

Welcome to First Reformed Church

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. After service join us in the Dirck Romeyn Room, to the left of the front of the sanctuary, for coffee and refreshments.

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.

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

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 gather in the library immediately following the Children's Message for a story. There will be time to check out books and then they will return to room 20 to meet parents after the service.

Other Sunday's all children 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 on the 2nd floor at the top of the stairs.

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.

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.

After Worship

Typically after worship, people stop for a chat and refreshments in Assembly Hall. Visitors are welcomed and are particularly encouraged to visit the Dirck Romeyn Room to the left of the sanctuary for five or ten minutes.

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.

Service Online

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

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2011
9:40 a.m.

VOLUNTARY

Three Advent Choral-Improvisations

Sigfrid Karg-Elert

1. *Ah, Leave With Us Thy Grace*

2. *All Depends On God's Blessing*

3. *Be Thou in Ernest, O Children of Men*

Improvisation on Wachtet auf (1987)

Paul Manz

10:00 a.m.

+ + + **The Approach to God** + + +

GREETING

Daniel Carlson

The grace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND WORSHIP ORIENTATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Levering

INTROIT

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Picardy

ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING

Cal, Carol & Caroline Welch

We light another candle each week of Advent for the arriving light of the world.

ADVENT SONG

Now We Await Your coming, Lord



Now we a - wait your com - ing, Lord.

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*HYMN #59

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

Christmas

*OUR NEED FOR GOD (*unison*)

Most merciful God, we confess our failure to listen for your arrival and to make ready your way. Our lives have been filled with noise and distraction. We have valued things over people. Quiet us, we pray, and lead us deeper into your holiness. Amen.

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE *Rejoice! Rejoice!*



*AFFIRMATION AND PRAYER 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. Come, Lord Jesus: We are open to your Spirit. We
await your full presence. Our world finds rest in you alone.**

*PASSING THE PEACE

ANTHEM *When God's Time had Ripened* Alfred V. Fedak

When God's time had ripened, Mary's womb bore fruit,
scion of the Godhead, sprung from Jesse's root:
so the True Vine branches from the lily's stem,
the Rose without blemish blooms in Bethlehem.

More than mind can fathom, limit or untwine,
this mysterious yoking, human and divine,
but what reason fetters faith at length unlocks,
and wise hearts discover truth in paradox.

As the bread of heaven, that we might be fed,
chose a manger cradle in the House of Bread,
so has Life Eternal mingled in the womb
with our mortal nature to confound the tomb.

For this swaddled infant in a humble place
holds our hope of glory and our means of grace;
in the Love enfleshed here dawns the world's rebirth,
promise of salvation, pledge of peace on earth.

Carl P. Daw, Jr.

+ + + **The Word of God** + + +

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION Nancy Wainwright
Guide us, O Lord, by your Word and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON *Luke 1:47-55 (page 57)*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:26-38 (page 56)

SERMON

Dimensions of Silence: Awe

Bill Levering

+ + + **The Response to the Word** + + +

*HYMN #48

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Es Ist Ein' Ros'

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *People, Look East*

French Carol, arr. Linda Lamb

Klokken Tower Ringers

*DOXOLOGY #592

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Christmas Offering

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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 #47

Still, Still, Still

Still, Still, Still

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Threefold Amen

Anonymous

*POSTLUDE

Organ Chorale: How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (1951)

Ludwig Lenel

*The congregation may stand

Music Notes

People, Look East (Hymnal pg. 12) invites us to prepare for the crowning of the year as love the guest is on the way. The references to furrow and birds speak to waiting for something that has been well prepared in advance of the event. The stars teach us the need to be watchful in our waiting and preparing. In the fifth verse, angels repeat the message of the prophets that every peak and valley should be stirring with that message, "Love the Lord is on the way".

An interesting aside is that the text was written by Eleanor Farjeon who also wrote the text for *Morning Has Broken*.

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 this congregation who entered eternal rest in previous years about this time:

Robert Brown and Clarence Gillespie.

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.

Chancel Flowers

If you would like to order celebratory or memorial flowers for the chancel, please call the church office. You may send your check for \$30 payable to Chancel Guild, c/o Marlene Risseeuw, 2140 Niskayuna Drive, Niskayuna, NY 12309-4126.

Eternal Rest

Long-time church member, Marguerite Carr, died Saturday, Dec. 10. In the last years of her life Marguerite was physically diminished and at a distance from Schenectady so her attendance at services was quite rare. During those years she regularly received attentive visits from a church member and periodic visits from ministers to share the sacrament of communion. A service was held on Dec. 13.

Chrismon Tree

Please take a moment to stop in the Dirck Romeyn Room to appreciate the Chrismon Tree. The tree was donated this year by the Assini and Welch families in memory of Russell V. Jones, Anne Shepherd Wemple, Robert V. Shepherd, and Susan Shepherd. The Chrismon (Christ and Monograms) ornaments, which depict the principal teachings and work of Jesus, were first created by the women of the church as a study project, and our first tree was made entirely of these Chrismons. Most of our Chrismons were made for a tree in the Schenectady Museum and later given to Mrs. Harrison Todd to present to her church.

Narthex Cases

Take a moment this Christmas to view the displays in the Narthex. *From Advent to Epiphany: May the Joy of the Season be Yours!*, designed and installed by Alida Rice, fills the east case. Nancy Teichner has carefully arranged the David Coons Van Voast Memorial Crèche in the west case. Our thanks to Alida and Nancy.

Envelopes For 2012

Available in the church office.

Post Service Refreshments

We are in need of volunteers to bring in food! It can be cookies, cheese and crackers, fruit, or anything you want. There is a sign-up sheet in Assembly Hall. Please bring your food around 9:30am, unless it is already set up on a platter.

Johnson Library

East side, West side, all around the library this morning you will see the library's formidable Christmas collections displayed for old and young and everyone in-between.

Is there a favorite you can't find? We will order it either for you to enjoy as an item in the library's collection or as a personal copy for you to own. Speak to the person in charge in the library this morning.

Faith Bookshop

There are new contributions to the *Talents for Talents* program in the Bookshop. All are appropriate to the season as gifts or for your own enjoyment: matted photos of FRC, crocheted snowflakes, note cards and CDs. The artisan's name and organization that receives the proceeds are shown with the item. Donated Christmas ornaments are replenished weekly; there are books, too, of course. Stop in, browse and enjoy. The Bookshop will be closed Dec. 25

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 a few copies available in the book shop or call Mary Carlson (346-6416) or Maria

Greskovich (372-9522). Cost \$7 each or 3 for \$20.

Holiday Events

Today: Living Nativity, 6pm

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Services

Family Service, 5pm

Christmas Cantata, 8:30pm

Traditional Service, 9pm

Communion Service, 11pm

Dec. 25: Christmas Day Worship 10am

Living Nativity

This live performance will be held on the church lawn on Sunday Dec. 18 at 6pm. Our very own Senior High Youth Group will act out the story of Jesus' birth, and then we will gather inside for donuts and hot cocoa to celebrate this Christmas season.

Jazz Vespers Every Sunday, 5pm

Today – Peg Delaney, piano, Bill Delaney, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums

Dec. 25 – No Vespers

Jan. 1 – No Vespers

Jan. 8 – Peggy Delaney, piano; Bill Delaney, bass; Tom D'Andrea, drums

Jan. 15 – Nat Phipps, piano; Pete Toigo, bass; Tom, D'Andrea, drums

Kinderwyck

We are looking for helping hands and arms to play with toddlers and rock babies from 9:50-noon on the following dates: Dec. 25 (1 hr only), Jan. 22, Jan 29, and Feb. 26, and March 4.

Please call the church office if you are willing and able. Thank you!

Junior & Senior High Youth Groups

The **JHYG** will meet at 5pm on Sundays (unless otherwise noted) for dinner, games, discussion, and other fun activities. Youth in grades 6-8 are welcome.

The **SHYG** will meet on Sundays at 7pm. All youth in grades 9-12 are welcome, and snacks will be provided.

Today – Living Nativity - Junior High serves hot cocoa and donuts, Senior High performs. Senior High should be at church by 5pm. The Living Nativity starts at 6pm.

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve family service at 5pm. Participants should arrive by 4:15pm for costumes and last minute preparation.

Christmas Offering 2011

Fatigue. It's a word that seems to walk hand in hand with decking the halls, buying the gifts, and attending all the special events that go along with the energetic frenzy that is the Christmas season.

Now think of fatigue in another context: the flood victims of Hurricane Irene. As our lives have continued on, their lives have been tossed into perpetual chaos. Most are still not in their home, while some have no home to rebuild. Some are living with friends or relatives, a precious few have finally received FEMA trailers, and some are living in the upper level of their devastated homes. Finances are stretched very thin; endurance is stretched to the limit.

This year's Christmas Offering is designated for the Schoharie flood victims. They have reached the point where they need financial aid to continue the laborious process of rebuilding their homes and putting their lives back together.

Donor fatigue sets in as the media now reports little on this continuing crisis. The need is as great as ever, however, as finances dwindle under the stress of the last few months. Please make

checks out to First Reformed Church **except** if your donations are eligible for GE matching funds, in which case you should make out your check to Schoharie Recovery (P.O. Box 111, Schoharie, NY 12157). Schoharie Recovery has now officially been added to the list of non-profit organizations eligible for GE matching funds.

Christmas Eve Cookies

Celebrate the season by meeting up with friends and family after the 9pm service on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24. Refreshments and refreshing good cheer will greet you all in Assembly Hall. If you are interested in volunteering to bring cookies, please call Heather Chestnut at 346-7887.

Wednesday Dialog – December 21

After enjoying a tasty lunch (\$4) at noon, listen to a talk on *Finiteness and the Future* presented by George Wise.

Why did world population growth and economic growth accelerate in the couple of hundred years leading up to 2000AD? Can population growth and economic growth continue at rates to which people in the developed world have become accustomed? What are the fundamental constraints on population and economic growth? This talk will address these questions. For further information about George Wise please visit our website.

Faith with a Twist - December 22

This group, geared toward young adults in their 20s and 30s, meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 7pm at the Van Dyck Restaurant for casual, open-minded conversation about faith, spirituality, God, and life. Participants need not be church

members; we encourage people from a variety of backgrounds to attend and enliven our discussion! Please contact Stacey Midge if you have questions.

Stitch Group

There will not be any Stitch Group in the Poling Conference room on Thursday, Dec. 23 or 29. Our next stitch day will be Thursday, Jan. 5.

A Place For Jazz

Swingtime Jazz Society and FRC of Schenectady proudly presents The Lee Shaw Trio with Rich Syracuse (bass) and Jeff Siegel (drums) Tuesday, Dec. 27 at 7:30pm.

Epiphany Cake Bakers Needed

On Wednesday, January 4 at 7pm we'll be baking delicious La Galette des Rois cakes in the Friendship Hall kitchen in preparation for the Epiphany Party (see below). If you're interested in helping, call Heather Chestnut (346-7887).

Epiphany Eve Party January 5

Heather and Andy Chestnut will host our annual celebration of Christ's manifestation to the Magi on Thursday, Jan. 5, 6-8:30pm at their home, 1286 Wendell Ave. Everyone is invited: young, old, family, friends, and strangers. We'll feast together, sing a few carols, recall the story, process with the Magi, share in the house blessing, and gather around the blazing bonfire. Traditional Gallet Epiphany cakes will be provided. All attending should bring a favorite appetizer and beverage to share. Contact Heather Chestnut (346-7887) or Daniel Carlson if you have any questions. A signup sheet is posted in Assembly Hall for

those who wish to commit ahead. Follow that star!

Purls of Wisdom

We will resume meetings on Thursday Jan. 12. Have a wonderful Holiday!

Group V

There will not be any meeting in Jan. We will resume on Monday, Feb. 6. Details will be published in the January bulletins.

Climate Change: Local and Global

Ward Stone noted environmental conservationist, will speak here at the First Reformed Church on Friday, Jan. 13 at 7pm. The topic is *climate change, the impact on people and wildlife worldwide and locally*. This event, arranged by the Creation Care Committee, is free and open to the public; question and discussions will follow the presentation.

Midnight Run

Back by popular demand! On Friday, Feb. 3, we will be taking a van load of people, clothes, food, and hygiene items to Manhattan to distribute to homeless people. This has been a very powerful experience for those who have gone in the past. If you want to go on the run, please talk to Stacey Midge. We are also collecting donations of socks, blankets, hygiene items, and sweatshirts and hoodies, especially in larger men's sizes. Please drop off your donations in Stacey's office.

Adult Winterfest February 4

Save the date for this delightful afternoon/evening fellowship gathering to be held again at Doug Todd's home in Galway. Details of this outdoor-indoor event will be published in January.

Bulletin Pictures

We have been featuring inspirational pictures on the cover of our bulletins lately. If you have one that you would like to suggest or one you have taken, send it to blevering@gmail.com.

	This Sunday	Next Sunday
Counting Deacons	Lisa Etkin, Catherine Lewis	Joan Lindsay, Becky Grande
Faith Bookshop	Nancy Wainwright	Closed
First Forum	Bill Levering & backup singers lead congregation in caroling	Coffee & Conversation
Flower Delivery	Chancel Guild	Chancel Guild
Kinderwyck	Sarah Bachorik, Alida Rice	Sarah Bachorik
Liturgist	Daniel Carlson	Daniel Carlson
Preacher	Bill Levering	Bill Levering
Procession Elders	Caroline Brooks, William Brooks, Bob Beadle, Christine Daniels, Gay Doolittle, Del Pierce	Mary Jewett, Darwin Brudos, Art Casey
Reader	Nancy Wainwright	Catherine deSalle
Refreshments	Ann Middleton	Alida Rice, Nancy Martin
Ushers	Earl Wainwright (head usher), Kip Arnold, Joanne Arnold, Philip Yourno, William Faulkner, Louis Acquasanta	Harlene Bachorik (head usher), Nicholas Blinckmann, Louis Acquasanta, Jeff Cox, William Faulkner, Art Shultes

Calendar for the Week of December 18, 2011

Sunday Dec. 18	9:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 11:15 a.m. 12:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir, Choir Room High School Choir, Room 20 Worship, Sanctuary Forum, Assembly Hall Kirk Ringers, Room 20 Creation Care Committee, Walton Conf. Room Youth Orchestra, Sanctuary Jazz Vespers, Poling Chapel JH & SHYG, Prepare for Living Nativity Living Nativity, Outside Front Lawn
Monday Dec. 19	9:00 a.m.	Mens Newsgroup, Poling Conference Room
Tuesday Dec. 20	10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer, Dykstra Chapel Support & Care, Poling Conference Room
Wednesday Dec. 21	12:00 p.m.	Wednesday Dialog, Assembly Hall
Thursday Dec. 22	7:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Breakfast Bible Bunch, Walton Conference Room Stitch Group, Poling Conference Room Boy Scouts, Assembly Hall Chancel Choir, Choir room
Saturday Christmas Eve Dec. 24	5:00 p.m. 8:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.	Family Service, Sanctuary Christmas Cantata, Sanctuary Traditional Service, Sanctuary Communion Service, Sanctuary
Sunday Christmas Day Dec. 25	10:00 a.m.	Worship, Sanctuary

First Reformed Church

Schenectady, New York

THE CONSISTORY

Bill Levering, Senior Minister
Daniel Carlson, Associate Minister
Stacey Midge, Minister of Mission, Outreach, and Youth
Caroline Brooks, Linda Ward, Senior Elders
Fred H. Daniels, Treasurer
Joan Lindsay, Clerk

ELDERS

Carolyn Jones-Assini
Veronica Bartholic
Caroline Brooks
William Brooks
Daniel Ipsen
Mary Jewett
Keith Muse
Katherine Trimarco
Linda Ward
Eugene Zeltmann

MISSIONERS

Penny Holmes
Lynne Gilgore
Art Hudak

DEACONS

Darwin Brudos
Thomas Burgoyne
Rachael Cox
Richard Davis
Lisa Etkin
Leah Kidwell-Fernandes
Claire Hughes
Joan Lindsay
Bill Martin
Caroline Welch

COVENANTERS

Senad Ademaj
Chris Henry
Erin Winn
Kseniya Zhuzha

CHURCH STAFF

Jamie Ipsen, Director of Children's Ministry
Julie Panke, Director of Music
Charles Moose, Organist
Jamie Ipsen, Director of Children's Music
Judy Moore, Director of Klokken Tower Rings
Sarah Bachorik, Director of Kinderwyk
Heather Chestnut, Hospitality Coordinator
Heather Scribner, Office Administrator
Frank Montalvo, Bookkeeper
Tani Breitenbach, Office Assistant
Lyn Gordon, Sunday Receptionist
Gary Nelson, Facility Supervisor
John Phillips, Sexton

***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.



Photo by Joan Lindsay; Glacier Bay, Alaska

December 18, 2011

Gathering silence
converges holiness
into our noisy hearts

First Reformed Church

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