

**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.*

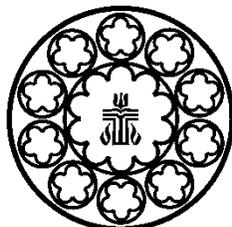


pre-positions

after the destruction  
out of the cracks  
from the depths  
in the midst of emptiness

hope

*November 15, 2015*



**First Reformed Church**  
8 North Church Street  
Schenectady, New York 12305  
(518) 377-2201 [www.1stReformed.com](http://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. Stop by a welcome table at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

### Non Emergency Number

Schenectady Police: 518-630-0911

### 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.

### 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 a hearing aid loop system that will make it easier to hear. Ask an usher.

### Child Care on Sunday

Childcare for babies through age four is available from 9:45am until 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 at 11:15am upstairs in room 20.

### 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 church school activities.

### 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 a cookie 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](http://1stReformed.com) one or two days following the service.

### Lost and Found

We have a lost and found basket in the Narthex (at the front entrance of the church). If you have lost/misplaced an item at church, please check this basket.

**Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

November 15, 2015

\*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE

*On the Rock that is Higher than I*

Dana Mengel

Bill Levering, soloist

Tom D'Andrea, drums; Dan Ertel, bass

10:00 a.m.

GREETING

Daniel Carlson

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ORIENTATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Levering

INTROIT

*Hallelujah*

Zimbabwean

\* HYMN *How Great Thou Art* #467 (v 1&2)

\* OUR NEED FOR GOD (*unison*)

**Infinite God, forgive us when we cannot see  
beyond our own interests. We pray your  
pardon on our selfishness and our constant  
search for distraction and comfort. Heal  
our hearts, we pray, so that we may live for  
a larger vision and love for a noble end.**

\*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God's love is strong and it never ends!**

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*unison*)

*Our Song of Hope*

**We sing to our Lord a new song;  
We sing in our world a sure hope:  
Our God loves this world,  
God called it into being,  
God renews it through Jesus Christ,  
God governs it by the Spirit.  
God is the world's true hope.**

\*PASSING THE PEACE

ANTHEM *Blessed Be Your Name*

Matt & Beth Redman

arr. McDonald

Stacey Midge, soloist

Tom D'Andrea, drums; Dan Ertel, bass

Blessed be Your name  
in the land that is plentiful,  
where your streams of abundance flow,  
Blessed be Your name.

Blessed be Your name  
when I'm found in the desert place  
though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name.

*Every blessing You pour out I'll  
turn back to praise.*

*When the darkness closes in, Lord,  
still I will say.*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord,  
blessed be Your name*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord,  
blessed be Your glorious name.*

You give and take away.  
You give and take away.  
My heart will choose to say,  
Lord, blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name  
when the sun's shining down on me,  
when the world's all as it should be,  
Blessed be Your name.

FIRST LESSON

Nancy Davidson

Guide us, God, by your Word and Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

*Psalms 16 (pg 495)*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SECOND LESSON

*Mark 13:1-8 (pg 50)*

SERMON

*Not Easy*

Bill Levering

\*HYMN *When in the Night I Meditate* #165

MINUTE FOR MISSION

*Center for Community Justice* Cheryl Vallee

OFFERING

## OFFERTORY

Two South African Freedom Songs:

*Freedom is Coming* and *Siyahamba*

ed. Anders Nyberg  
Tom D'Andrea, conga

\*DOXOLOGY #592

*Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### THE 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.**

\*HYMN *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!* #145

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\* CHORAL RESPONSE

*Threefold Amen* Traditional

## POSTLUDE

*Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing*  
Sicilian Mariners

+ + +

## 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 our church who entered into eternal rest in previous years about this time:

*Josephine Van Nest, Albert Holland, Richard Roberts, H. Gilbert Harlow, Jean Anderson, Norman Reed*

If you are aware of a departed member, whose name has not been noted near the anniversary of their death, please 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 Risseeuw, 2140 Niskayuna Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309.

## Memorial Flowers

The chancel flowers today are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God and in loving memory of her husband, Bernard Overeynder, by Jenny Overeynder.

## United Prayer Ministry

Prayers of healing:

*Earl Wainwright* at Ellis.

*Father* of Christina Walthers at Sloan Kettering.

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

Birth of *Giada Bailey-Yavonditte*, granddaughter of Marey and Joseph Bailey.

## Scientific Reasons To Host December & January Post-Service Refreshments

Our bodies burn more energy when it's cold. Primitive impulses make us stockpile calories for the long Winter. Social supports reduce stress when holiday preparations leave us frazzled. Chocolate contains tryptophan which the brain uses to make serotonin, producing feelings of happiness. For these reasons, please sign up to host in Assembly Hall. Thank you!

## Chancel Guild – TODAY

Chancel Guild will hold a Business Meeting today, in the Dirck Romeyn room after worship.

## Congregational Meeting Notice – Nov. 22

There will be meeting of the congregation on November 22, after worship, to consider a building renovation proposal.

## Music Notes

Our Response of Praise is a joyful declaration first heard by John Bell at the Sunrise Hospice in S. Africa. Words and transcription copyright 2008 WGRG, Iona Community Scotland, GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. OneLicense.net License #A-700700.

## First 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, or Joe Doolittle 384-1700.

**Today:** Racism & Storytelling, (see below)

**Nov 22:** Building a Parenting Program,  
Wales Brown

**Nov 29:** Coffee and Conversation

Friends for Racial Justice: Barbara Spring, Albany Friends Meeting, will share successful efforts to promote racial healing through story-telling. Regularly scheduled sessions have deepened understanding of the complexities of racism in our society. Join us for a provocative session and perhaps share a story.

## Church School

This year our Pastors will be leading the teaching of Church School, but we need your help. Please sign up ASAP in Assembly Hall, so the Pastors will know ahead of time who they will be working with. Also, if you have any activities you are particularly fond of ie: stories, children in worship, crafts, let us know. Thank you so much!

## Orff

We have been blessed with a beautiful ensemble of ORFF instruments that must be played! Join us in the Music Office at 9am each Sunday morning! No experience is needed as we learn songs and accompaniments for worship. Contact Jamie Ipsen, 399-6848, with questions.

## Jazz Vespers Every Sunday ~ 5:00 pm

**Today:** Tim Olsen, piano

**Nov 22:** *Thanksgiving Jazz Festival 4-6pm*

**Nov 29:** Mike Lamkin, piano; Pete Toigo, bass

## Klokken Tower Ringers

Join us at 7pm on Mondays in the Poling Conference room. Questions can be answered by Judy Moore at moorebells@gmail.com

## Kirk Ringers and Singers

Kirk Ringers and Singers will meet from 11:15 to noon in room 20 (at the top of the stairs) each Sunday. We have loads of special music planned and lots of participants are needed! Any child of Church School age is invited to join us.

## Youth Group Schedule

The youth group is open to all students in grades 6-12, and meets every Sunday night from 5-7pm (unless otherwise indicated) for: discussion, food, learning, fellowship, and service.

**Today:** - 5pm meeting –How Do We See Jesus?  
**Parent & Youth Mission Trip Mtg.**

**Nov 21:** - 10am Pie Baking

**Nov 22:** - Pie distribution after worship.  
No Regular Mtg; Youth will be selling refreshments after the Thanksgiving Jazz Vespers Service

**Nov 29:** - *Advent Festival 5pm*

## Faith Bookshop

Back by popular demand: sale of donated jewelry. Bring jewelry you'd like to share to the Bookshop any time; Sale to begin in December.

## Johnson Library

Of interest on the display table is the Oct 14 issue of the *Christian Century*, containing an article: "Harper Lee, Then and Now", about her book *Go Set a Watchman*. Find out why *Watchman* was long judged unfit for publication.

## Horizon's Bible Study

The last session for the Horizons study "Come to the Waters" will be November 17. We'll skip the 24th and do an Upper Room Advent devotional study called "Light of Lights" on December 1, 8 and 15. Study guides are \$8, available from Peg Miller. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

### **New Member Class**

Interested in a closer relationship with this congregation? Dr. Levering will be leading a membership 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, usually on the first Sunday of the month.

### **Midweek Feast: Food for Body, Mind & Soul Every Wednesday this fall**

>*Dinner at 6*--bring whatever food you like and wish to contribute to the table in Assembly Hall where informal, friendly conversation is enjoyed.

>*Study at 7*--delve into the discussion of various timely topics led by Stacey Midge. This week's topic is "Why is that in the Bible."

>*Worship at 8*--stay for a brief, reflective service of song, scripture, silence, the Lord's Supper, and prayers of supplication for those in need.

### **Stitch Group**

Our church PHD\* stitch group meets every Thursday in Poling Conference room. Work on whatever project you have. For more info, contact Joan Lindsay, 399-3153. \*Projects Half Done

### **Operation Christmas Child Boxes Due TODAY**

Completed boxes can be dropped off at our blue bin in the church lobby. All cash donations are tax deductible. Checks can be made payable to FRC of Schenectady indicating O.C.C. on the memo line. We especially need the \$7 shipping fees that need to accompany each box! For more information visit [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org) or contact Shannon Kerwin 374-2542 or [shan2112@yahoo.com](mailto:shan2112@yahoo.com) Thank you!!!!

### **Pie Sale to raise funds for the mission trip**

Apple and pumpkin pies are available - now with a new, improved crust recipe! - for \$12 each. Please order your pies on the form in Assembly Hall or use a white pew card by **November 19** for pickup after church on November 22. The Youth Group is heading to Palermo, Italy in February to do mission work with refugees.

### **First Futures Building Campaign - Q&A:**

*Don't programming and ministerial leadership far outweigh other factors in attracting membership growth?* Clearly programming and leadership are key elements, and we already have great leaders who are accelerating the development and implementation of great **and relevant** programming. Improvements to our building, however, will serve to increase the attraction substantially. The plan stresses functionality (making our programs even better), access (a key negative now and keenly perceived as desirable by our next generation) and a more up-to-date feel. Can building improvements improve our chances of membership growth? Yes. Is the cost worth it? We must all decide.

### **Tuesday Ladies – November 17**

Tuesday Ladies meets next on November 17 at the home of Connie Young, 1400 Keyes Avenue. All ladies welcome to chat and get to know each other around a cup of tea at 7pm.

### **Group VII – November 20**

Group VII meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at 10am in the Dirck Romeyn room. Our next meeting is on November 20 with a program by the Schenectady County Historical Society.

### **New Word Service**

Our congregation is full of stories. **And God has stories of faith for us.** Put this all together, and you have a recipe for a fascinating worship service. Our next service is December 11.

### **Men's Breakfast Group – November 21**

The Men's Breakfast group will meet in Assembly Hall at 8am on Sat., Nov. 21. Bill Levering will be our speaker, and he will discuss the recent visit of Pope Francis to the U.S. The Pope raised a number of religious and humanitarian issues that are important not only to Catholics, but also to concerned Christians of any denomination. Questions/suggestion: contact - Joe Doolittle - [aldenjoe@nycap.rr.com](mailto:aldenjoe@nycap.rr.com) or Gene Rowland - [erowland@nycap.rr.com](mailto:erowland@nycap.rr.com)

### **Thanksgiving Offering – November 22**

#### **Concerned for the Hungry**

Monies collected at our church will be sent to Concerned for the Hungry and are used to purchase supplies in bulk at greatly reduced prices to help stretch the dollars. Checks should be made payable to FRC, with *Concerned for the Hungry* in the memo line. See First Things article.

#### **Covenanter Brittany Bernardi needs a ride**

Are you heading to or toward NYC for Thanksgiving? Brittany is looking for a ride.

#### **The Short-Short Writing Group – Nov 25**

A writing critique group meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month in the Walton Conference room at 7pm. Short-Shorts are stories, essays, memoirs, or other non-fiction works told in 1,000 words or less. For more info, contact James Gonda at [jgonda12309@gmail.com](mailto:jgonda12309@gmail.com)

#### **Intergenerational Advent Festival - Nov 29**

On the evening of the first Sunday of Advent, those of all ages gather in Friendship Hall for a covered dish dinner and seasonal crafts. For dinner at 5pm, bring food you wish to share (seasonal suggestion: anything that begins with the letter A, for Advent, or food that is purple or blue, Advent colors). After our meal the crafts commence, including the making of unique Advent wreaths from natural materials and hand-dipped candles! We'll conclude at 7pm with a brief liturgy around our candlelit wreaths.

#### **New Book Club - *The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness***

The Justice Action Council and the Adult Education and Nurture Committee are forming a book club to discuss and examine this poignant work by Michelle Alexander. Please join us on Sunday, **November 29** at noon for lunch and conversation on the Mezzanine. We will cover at least the first few chapters. More meeting dates to follow. The book is available now at a discounted rate in the church book store. Contact either Mary Alice Jewett or Jeanne Shoulder with any ???

### **First Friday Performances – December 4**

Avery will be showing the 1987 movie *Babette's Feast* at 7pm in Poling Chapel. This is a heartwarming story of two sisters who take in a cook, Babette, as a refugee from war torn France. This is a foreign movie with subtitles. It will be played as a silent movie, with live accompaniment by Avery. Join us for a night out!

#### **Thursday Musical Club Christmas Concert**

Join the Thursday Musical Club all women's chorus directed by Julie Panke and accompanied by Elinore Farnum, for a Christmas concert on **Saturday, December 5 at 2:30pm** in the church sanctuary. The Thursday Belles, directed by Judy Moore, will be guest artists. Complimentary tickets are available for all church members from Julie or the church office.

#### **Breakfast with St. Nicholas – Dec. 6**

No matter your age or faith tradition, join us Sunday 8:45-9:45am for a complimentary Dutch breakfast of chocolate sprinkle sandwiches, strong coffee, oatmeal, and speculaas cookies, followed by a visit from the just and generous Sinterklaas, telling stories and giving gifts!

#### **Klokken Tower Ringers, Thursday Belles and Carol Sing December 6**

For 90+ years, this Carol Sing has taken place with handbells, carols, and a totally unique version of the 12 Days of Christmas! Please Join us at 3pm, in our Sanctuary, on December 6 and bring your friends and family. There will be a special guest too!

#### **Advent Lessons and Carols – Dec. 13**

The choirs of St. George's Episcopal Church and First Reformed Church of Schenectady, will come together on Sunday, December 13 at 2pm for a traditional service of Advent Lessons and Carols at St. George's in the Stockade. Music of Brahms, Poston, Sumsion, and Gardner will be included. Andrew Krystopolski will be the organist and Julie Panke will direct the choirs. The Klokken Tower Ringers will assist.

I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical.

- Thomas Jefferson

I finally figured out that not every crisis can be managed. As much as we want to keep ourselves safe, we can't protect ourselves from everything. If we want to embrace life, we also have to embrace chaos. — Susan Elizabeth Phillips,

Sometimes you need a little crisis to get your adrenaline flowing and help you realize your potential. — Jeannette Walls, *The Glass Castle*

In every crisis, doubt or confusion, take the higher path - the path of compassion, courage, understanding and love. — Amit Ray, *Nonviolence: The Transforming Power*

Every test successfully met is rewarded by some growth in intuitive knowledge, strengthening of character, or initiation into a higher consciousness. — Paul Brunton

The power we discover inside ourselves as we survive a life-threatening experience can be utilized equally well outside of crisis, too. I am, in every moment, capable of mustering the strength to survive again—or of tapping that strength in other good, productive, healthy ways. — Michele Rosenthal

If only one person were perfectly informed there could never be a general crisis. But the only perfectly informed person is God, and he does not play the stock market. — Robert Skidelsky

Perhaps the story you finish is never the one you begin. — Salman Rushdie

Through each crisis in my life, with acceptance and hope, in a single defining moment, I finally gained the courage to do things differently. — Sharon E. Rainey

When faced with a radical crisis, when the old way of being in the world, of interacting with each other and with the realm of nature doesn't work anymore, when survival is threatened by seemingly insurmountable problems, an individual life-form -- or a species -- will either die or become extinct or rise above the limitations of its condition through an evolutionary leap. — Eckhart Tolle



## Jazz Thanksgiving Festival

The annual Thanksgiving Jazz Festival and Vespers will take place on Sunday, November 22 in the main sanctuary from 4-6pm. On the program will be: Nat Phipps, piano; Keith Pray, sax; Tom D'Andrea, drums; Pete Toigo, bass; Peg Delaney, piano; Jim Corigliano, sax; Tim Coakley, drums; Bill Delaney, bass; and Colleen Pratt, vocals.

Admission is \$10, \$5 students and retirement community residents.

*Youth Group will be selling refreshments as a Fundraiser for their February Mission Trip!*

**Sunday, November 15**

10:00 am ..... Worship  
 10:15 am ..... Church School K-5  
 11:00 am ..... Refreshments  
 11:15 am ..... Kirk Ringers & Singers  
 11:15 am ..... First Forum  
 11:30 am ..... Chancel Guild Meeting  
 5:00 pm ..... Jazz Vespers & Youth Group

**Monday, November 16**

9:00 am ..... Mens Newsgroup  
 7:00 pm ..... Klokken Tower Ringers

**Tuesday, November 17**

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

**Wednesday, November 18**

9:30 am ..... Kerygma Conversations  
 1:00 pm ..... Thursday Belles  
 6:00 pm ..... Midweek Feast - *Dinner*  
 7:00 pm ..... Midweek Feast – *Study*  
 8:00 pm ..... Midweek Feast – *Worship*

**Thursday, November 19**

7:30 am ..... Breakfast Bible Bunch  
 10:00 am ..... Stitch Group  
 7:00 pm ..... Stephen Ministry  
 7:30 pm ..... Chancel Choir

**Friday, November 20**

10:00 am ..... Group VII

**Saturday, November 21**

8:00 am ..... Men's Breakfast Group  
 10:00 am ..... Youth Group Pie Baking

**Sunday, November 22**

8:30 am ..... Early Bird Sunday Study  
 9:00 am ..... Chancel Choir  
 10:00 am ..... Worship  
 10:15 am ..... Church School K-5  
 11:00 am ..... Refreshments  
 11:15 am ..... First Forum & Kirk Ringers  
 4:00 pm ..... Thanksgiving Jazz Vespers

<b>Counting Deacons</b>	Fred Daniels and Carol Troost	Kim & Tom Burgoyne
<b>Greeters</b>	Jim & Sharron McCullough	Dave & Donna Bundy
<b>Flower Delivery</b>	Joanne Bedell and James Reid	Gay Doolittle and Elsa Hjelmar
<b>Faith Bookshop</b>	Birdie Blackmer	Committee Member
<b>Liturgist</b>	Daniel Carlson	Daniel Carlson
<b>Preacher</b>	Bill Levering	Stacey Midge
<b>Processing Elders</b>	Art Casey, George Davidson, Gay Doolittle, Peggy King, Don & Marilyn Leach, Bill Rochelle, Maria Todd	Bob Beadle, Christine Daniels, George Davidson, Del Pierce, Carolyn Jones-Assini, Brad & Cathy Lewis, Liz Mastrianni
<b>Reader</b>	Nancy Davidson	Liz Mastrianni
<b>Refreshments</b>	Gay Doolittle and Joan Crandall	Ann Hicks and Ann Bish
<b>Ushers</b>	Glenn Blinckmann (head usher), Gerry Myers, Crystal Mongillo, Justine Ochal, Ralph Rosenthal	Tom Burgoyne (head usher), David Bundy, Joe Gotwals, Karen Gonda, Berta and Nat Phipps

## **First Futures Building Plan**

### **The Planning Committee:**

Fred Daniels, Co-chair

Lisa Etkin, Co-chair

Dave Hjelmar, Del Pierce, Cindy Gallagher

Gay Doolittle, Dan Ipsen, Nancy Davidson, Bill

Levering, Daniel Carlson, Stacey Midge

### ***The Process***

The Planning Committee engaged in a 9 month planning process, involving four sub-committees tasked with studying the current building and how it is used, identifying needs as expressed through hundreds of conversations with interested parties.

The Committee researched and solicited proposals from four architectural firms to help with the planning process. Each was interviewed and competitively ranked. Ultimately the firm of Mesick Cohen Wilson and Baker was selected based on their body of work in historical preservation and church architecture (Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany).

Altogether four plans were developed and considered. Each received a professional cost estimate, and costs ranged from \$850,000 to four million. Each plan had its own merits and limitations, and the four plans were scored by the Planning Committee on the following criteria:

1. Would the proposed building improvements provide greater flexibility and functionality?
2. Would they improve access into and within the building, both for people with handicaps as well as for general navigation and 'way finding' within the building?
3. To what degree would the improvements bring the church into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act?
4. Would the improvements create a more welcoming perception of our church community both in the local neighborhood and the greater region?
5. Would the improvements increase our energy efficiency and reduce costs?

6. Would they serve to increase the impact of our programming for the coming generation of church members, especially with regards to music, family education, community engagement, spiritual development and contemporary relevance?

These criteria broadly represented the key findings from the Committee's numerous conversations throughout the congregation. The first plan created by the architect was labeled the Optimal Plan, because it captured everything that the Committee had heard from the congregation. It's \$4 million price tag, however, was believed to be beyond a realistic scope, and the Committee worked closely with the architect to identify trade-offs which would reduce the cost.

Additionally the Committee requested that the architect develop the best plans possible (reflecting the criteria) at a price below \$1 million, between \$1 and \$2 million, and between \$2 and \$3 million. Each of these was examined, and the trade-offs were identified and discussed. Ultimately the plan represented in the coming pages was recommended to the Consistory for their consideration.

This Recommended Plan is based on the \$4 million plan but with a reduced scope. The Planning Committee felt that the reductions were reasonable and did not substantially compromise the fundamentals of the established criteria. It has been professionally cost estimated at \$3 million, including a 15% contingency and allowances for architectural and engineering fees.

On October 17, 2015 the Consistory voted overwhelmingly to accept the recommendation of the Planning Committee. The Consistory approved the scope of the plan, at \$3million, and recognized that there are hundreds of detailed decisions that must be made before this conceptual plan becomes "the plan" upon which architects and engineers will proceed. It also recognized that a plan of this scope should be affirmed by the congregation, and so the congregation will vote on November 22 to affirm the decision of the Consistory.

## *The Recommended Plan*

1. The First Futures plan provides for a majestic new assembly space, Fellowship Hall, to be located in the space currently occupied by the Poling Conference Room, the Library and Bookstore. These important programs will be relocated to other spaces made available in the building.
2. Fellowship Hall will include a new kitchen and be located within steps of the current sanctuary.
3. A new access driveway and handicap parking lot will be located on the southeast lawn of the church, with a graded walkway leading directly into Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary.
4. The Library and bookstore will be relocated into space currently in use as Assembly Hall, and new ADA compliant bathrooms will be located in adjacent space.
5. An elevator which will carry members up to the second floor or down to the Garden Level will be located near the entrance to Poling Chapel.
6. The music program will be aggregated to the second floor, including space for offices, rehearsal, and files, robes and instrument storage.
7. The children's programs will be aggregated to the Garden Level, including Kinderwyck which will become much closer to the sanctuary and the new Fellowship Hall.
8. The first floor of Kinderwyck will become a community conference center, with two meeting rooms, a bathroom and small coffee lounge.

## *Financing the Recommended Plan*

The Consistory approved in principle the funding of the building costs by using \$2 million from our endowments and raising \$1 million from the congregation. Plans are being developed for a capital campaign which would commence in January. Members of the congregation will be asked to make a three year pledge to the campaign.

The operating budget draws 5% each year from the endowment to support the costs to run the church. Currently the operating budget includes \$100,000 to be spend on Mission and Benevolence. \$2 million taken from endowment will reduce the funds available to support our operating budget by \$100,000. The members of the Covenant Fund committee have proposed a plan that will provide mission funding necessary to maintain the M&B budget line in the operating budget.

While this does mean that there will be \$100,000 less spent on mission each year, this reduction comes at a time when the other funded activities of the Covenant Fund are in transition. The members of the Covenant Fund committee have determined specifically how they will re-allocate their remaining funding (\$200,000) to minimize impact on overall mission.

Further, the First Futures fund raising team is proposing a planned giving program which will benefit the church long after the campaign is over, and the Committee has recommended that the first \$2 million in bequests received should replace the endowment funds used for the building campaign (unless the donor specifically restricts the bequest in some other way).

## *The Rationale*

Unlike the vast majority of churches, we have a creative and strong ministerial team which (obviously) has the capability of developing dynamic and relevant programming. Our future ministers must be selected largely on the basis of their ability to perpetuate such programs.

Unlike the vast majority of churches, we have a \$10 million endowment. While some is restricted for mission, much of it is not restricted at all, and the proposed approach to funding maintains all mission restrictions. Further, the improved building represent a uniquely flexible opportunity to develop missional programs within our walls, to supplement the generous mission giving we have for decades provided to the greater community.

**The Planning Committee believes that a combination of improving programs relevant to the coming generations together with a dramatically improved facility give us the best chance of developing the coming generations at FRC.**

While some of our members believe that merely developing the programs will be enough, it is the consensus of the Planning Committee that even the most creative and relevant programs presented in our current dated facility significantly lessens our chances of success.

The Planning Committee believes that significant improvements to the facilities, including a grand fellowship hall, will provide significant added energy to the opportunity to develop and present programs that will attract the coming generations.

The proposed building plan offers the following kinds of opportunities (by way of example only):

- Elder Diner Once a Week Lunch
- Secure Community Meeting Space in Separate Building
- Hosting Gambler's Anonymous
- Contemporary Worship Space
- Sunday Morning Drop Off Driveway

- Parent's Coffee Klatch
- Friendship Hall Rock Climbing
- Sustainability Garden
- Youth Program Space
- Classrooms Designed for Child Protection Policies
- Internet and Video Wired Classrooms

No one can predict with certainty whether program alone or a combination of facility and program will meet the coming challenge. **The Planning Committee believes, however, that improved facilities will significantly increase the odds of success. From this perspective, the recommended plan does not represent current building expense... it represents investment in our own mission and future potential.**

If our new building combined with new programming models are successful at attracting new generations of the faithful, no one will be concerned that \$2 million of our endowments were invested to secure our future.

If we cannot successfully attract new generations we will most likely enter a period of slow decline.

***The Planning Committee believes this is the time to invest, and strongly urges approval of the plan that gives FRC the greatest chance of successfully attracting future generations to sustain us for the next 300+ years.***