

**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.



THIRD SUNDAY OF

Advent

December 15, 2019

Because we put God first, we are dedicated to caring for creation, for human diversity, for the next generations, and for each other.

*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 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.

Parking

You may park right out in front of the church in the 'no parking' area' (only) if you have trouble getting around.

Childcare on Sunday

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

Youth Ed & Nurture

Following the Children's Message all children are invited downstairs to the Youth Ed & Nurture Level to participate in Dwell Kids Class (3rd-8th grade) or Young Children and Worship (K-2nd grade); parents pick up their children there at 11:15am.

Children's Music After Worship

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

Elders in Worship

Past and current leaders called 'elders' walk in together and sit in the front pew. This is to identify them as servants of the church and make it easy to see who you might talk to about the life of our congregation.

Helping Others Focus

It will be easier for God to get through if we silence our cell phones. God can always call you later.

After Worship

Typically, after worship, people stop for a chat and a cookie in Covenant Hall before going to a learning opportunity that lasts until noon. All are welcome.

Open 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.

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 white pew card.



Hearing Assistance

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

Non-Emergency Number

Schenectady Police: 518-630-0911



Third Sunday In Advent

December 15, 2019

*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE

String Ensemble

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Daniel Carlson

The grace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Levering

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING Cheryl Zahner and Vernetta Thuener

Capo 1

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre-para the way of the Lord, and
all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God. Pre -

*HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful

#41

We will sing the verses in this order: 1,3,2

There will be an interlude before the final verse.

*OUR NEED FOR GOD

God of all time, we confess we are stuck in empty patterns of our past. God of the future, we long to embrace new insights, hope, and joy. God of right now, move us beyond petty distractions, and focus us on your presence and purpose in our lives.

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (*unison*)

Gloria, Gloria

#576

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Daniel Carlson

ANTHEM

Adam Lay Ybounden

Robert J. Powel

Adam lay ybounden,
bounden in a bond;
four thousand winter
thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple,
an apple that he took,
as clerkes finden written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,
the apple taken been,
ne had never our lady
a been heavene queen.
Blessed be the time
that apple taken was.
Therefor we moun singen,
Deo gracias! deo gracias!

There is no Rose

Hal H. Hobsen

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu;
Alleluia.

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Paris forma.

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space;
Res miranda.

Then leave we all this worldly mirth
And follow we this joyful birth;
Tranreamus.

FIRST LESSON

James 5:7-10 (pg 231)

Christine Daniels

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

HYMN

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

#1

SECOND LESSON

Matthew 11:2-11 (pg 11)

SERMON

Are You the One, Jesus?

Bill Levering

*HYMN

Comfort, Comfort, You My People

#3

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Andy Chestnut

Christmas Offering: Rotary Mayogou Clean Water Project

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

The Huron Carol

by Jean de Brebeuf c. 1643

arr by Dan Forrest, Jesus Ahatonhia. Gloria.

‘Twas in the moon of wintertime
when all the birds had fled,
That mighty Citchi Manitou (God the
Creator) sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim,
and wand’ring hunters heard the hymn:
“Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born in excelsis gloria”

The earliest moon of wintertime
is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory
on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before Him knelt,
with gifts of fur and beaver pelt,
“Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born in excelsis gloria”

Within a lodge of broken bark
the tender babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin en-wrapp’d
His beauty round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,
the angel song rang loud and high,
“Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born in excelsis gloria”

O children of the forest free,
O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and heav’n
is born this day for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy
who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
“Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born in excelsis gloria”

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

#592

*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

Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming

#48

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

+ + +

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:

Adeline Graham, Peg Norton, Ruth Arthur, Paul L. Abbey, John Young

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.

Music Notes

The Huron Carol, the oldest carol in the Americas, was written about 1642 by Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit missionary. Ensemble musicians today are: Violin I Ann Marie Barker Schwartz, Teresa Norton, Virginia Boyle Traver; Violin II Abby Norton-Levering, Carol Blom; Viola Edith Kliman, Louise Dickinson, Taina Melendez; Cello Cante Yacobellis; Bass Michael Lawrence; Percussion Daniel Gleason; Guest singers: Anastasia Duff, Cathy Roberts, Marjorie Rush, Marrisca Scotti.

First Forum: Christmas Offering

Today's First Forum Andy Chestnut of Mission and Benevolence and Brian Merriam from Rotary who has been doing work in Haiti for decades.

Gifts for the Men of City Mission

This Monday, December 16 is the deadline to bring donated gifts for the Men of City Mission and place under the tree going into Covenant Hall.

Green Steps: Happy Holiday Habits

Wrap the holidays thoughtfully: Get creative and have the wrapping be part of the gift itself, such as using a pretty scarf to wrap presents, or use hand decorated paper or old magazines. Green your holiday by cutting up old Christmas cards as gift tags and re-using ribbons from last season.

Faith Book Shop

Christmas related items in the Shop include two styles of Advent candle holders, candles of the traditional advent colors and candles with a Christmas design. You'll also find small, handmade wreaths, cards depicting FRC in winter, stocking stuffers, children's books and Bill's book, "Travels With Levering."

Offering Envelopes

2020 Offering Envelopes are available in the church office. There are extra available if anyone needs them.

Christmas Flower Delivery - Today

Volunteers are needed today to deliver poinsettia plants to homebound church members. The plants and cards for each recipient are available after service in the Dirck Romeyn room.

The Chrismon Tree In Sanctuary

Chrismon, meaning "symbols of Christ," is a combination of the words "Christ" and "monogram." Chrismons are fashioned from centuries-old Christian symbols, the Bible and church histories using various materials of white and gold to represent majesty and purity. FRC's Chrismons were originally made for annual tree festivals at Schenectady Museum in the 1970s and 80s. When the festivals stopped, Mrs. Harrison Todd brought the beautiful ornament collection to FRC as a donation. Pattern books and instructions are available for making Chrismons or create your own.

Mooncatcher Project Update

A big thank you to all who contributed to the Mooncatcher Project. Our total from dinner attendees and other donations was \$904.

FRC on Festival Tree

At the traditional Stockade Festival of Trees, stop in to see renditions of FRC sanctuaries in the snow by Len Tantillo, Percy Lee, and Kitty Trimarco. The Festival is from Dec 7-22, 10am-5pm.

Nostalgia Night - Dec 29

College aged and slightly-older siblings are gathering for a night of nostalgia and catching up with old friends. There'll be Domino's Pizza, Sardine Hide & Seek, weird group building activities! Spooky Steeple Tour! And perhaps...Special Guest Appearances. Sunday, Dec 29 at 6pm meet in Friendship Hall. Contact Lisa Etkin with questions or suggestions: 1streformedmvc@gmail.com, 518-377-2201x306.

Sunday Volunteers	This Week	Next Week
Bookshop	Martha Winchester	Jane Wilkinson
Candle Lighters	Cheryl Zahner and Vernetta Thuener	Amanda, Bill and Faith Potter
Children & Worship	Jeanette Davidson	Jeanette Davidson
Counting Deacons	Fred Daniels, Carol Troost	Ralph Rosenthal, Gay Doolittle
Dwell Kids Teacher	Dave Pizzolo	Dave Pizzolo
Forum	Christmas Offering, Mayogou Clean Water Project by Andy Chestnut	Christmas Story Telling, Sharing Family Traditions by Joe Doolittle
Jazz Vespers	Peg Delaney, piano; Bill Delaney, bass; Nathan Schied, drums	Azzaam Hameed, solo piano
Kinderwyk	Mary Carlson, Christina Jones	Peter Lion, Natalie Pizzolo
Liturgist	Daniel Carlson	Daniel Carlson
Preacher	Bill Levering	Bill Levering
Processing Elders	Karen Gonda, Christine Daniels, Peggy King, Tom Lindsay, Walt Robb	Darwin Brudos, Gay Doolittle, Phil Falconer, Don & Marilyn Leach, Richard Rose
Reader	Christine Daniels	George Trimarco
Refreshments	Helle Moore, Inge-Lise Pangburn	The Pizzolo Family
Ushers	Del Pierce, Lian Drisgula, Christine Lund, Doug Todd, Tom Zych	Jim & Sharron McCullough, Renate Reeves-Ellington, Bill & Amanda Potter

Alumni Choir

Anyone who has sung in a choir is invited to participate in the 'alumni choir' for the 5pm Christmas Eve Service. Rehearsals are Dec 20 at 5:30pm, Dec 22 at 12pm, Dec 23 at 7pm. If you'd like to receive music in advance, please email 1streformed@gmail.com.

Christmas Offering:

The Matogou community of Carrefour, Haiti gets its water from a contaminated spring. Schenectady's Rotary Club has been bringing small-scale water filtration systems to the Carrefour region for many years. Matogou community leaders asked for a larger scale system that would provide safe water without the need to wait. The Matogou Project was developed to solve this problem, with a well, a pump, a generator and a chlorination system with gravity feed to three kiosks. Schenectady Rotary is seeking to raise funds to make this happen and is reaching out for help. Please give generously to help this community in need.

Narthex Nativity Scenes

Be sure to see the two beautiful settings portraying the birth of Jesus Christ in the narthex windows this Christmas season. The David Coons Van Voast Memorial Crèche is again carefully displayed, along with a wonderful nativity scene designed by Kathy Petersen from her vast collection of miniatures depicting the Holy Land. We are thankful to Holly Van Voast and Kathy Petersen and her family for installing all of the treasured figures and ornaments making up these special panoramas for our viewing enjoyment.



Christmas Eve Tuesday, December 24 Service Schedule

5pmIntergenerational Service

The youth of FRC serve as readers, liturgists, ushers and musicians during this beautiful candlelit service celebrating the birth of Jesus.

8:30pmMusic of the Season

Music of the Season with Harpist Lydia Zotto playing carols with the choir.

9pm ..Carols and Candles Service

Come light a candle and sing "Silent Night" again. This year we are also featuring violinist Ann Marie Barker Schwartz on *The Wexford Carol* joined by Abby Norton Levering and Leonid Polishchuk for the anthem *Saw You Never?*.

11pm Christmas Jazz Vespers

Featuring Max Caplan and Pete Toigo. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated

The sanctuary and chapel is adorned to the glory of God and in loving memory of:

- Margaret (Peg) Shultes from her family
- Dr. Charles Assini and Russell and Alice Jones by the Assini Family
- David by Audrey Bain and Family
- Dick Blackmer and given by his family.
- Our parents from Wayne & Amy Brule
- Mr & Mrs. Richard E. Burgoyne from their family
- Timothy Burgoyne from his family
- Our mothers, Ethel Slabaugh and Priscilla Carlson from Mary & Daniel Carslon
- Parents and siblings by Gay & Joe Doolittle
- William Dotter by his wife, Elsie & children
- Sylvia & Dolph Ebeling, Lorraine Ebling and Elyne Schulte by Scott Ebeling
- Rudolph and Therese Mahlberg, and Paul Erickson, by the Erickson family
- William and Louise Stange and Sam Croce by Marlene Risseeuw and the Erickson family
- Erin Falconer, Raymond & Marion Falconer, Donald & Lois Weidenfeller from Phil, Jane & Trevor Falconer
- Merry Christmas by Marjorie Geiger
- Roy Hjelmar, Sidney White, and Elsie White by the Hjelmar Family
- Scott Jewett by his family
- LeRoy Jewett by his family
- Harold Lapham from his family
- My friend Brenda Spencer from Joan Lindsay
- Robert Matz and Meg Kester by Mary Matz
- Mark McDermott by his wife, Gini
- Rev Margaret "Peg" Miller from her family
- Frederic P and Florence Reimer from Florence Reed
- Rick Reimer from Florence Reed
- Robert E. Reed from Florence Reed and family
- Our parents given by Richard & Kate Rose
- To honor our family from Ellie & Gene Rowland
- Hans and Mary Stern from their Children
- Daniel J. Thuener from Vernetta and family
- Donald Troost from Carol, Deborah & Matt
- Earle and Dena Van Heyningen by daughter Carol Troost
- Claribel & Clarence H Linder Sr. from The Walraven Family
- Ann Walraven from The Walraven Family
- Carolyn Shepherd Welch by the Welch family
- Anne Shepherd Wemple, Robert V. Shepherd and Susan Shepherd by the Welch family
- Palmer V. Welch, Marian A. Welch, Mary C. Welch by the Welch family
- Gene Zeltmann from his family

“Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you.” — Steve Maraboli, *Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience*

“Turn around and believe that the good news that we are loved is better than we ever dared hope, and that to believe in that good news, to live out of it and toward it, to be in love with that good news, is of all glad things in this world the gladdest thing of all. Amen, and come Lord Jesus.” — Frederick Buechner

“The irony is that while God doesn’t need us but still wants us, we desperately need God but don’t really want Him most of the time.” — Francis Chan

“Hungry for love, He looks at you. Thirsty for kindness, He begs of you. Naked for loyalty, He hopes in you. Homeless for shelter in your heart, He asks of you. Will you be that one to Him?” — Mother Teresa, *In the Heart of the World: Thoughts, Stories and Prayers*

“Just keep asking yourself: What would Jesus not do?” — Chuck Palahniuk

“Jesus promised his disciples three things—that they would be completely fearless, absurdly happy, and in constant trouble.” — William Barclay, *The Gospel of Luke*

“There was only one guy in the whole Bible Jesus ever personally promised a place with him in Paradise. Not Peter, not Paul, not any of those guys. He was a convicted thief, being executed. So don't knock the guys on death row. Maybe they know something you don't.” — Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*

“What kind of Christmas present would Jesus ask Santa for?” — Salman Rushdie



Coming Up

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

Sun, Dec 15	9am	Chancel Choir	Sanctuary
	9am	Ukuleles For All Ages	Music Level
	9:45am	Kinderwyk Childcare	Forest Nursery
	10am	Worship	Sanctuary
	10:15am	Dwell Kids' Class	Mountain room
	10:15am	Young Children and Worship	River room
	11:15am	First Forum	Poling Chapel
	11:15am	FRC Orff-estra	Choir room
	11:15am	Christmas Flower Delivery	Dirck Romeyn
	5pm	Jazz Vespers	Covenant Hall
Mon, Dec 16	10:30am	The Glen Eddy Group	Glen Eddy
	6pm	Community Yoga	Covenant Hall
Tue, Dec 17	10am	Horizon's Bible Study	Mohawk – Pres.
	7pm	Writers' Critique Group	Mohawk - Lunn
Wed, Dec 18	9:30am	Kerygma Conversations	Mohawk – Pres.
	11:30am	Wednesday Lunch	Covenant Hall
	11:30am	First Things Volunteers	Mohawk - Lunn
	6pm	Compassionate Dinner	Covenant Hall
	7pm	Contemplative Worship	Poling Chapel
Thu, Dec 19	7:30am	Breakfast Bible Bunch	Mohawk – Lunn
	10am	Stitch Group	Walton room
	6:30pm	Stephen Ministry	Mohawk – Lunn
	7pm	Chancel Choir	Choir room
Fri, Dec 20	5:30pm	Alumni Choir Rehearsal	Poling Chapel
Sun, Dec 22	9am	Chancel Choir	Sanctuary
	9am	Ukuleles For All Ages	Music Level
	9:45am	Kinderwyk Childcare	Forest Nursery
	10am	Worship	Sanctuary
	10:15am	Dwell Kids' Class	Mountain room
	10:15am	Young Children and Worship	River room
	11:15am	First Forum	Poling Chapel
	11:15am	FRC Orff-estra	Choir room
		12pm	Alumni Choir
	5pm	Jazz Vespers	Covenant Hall

FIRST REFORMED CHURCH OF SCHENECTADY

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

THE CONSISTORY

Elders

Del Pierce, Senior Elder
Joanne Arnold, Senior Elder
Karen Gonda
Laura Lee
Brad Lewis
Barbara Mancuso
Liz Mastrianni
Vickie McGowan-Horan
Kate Rose
Kitty Trimarco

Deacons

Sarah Bachorik
Caroline Brooks
Andy Chestnut
Lian Drisgula
Dave Hjelmar
Christina Jones
Kristin Lion
Bill Rochelle
Ralph Rosenthal
Brandon Stabler

Ministers

Bill Levering, Senior Minister
Daniel Carlson, Associate Minister

Other Officers

Catherine Lewis, Treasurer
Kate Rose, Assistant Treasurer
Joanne Bedell, Clerk

