

***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.



Again the leaving
again the returning
like blood leaving our hearts
only to return
like library books
or ships at sea
or lost loves
or senses
or souls

Time and place and person
tug us back
to a certain harbor

Always leaving
always returning

Let us look to the heart
of the pulsing stars
and hope
fully
the returning is to the harbor called
God

September 1, 2019

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

Welcome to First Reformed

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 pick up and fill out a Welcome Card and place it in the offering plate. After the service please join us for refreshments.

Child Care on Sunday - Kinderwyk

Childcare for infants through Pre-k is available from 9:45am until noon downstairs in the Education Level.

Summer Church School

On the first Sunday of July, August, and September children in grades K-2 share in a faith activity. After the Children's Message, they follow the leader to the Education Level; parents meet them there after worship.

Children's Music

Music for kids is offered in the upstairs music level between 11:15-12pm.

Elders in Worship

Past and current leaders we call 'Elders' walk in together at the beginning of worship and sit in the front seats. 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.

Non-Emergency Number

Schenectady Police: 518-630-0911

Worshiping In Covenant Hall

For July and August we'll avoid the heat of the sanctuary and praise God in our new air-conditioned space.

After Worship

Typically, after worship, people stay for chat and a cookie in Covenant Hall. Visitors are warmly welcomed to join in.

Communion

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

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 please fill out a Welcome Card.

Service Online

A live stream of the worship service as well as some of the past services can be found at 1stReformed.com.



Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost

September 1, 2019

*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE

John Norton, harpsichord setting

Prelude and Fugue in B-flat minor, WTC Bk. 2

J.S. Bach

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Daniel Carlson

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Levering

*HYMN

Gather Us In

(see back)

*OUR NEED FOR GOD

God beyond us, gather us in, we pray. We have wandered and pursued selfish paths. We have denied our connections to each other and to you. Give us the strength to make the journey home to you today. Amen.

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (*unison*)

Halle, halle, halle, lu-jah! Halle, halle, halle, lu-jah!

Halle, halle, halle, lu-jah! Hallelujah! Halle, lu-jah!

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from Our Song of Hope

**We are a people of hope
waiting for the return of our Lord.**

**God has come to us
through the ancient people of Israel,
as the true Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth,
as the Holy Spirit at work in our world.**

**Our Lord speaks to us now through the inspired Scriptures.
Christ is with us day by day.**

*PASSING THE PEACE

MUSICAL OFFERING

Slowly

by Gabby Pizzolo

There are two distant roads,
both got a mind of their own.
They twist and they turn and they take control.
Which one will I choose?
I suddenly feel so alone.
I don't know where to go.
Which path will lead me home?
Which one will lead me through?
You say I'll be fine, it's hard to decide,
You say "take your time", but oh --
That's one thing I don't got,
'cuz there's not a lot to spare.
But slowly, you help me believe.
Slowly get me up on my feet again.
Slowly I can finally breathe, finally
breathe. Slowly you comfort my cries,
Slowly - now I'll get up and try. Slowly,
you're here by my side, here by my side.
And there are so many ways you save my
life everyday.
You're the reason I'm okay,

the very reason I'm alive.
And when I'm down on the ground,
You turn my world right around.
You're the best thing I've found
in this game we all call life.
And there's so much more, I feel so
secure 'cuz you are my cure --
And now, though some days we're apart,
you're my Moon and my stars tonight.
Yeah slowly, you help me believe.
Slowly get me up on my feet again. . .
You give me all your strength,
and still you are stronger.
You're helping me the most to grow,
and still you are taller.
You train me for my marathon,
and I can't even crawl.
But you're right there next to me while
I'm running, in case I stumble and fall.
Yeah slowly, you help me believe.
Slowly get me up on my feet again. .

FIRST LESSON *Joel 2:13 (pg 847)*

Brad Lewis

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SECOND LESSON *Luke 15:11-32 (pg 78)*

SERMON *Returning*

Bill Levering

*HYMN *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

#504

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Gabby Pizzolo, soloist

Pie Jesu

Faure Requiem

Pie Jesu Domine, Dona eis requiem. Sempiternam requiem

*DOXOLOGY *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow* #592

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

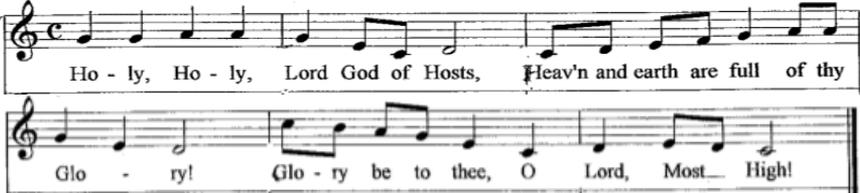
SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION AND PRAYER

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise!

SANCTUS (*unison*)

Carl Steubing



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts, Heav'n and earth are full of thy
Glo - ry! Glo - ry be to thee, O Lord, Most High!

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

Please process forward from the middle aisle, take bread, dip it in the cup, and partake, returning by the side aisle. Gluten free elements are given at the middle station. We will be served to those unable to come forward.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

#376

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Entered Into Eternal Rest

Elaine Springsted – 8/25/19

A service will be held on Thursday,
September 5 at 10:30am.

Eileen Herring – 8/25/19

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 eternal rest in previous years about this time:

Eleanor Mae Hart, Beverly McLane, Mary Grupe, Alun Pritchard, Jane & Clifford Bryant

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

Choose a date for donating flowers to remember a loved one or to honor a special event. 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.

Seasons of Creation

Starting Sept 8, we will be worshipping God expressed in our love and care for the oceans, animals, storms, and the cosmos.

Johnson Library

The Johnson Library will be displaying its books on Racism during September to support the study on *Anxious to talk about it*.

Music Notes

Gabriel Fauré was a French composer, organist, pianist and one of the foremost French composers of his generation. His musical style influenced many 20th-century composers.

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Fall Picnic

Following Church on September 8, come together for a time of fun, food and fellowship. Bring a side, salad or dessert. Volunteers needed for setup and takedown. Contact Sarah Bachorik at sbachori@gmail.com.

Children and Families

Church school children and families are invited to attend the ValleyCats game on Sunday, Sept 1. The game starts at 5pm and will be followed by fireworks. Tickets are \$10. RSVP asap to 1streformededucation@gmail.com!

Green Steps

When purchasing produce, commit to opting out of plastic wrapped food while also avoiding the readily available plastic bags on rolls at every turn. For more details, look on the FRC website.

Garden Funding Sought

The last, but not least, part of the building program is the establishment of a wonderful Memorial Garden by the office entrance. We are about to begin and need your help. If you didn't get a chance to contribute to the building campaign or a looking for a special memorial gift, this would be perfect.

Coming Up

More information is in the newsletter at the back of the sanctuary.

Sun, Sept 1	9:45am Kinderwyk 10am Worship & Communion 5pm Jazz Vespers 5pm Children and Families	Education Level Sanctuary Covenant Hall ValleyCats Game
Mon, Sept 2	Labor Day – Office Closed	
Tue, Sept 3	11:30am Support & Care 7pm Short Short Writing	Mohawk – Pres Mohawk – Lunn
Wed, Sept 4	7:30am Retirement Roundtable 11:30am Wednesday Lunch 6:30pm Square Dancing 7pm Adult Ukulele	Mohawk House Covenant Hall Covenant Hall Music Level
Thu, Sept 5	10:30am Springsted Memorial Service 7:30pm Chancel Choir	Sanctuary Music Level
Sun, Sept 8	9am Chancel Choir 9am Chords of Love 9:45am Kinderwyk 10am Worship 10:15am Church School 11am Fall Picnic 5pm Jazz Vespers	Sanctuary Music Level Education Level Sanctuary Education Level Front Lawn Covenant Hall

Sunday Volunteers	This Week	Next Week
Bookshop	Jane Wilkinson	Sarah Howes
Counting Deacons	Tom Burgoyne, Cynthia Gallagher	Andy Chestnut, Joan Lindsay
Flower Delivery	Jim and Sharron McCullough, Barbara Walton	Claire Hughes, Vickie McGowan-Horan
Greeters	Jim and Sharron McCullough	
Jazz Vespers	Nat Phipps, piano; Pete Toigo, bass; Bob Halek, drums	Wayne Hawkins, piano; Mike Lawrence, bass; Cliff Brucker, drums
Kinderwyk	Lian Drisgula, Alexis Wisniewski, Natalie Pizzolo	Kristin Lion, Elizabeth Gleason
Liturgist	Daniel Carlson	Daniel Carlson
Preacher	Bill Levering	Bill Levering
Processing Elders	Amy & Wayne Brule, Birdie Blackmer, Brad & Cathy Lewis, Kitty Trimarco	Vickie McGowan-Horan, Del Pierce, Tom Lindsay, Bill Rochelle, Jeanne Shoulder, Barbara Walton
Reader	Brad Lewis	Amy Brule
Refreshments	Joe & Gay Doolittle	Church Picnic
Ushers	Mike Horan, Hannah Bachorik, Sarah Bachorik, Crystal Mongillo, Justine Ochal, Ralph Rosenthal	Tom Burgoyne, David Bundy, Joe Gotwals, Karen Gonda, Julia Ettkin

Gather Us In



1 Here in this place — new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - tery, we are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van-ish-ed a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through-out all of his - tory,
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a - way — here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath-er us in, the
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com - pas-sion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath - er us in, all peop - les to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en - ter the song.
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
 fire — of love in our flesh and our bone.

"If you feel lost, disappointed, hesitant, or weak, return to yourself, to who you are, here and now and when you get there, you will discover yourself, like a lotus flower in full bloom, even in a muddy pond, beautiful and strong." — Masaru Emoto, *Secret Life of Water*

"Farewells can be shattering, but returns are surely worse. Solid flesh can never live up to the bright shadow cast by its absence. Time and distance blur the edges; then suddenly the beloved has arrived, and it's noon with its merciless light, and every spot and pore and wrinkle and bristle stands clear."

— Margaret Atwood, *The Blind Assassin*

"And now you'll be telling stories
 of my coming back
 and they won't be false,
 and they won't be true
 but they'll be real"

— Mary Oliver, *A Thousand Mornings*

Zechariah 1:3 Therefore say to them, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return to Me," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.