

**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.*

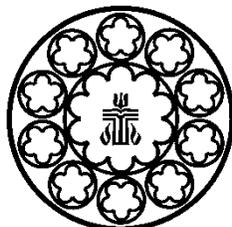
*Our fellowship shall not be dependent upon identity of theological opinion, or of outward circumstance, or of denominational concern, but shall grow from a common loyalty to Jesus, a common commitment to serve the world we touch, and a common purpose to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly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



*Sometimes we wear the Christmas sweater  
God provides for us*

*December 27, 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.

## First Sunday after Christmas Day

December 27, 2015

\*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE Norman Thibodeau, flute  
Anne-Marie Barker Schwartz, violin

*Sonata in D-Dur TWV 49:103*

*Dolce and Canonic Sonata in G: Allegro*

G.P. Telemann (1681-1767)

10:00 a.m.

GREETING Stacey Midge

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ORIENTATION

CALL TO WORSHIP Bill Levering

INTROIT *Glory* Pablo Sosa

\* HYMN *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* #22

\* 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

**Joy to the World the Lord is come.**

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*unison*)

*(From the Brief Statement of Faith)*

**In gratitude to God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, 'Come, Lord Jesus.'**

\*PASSING THE PEACE

## ANTHEM

*The White Dove*

German Folk Song  
arr. Johannes Brahms

A snow-white dove from heaven  
Flew down to the earth,  
In angel form it greeted  
A maid of lowly birth;  
With peace and joy  
Its tiding filled her breast,  
For she, above all women,  
Would be forever blest.  
*Kyrie eleison.*

The gates of heaven would open,  
The angel then did tell,  
And Christ our blest Redeemer  
Would deign on earth to dwell;  
The Holy Babe,  
who lay her arms within,  
Should be the promised Saviour  
To purge the world from sin.  
*Kyrie eleison.*

And when our life is ended,  
On Thee will we call,  
The Son of holy Mary,  
Who died to save us all;  
In mercy hear us  
when we cry to Thee,  
From fear of death's dark angel,  
O Jesus, set us free.  
*Kyrie eleison.*

Translated by W.G. Rotary

FIRST LESSON

George Trimarco

Guide us, God, by your Word and Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.** *Galatians 4:4-7 (pg 189)*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

\*HYMN *Away in a Manger* #25

SECOND LESSON *Colossians 3:12-17 (pg 201)*

SERMON Bill Levering  
*The Christmas Sweater*

\*HYMN *The First Nowell* #56

OFFERING

OFFERTORY  
*Bei Männern welche Liebe fühlen*  
from The Magic Flute  
W.A. Mozart

\*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 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* #28

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL RESPONSE  
*Twofold Amen* Traditional

POSTLUDE  
*Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing*  
Sicilian Mariners

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### 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:

*Helen H. Masjoan, R. Ned Landon,  
Fran Zentmire, Jean Collins, Jean Bowman*

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.

### A Time for Sharing

Extra cookies in your cupboard? Tons of tempting treats on your table? Trying to find a home for that fruitcake Aunt Edna gave you? Please place your excess goodies in our Assembly Hall freezer for post-service refreshments. Your physician will thank you, as will the Taart Baas!

### 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:** Coffee and Conversation

**Jan 3:** Building a Parenting Program,  
Wales Brown

**Jan 10:** Unity Luncheon, Viki Brooks

### 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. Any child of Church School age is invited to join us.

### **New Word Service – January 8**

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 service.

### **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.

### **Church School – *Message from Blythe***

Please come upstairs to get your children and make sure that I have met you so I know which parents are attached to which children, especially if your kids haven't been coming to Church School regularly. It is difficult for me, being new, to know who is attached to whom. I would like to make sure that I become well acquainted with all of the parents of the wonderful children in the classes. Also, if you haven't filled out the informational sheet on your child, please be sure to do that in Rm 20 or Kinderwyk as well. These records are kept by the church and we would love to someday have a very accurate list of the children who have been through our program.

### **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:** - No Meeting

**Jan 3:** - Regular Meeting

**Jan 10:** - Regular Meeting

### **Jazz Vespers Every Sunday ~ 5:00 pm**

**Today:** Dave Gleason, piano

**Jan 3:** Peg Delaney Trio

**Jan 10:** Tim Olsen, piano

### **Chrismon Tree**

We encourage everyone to stop in the Dirck Romeyn room to admire the tree between Sunday, December 20 and Sunday, January 3.

### **Faith Bookshop**

Because of display limitations, the Bookshop's donated jewelry project was postponed until after the holiday season. Watch the Sunday bulletins for the new date. Meanwhile, thank you to the folks who have brought in jewelry, and we welcome more!

### **Christmas Stewardship**

Christmas is finally here! Hallelujah! The Saviour is born! Many people came to worship the newborn king on that night in Bethlehem. They gave of their time and resources to praise God with everything that they have. As the Christmas season draws to a close consider how you are giving your all to God and not holding back. We thank you for your generosity.

### **Avery Presents, *Sherlock Jr.* – January 1**

On Friday, January 1 at 7pm in Poling Chapel Avery will present the 1924 silent movie comedy "Sherlock Jr." starring Buster Keaton. While the movie is modest in length at 45 minutes, it doesn't hold back when it comes to content! Buster Keaton plays a mild mannered movie projectionist who gets caught up in a fantasy sequence when he "leaps" into the movie he is showing. What results is a movie within a movie and a "roller coaster ride" of thrills.

Please help us celebrate a new year with a charming look into the past! We hope to see you there. Reception to follow.

### **Stitch Group**

Our church PHD\* stitch group will not meet on 12/31. See you in the New Year. We meet most every Thursday, in Poling Conference room. Work on whatever project you have. For more info, contact Joan Lindsay, 399-3153.

### **New Member Class – January 3**

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.

## **Midweek Feast: Food for Body, Mind & Soul Wednesdays in January**

>*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.

>*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.

## **The Men's Breakfast Group – January 9**

The next meeting of the Men's Breakfast group will take place on Saturday, Jan 9. Meetings are held in Assembly Hall, beginning with breakfast at 8am. Following the breakfast meal we traditionally have a brief program presentation.

Our speaker is Walt Robb, who will speak about "Generating an Electrical Revolution". This talk will examine various techniques for generating electrical energy, and make some projections (or educated guesses?) about the future use of these alternate modalities.

## **Unity Luncheon – January 10**

The second Sunday in January has been set aside each year to honor unity between FRC and UPC. Everyone is invited to the Unity Luncheon Sunday, January 10. The theme this year is "Reflecting on Unity". We will have a catered Lasagna luncheon served by the women of the church in Fellowship Hall. Special vegan and gluten free meals will be served.

## **Horizons Bible Study – January 12**

A study on Luke's gospel will start on Jan. 12. Study guides are \$10, payable to Peg Miller. Anyone interested is welcome.

## **The Short-Short Writing Group – January 13**

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

## **New Bible Study to begin January 12**

Paige Convis is starting a new Bible study on Tuesday's at 7pm. We will meet for about an hour each week to read and discuss scripture and how it speaks to our lives and to the current events happening in the world. Please join us for this time of study and sharing. We will begin our study in the book of Job. We will grapple with the age old question-- Why do bad things happen to good people? There might not be any good answers, but we will wonder together about the wisdom God's Word has for us even today.

## **Call for Submissions**

*The Beverwyck Anthology* is now accepting submissions for its March 2016 issue. Fiction, nonfiction, essays, memoirs, and travel pieces not exceeding one thousand words are acceptable. Poetry of less than 100 lines is also acceptable. Submissions should be appropriate for a church publication. Please email submissions to Rudy and Kathy Petersen, Editors-in-Chief, at [thebeverwyck@gmail.com](mailto:thebeverwyck@gmail.com).

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

Our third meeting is scheduled on Sunday, January 17 at noon on the Mezzanine. We will discuss chapters 3 & 4. The fourth meeting will be scheduled at that time. Contact either Mary Alice Jewett or Jeanne Shoulder with any questions. Lunch will be provided.

## **Tuesday Ladies – January 19**

Tuesday Ladies meets next on January 19, at the home of Connie Young, 1400 Keyes Avenue. This will be our salad supper meeting. All ladies welcome to chat and get to know each other while we enjoy dinner at 6pm.

## **Pledge Update**

Our pledge response has been good so far. Have you made your pledge for 2016? The easiest way to do it is to go online at [1stReformed.com](http://1stReformed.com) and you will see a link on the left. It takes less than 30 seconds.

## **Christmas Offering**

### **Soap & Toilet Paper Ministry**

The Mission and Benevolence committee of FRC has selected the following ministry to receive the funds collected in our Christmas offering. The First United Methodist Church (FUMC) Soap & Toilet Paper Ministry provides a vital service to many in our community through the distribution of toilet paper, soap, diapers, feminine hygiene, and adult incontinence products, and when available, other personal care items. Please make checks payable to **FRC** and put *Christmas Offering* in the memo line.

### **What To Do With Those Bottles and Cans**

Turn in your redeemable recyclables at Creating Change Redemption Center at 309 Saratoga Rd. in Glenville, and tell them to donate the deposit to the *First Reformed Church of Schenectady Youth Mission Trip*. The youth group has an account there and will collect donations until the mission trip in February (Palermo, Italy).

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“Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this too, was a gift.” — Mary Oliver

“May it be a light to you in dark places, when all other lights go out.”  
— J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

“A friend is a gift you give yourself.”  
— Robert Louis Stevenson

“Tucker: "But she gave me the perfect gift."  
Clara: "What?"  
Tucker: "You."  
— Cynthia Hand, *Unearthly*

“A wonderful gift may not be wrapped as you expect.” — Jonathan Lockwood Huie

“A generous heart is always open, always ready to receive our going and coming. In the midst of such love we need never fear abandonment. This is the most precious gift true love offers - the experience of knowing we always belong.”  
— Bell Hooks, *All About Love: New Visions*

“Practice giving things away, not just things you don't care about, but things you do like. Remember, it is not the size of a gift, it is its quality and the amount of mental attachment you overcome that count. So don't bankrupt yourself on a momentary positive impulse, only to regret it later. Give thought to giving. Give small things, carefully, and observe the mental processes going along with the act of releasing the little thing you liked. — Huston Smith, *Tibetan Book of the Dead*

“I didn't expect to recover from my second operation but since I did, I consider that I'm living on borrowed time. Every day that dawns is a gift to me and I take it in that way. I accept it gratefully without looking beyond it. I completely forget my physical suffering and all the unpleasantness of my present condition and I think only of the joy of seeing the sun rise once more and of being able to work a little bit, even under difficult conditions.”  
— Henri Matisse

“My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me.”  
— Jim Valvano

“What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.”  
— Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prayer*

“Even when you'd lost everything you thought there was to lose, somebody came along and gave you something for free.”  
— Jenny Valentine, *Broken Soup*

**Sunday, December 27**

10:00 am ..... Worship  
 10:15 am ..... Church School K-5  
 11:00 am ..... Refreshments  
 11:15 am ..... First Forum  
 11:15 am ..... Kirk Ringers & Singers  
 5:00 pm ..... Jazz Vespers

**Monday, December 28****Office Closed****Tuesday, December 29**

10:00 am ..... Morning Prayer

**Wednesday, December 30**

11:00 am ..... First Things Volunteers

**Friday, January 1****Happy New Year - Office Closed**

7:00 pm ..... Avery Presents – *Sherlock Jr.*

**Saturday, January 2**

4:00 pm ..... Senior Pastor's Open House

**Sunday, January 3**

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  
 3:00 pm ..... New Member Class  
 5:00 pm ..... Jazz Vespers & Youth Group

<b>Sunday Volunteers</b>	<b>This Sunday</b>	<b>Next Sunday</b>
<b>Counting Deacons</b>	Claire Hughes and Joan Lindsay	Kim & Tom Burgoyne
<b>Greeters</b>	Linda & Bill Ward	
<b>Flower Delivery</b>		Louise Dickinson and Lisa Etkin
<b>Faith Bookshop</b>	Birdie Blackmer	
<b>Liturgist</b>	Stacey Midge	Stacey Midge
<b>Preacher</b>	Bill Levering	Daniel Carlson
<b>Processing Elders</b>	Darwin Brudos, Art Casey, Jerry & Joyce Griggs, James Gonda, Peggy King, Del Pierce, Richard Rose	Birdie Blackmer, Darwin Brudos, Art Casey, Gay Doolittle, James Gonda, Del Pierce
<b>Reader</b>	George Trimarco	Mary Jewett
<b>Refreshments</b>		Ellie Brudos
<b>Ushers</b>	Glenn Blinckmann (head usher), Gerry Meyers, Crystal Mongillo, Justine Ochal, Ralph Rosenthal	Tom Burgoyne (head usher), David Bundy, Joe Gotwals, Karen Gonda