Leach, Ronnie Bartholic, Bob Beadle, Christine Daniels, Jerry Griggs	Adam Mason, Mary Jewett, Don Leach, Marilyn Leach, Arthur Casey, Thomas Lindsay, Joseph Lovell, Keith Muse
Reader	Nancy Davidson	Chris Fernandes
Refreshments	Nancy Davidson, Jeanette Davidson	Sally Bestgen
Ushers	Bill Clock (head usher), Cathy Allen, Robert Allen, Joe Gallagher, Jacob Etkin	Del Pierce (head usher), Karen Dickson, Rob Dickson, Michael Horan, Vickie McGowan-Horan, Doug Todd, Carol Troost

