

**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.



March 22, 2015

First Reformed Church
8 North Church Street
Schenectady, New York 12305
(518) 377-2201 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.

Non Emergency Number

Schenectady Police: 518-382-5200

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; a baby changing station is in the women's bathroom.

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 hearing reinforcement units that will make it easier to hear. Ask an usher.

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

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 after worship on the 2nd floor at the top of the stairs.

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 music and crafts.

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 refreshments in Assembly Hall before going to a learning opportunity that lasts until noon. Visitors are welcome to join in.

Service Online

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

Lost and Found Basket

We have a lost and found basket in the Narthex at the Union St. entrance of the church. If you have lost/misplaced an item at church, please check there.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2015

*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE Olivia Mancuso, piano

10:00 a.m.

GREETING Daniel Carlson

The grace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ORIENTATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

INTROIT *Turn Unto the Lord* Eric Thiman

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #366

Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me

*OUR NEED FOR GOD

Beginning with prayerful silence.

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

(Lord have mercy)

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*unison*)

(from the United Church of Canada)

**We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God: who has created and is
creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word
made flesh, to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God. We are called to be the
Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live**

**with respect in Creation, to love and serve
others, to seek justice and resist evil, to
proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our
judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life
beyond death, God is with us. We are not
alone. Thanks be to God.**

*PASSING THE PEACE

ANTHEM

Land of Rest
Arr. Robert Powell

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

Lord, who throughout these forty days
for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with thee to mourn out sins
and close by thee to stay.

As thou with Satan didst contend,
and didst the victory win,
O give us strength in thee to fight,
in thee to conquer sin.

As thou didst hunger bear, and thirst,
so teach us, gracious Lord,
to die to self, and chiefly live
by thy most holy word.

And through these days of penitence,
and through thy passiontide,
yea, evermore in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life
of suffering over past,
an Easter of unending joy
we may attain at last.

Claudia Hernaman (1838-98)

FIRST LESSON Norma Brown

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

Amen. Jeremiah 31:31-34 (*page 725*)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SECOND LESSON John 12:20-33 (*page 106*)

SERMON *Fear of Death, Promise of Life*

*HYMN *Beneath the Cross of Jesus* #92

OFFERING

OFFERTORY Thursday Belles
Shalom Chaverim arr. Sondra Tucker

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

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Fostering Hope Meredith Osta

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND
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.

*RECESSIONAL HYMN #384
O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE Israeli
Shalom, Chaverim!

POSTLUDE Sicilian Mariners
Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing

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 FRC & UPC who entered eternal rest in previous years about this time:

Sylvia Ebeling, Leroy Jewett

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.

In Memoriam

The chancel flowers today are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God in loving memory of LeRoy Jewett by his family.

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, Olivia Mancuso 381-8860, or Joe Doolittle 384-1700.

Today: Mission Updates - Rev. Stacey Midge
March 29: Covenanters wrap up - Claudette, Hannah, Kendra & Kelsey
April 5: Easter Reception in Friendship Hall

Jazz Vespers Every Sunday ~ 5pm

Today: Tim Olsen, piano
March 29: Mike Lamkin, piano
April 5, Jazz Appreciation Month: Nat Phipps, piano; Pete Toigo, bass, Tom D'Andrea/Tim Coakley, drums, Ben O'Shea, trombone
April 12: Dave Gleason, piano; Pete Toigo, bass; TD'A/TC, drums; Steve Lambert, flugelhorn

Youth Activities

Youth group will meet every Sunday at 5pm for dinner, discussion, games, etc. All youth in grades 6 – 12 are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Stacey.

Today: Mission Shareholders Dinner at 6pm (youth should arrive at 4 to help set up)
March 29: Regular Meeting

Today ~ First Futures Building Campaign

Each of us would probably agree that our faith walk grows deeper because of the fellowship we all enjoy at FRC. Can we improve our building to improve our fellowship experience? Is there a better space we can use for our second hour? Is there a better way to organize our spaces so that our time spent together is richer? If you have thoughts or observations about fellowship in our building you can share them with Nancy Davidson, Co-chair of the Connecting with Each Other Committee for the First Futures Building Campaign. Find her in the Dirk Romeyn room right after worship today.

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 check payable to Chancel Guild, c/o Marlene Risseuw, 2140 Niskayuna Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309.

Chancel Memorial Flowers for Easter

Each Easter, members of Chancel Guild adorn our sanctuary with beautiful flowers. Your family can contribute to remember a loved one or honor a loved one. Please send your suggested donation of \$20 to Chancel Guild c/o Marlene Risseuw, 2140 Niskayuna Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309 **and** contact the church office with the name of the person the flowers are in honor or memory of. Even if you have donated in previous years, please place an order for 2015 by Monday March 30.

Horizons Bible Study

We will be doing a study of the first half of the book of Psalms (Psalms 1-72). Anyone interested is welcome to join us Tuesdays at 10am.

Post-Service Refreshments, Please!

Easter Reception...in two weeks!

We need your light refreshments or help with set up and clean up to make our Easter reception a success. Please contact Karen the Taart Baas, 607-725-4521 or gonda6@aol.com, to participate. Thank you!

Faith Bookshop

New in the Bookshop: mealtime prayer cubes with a different grace on each side. Large and easy to read, they make a nice addition to a family table during Lent, or anytime. Smaller, help-me-be-a-good-friend prayer cubes are also available.

Easter Flowers Delivery

We need volunteers on Easter Sunday, April 5, to deliver Easter flowers to recently-bereaved and home-bound church members. The flowers, an addressed card for each recipient, and a Sunday bulletin will be available for pick up after the service. Members of the Support and Care Committee will be present to assist. Please plan now on participating in this ministry by extending a lovely symbol of God's faithfulness!

Church Directory Photos

Ralph Rosenthal will continue to take pictures for our next church directory every Sunday after worship in the Heritage room (off the Dirck Romeyn Room). No appointment necessary.

FRC Fellowship Luncheon

Mark your calendars now for Friday, April 17 at 11:45am. Bring a dish to share. Beverage and dessert will be provided. Please sign up in Assembly Hall. Your hosts will be Liz Mastrianni, Frank Ralbovsky, Amy Brule and Wayne Brule. Come for the best meal in town and usher in SPRING with beautiful photos and poetry.

Evening Circle

Evening Circle will meet at Ellie Rowland's home on the 8th of April at 7:00. Her address is 216 Lois Lane, Niskayuna. All women are invited.

Easter Offering

Great Hour of Sharing to the Presbyterian Church-USA

One of many blessings of our combined congregations and ministry is the donation of the offering for One Great Hour of Sharing to the Presbyterian Church-USA. Although this offering will continue to be directed to PC-USA, this is part of a wider mission supported by Christians around the nation. It all began in 1949 with a radio broadcast where Protestant churches made appeals for relief and reconstruction in areas devastated by World War II, and it has developed over the decades into a truly ecumenical effort to share Christ's love to those in need.

Church School

Lent is here. The kids will tell you "It's those purple weeks when we get ready for Easter". It is the perfect time for us to try something a little different in church school! For each of the six Sundays in Lent our children will participate in a community service project (or other meaningful project) during the regular church school time. Activities range from making blankets to a writer's workshop! (See our list at the bottom of the stairs.) Our projects will help us give and grow in Christ like ways – not only for six weeks but hopefully overflowing into lifetimes. Feel free to stop in Room 20 any Sunday and lend a hand.

Sunday Volunteers	This Sunday	Next Sunday
Counting Deacons	Claire Hughes and Doug Todd	Fred Daniels and Dave Hjelmar
Greeters	Brad and Cathy Lewis	Jeanette and Don Davidson
Flower Delivery	Kay Opdyke, Cynthia Hamilton	Dick Davis, Virginia McDermott
Faith Bookshop	Linda Witkowski	Bill Clock
Liturgist	Daniel Carlson	Daniel Carlson
Preacher	Stacey Midge	Bill Levering
Processing Elders	Jeanne Shoulder, Christine Daniels, Del Pierce, George Davidson, Jerry Griggs, Keith Muse, Maria Todd, Bob Beadle	Peggy King, Mary Jewett, Darwin Brudos, Arend Van der Veen, Emile Walraven, Linda Witkowski, Birdie Blackmer, Bill Rochelle
Reader	Norma Brown	George Trimarco
Refreshments	Gay Doolittle & Joan Crandall	
Ushers	Del Pierce (head usher), Karen Dickson, Rob Dickson, Michael Horan, Vickie McGowan-Horan, Doug Todd, Carol Troost	Earl Wainwright (head usher), Hendrick and Joanne Arnold, Dick Davis, Adam Kerwin, George Davidson

2015 Lenten Schedule

Wednesdays, Through March 25

6pm ~ Dinner

7pm ~ Lenten Programs

8pm ~ Lenten Evening Worship

Programs

For this year's journey towards Easter the Adult Education and Nurture Committee is sponsoring five different programs, weekly worship services and dinners.

First Reformed Church and the Civil War

Presented by the Archives and Historical Concerns Committee and guest speakers.

Mar 25 The Sermon that called Schenectady Together at the end of the Civil War;
Speaker Dale Brown

What's Your Story? Everyone has significant life stories to share, and doing so with the context of a small group committed to gently holding such stories in the light of God's love enables us to come to better know and appreciate others and ourselves. Led by Norma Brown.

God in the News A drop-in class reviewing the headlines of the week and discussing our responses.

Lights, Camera, Action! Kids in grades K-12 are invited to join the FRC Productions team to create and film the story of Jonah.

Prayer Shawls Ministry Do you knit or crochet? Or would you like to learn? Please join us to make a prayer shawl to share with someone in need of prayer, attention and warmth!

Exploring Prayer Learn and share about our experience of God. Led by Rev. Annie Riley, Pastor of the State Street Presbyterian Church.

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 29 – 10am

This celebration of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem marks the beginning of Holy Week. Music on this joyous day will feature youth and children.

Maundy Thursday, April 2 – 7:30pm

A service of darkening on Maundy Thursday in which the Lord's Supper is celebrated; then a series of readings and a darkening sanctuary create a somber and reflective remembrance of the trials of Jesus.

Good Friday, April 3 – 12pm

At noon in our Sanctuary gospel readers, intercessors, and the Chancel Choir help lead this service amidst the presence of a rugged cross.

Easter, April 5 – 10am

On Easter Sunday join us for the grand celebration of Easter Joy including the *Hallelujah Chorus*. Music for Easter Sunday will include a full complement of voices and instruments including brass quartet, timpani. Anthems will be *Now Christ is Risen* by J.S. Bach and *Begin the Song of Glory Now* by Alfred Fedak. As is our tradition we will invite people to join the choir for the *Hallelujah Chorus*. This year we will have a special rehearsal at 9:40 in the Sanctuary for those wish to brush up a bit first.

Our annual **ON THE LAWN EASTER EGG HUNT** will be held during regular church school. Children in grades K-5 are welcome to hunt eggs while children in grades 6-12 are needed to hide eggs. All will gather in Room 20 after the Children's Message. We will return there after the hunt to meet parents.

Sunday, March 22

9:00 am Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 10:00 am Worship
 10:15 am Church School K-5
 11:15 am Forum
 11:15 am Kirk Ringers
 11:15 am First Futures
 5:00 pm Jazz Vespers
 5:00 pm Youth Group

Monday, March 23

9:00 am Mens Newsgroup
 6:15 pm Yoga
 7:00 pm Klokken Ringers
 7:00 pm Creation Care

Tuesday, March 24

10:00 am Horizon Bible Study
 10:00 am Morning Prayer

Wednesday, March 25

9:30 am Kerygma
 1:00 pm Thursday Bells
 6:00 pm Lenten Dinners
 7:00 pm Lenten Program
 7:00 pm Writers Group
 8:00 pm Lenten Evening Worship

Thursday, March 26

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

Friday, March 27**Saturday, March 28****Palm Sunday, March 29**

9:00 am Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 10:00 am Worship
 10:15 am Church School K-5
 11:15 am Forum
 11:15 am Kirk Ringers
 11:15 am First Futures
 5:00 pm Jazz Vespers
 5:00 pm Youth Group

“No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.”

-Steve Jobs

“When your time comes to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song, and die like a hero going home.”

-Tecumseh

“While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die.”

-Leonardo da Vinci

“It is not the end of the physical body that should worry us. Rather, our concern must be to live while we're alive - to release our inner selves from the spiritual death that comes with living behind a facade designed to conform to external definitions of who and what we are.”

-Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

“The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time.”

-Mark Twain

“Only after disaster can we be resurrected.”

- Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*

“If you live in the dark a long time and the sun comes out, you do not cross into it whistling. There's an initial uprush of relief at first, then-for me, anyway- a profound dislocation. My old assumptions about how the world works are buried, yet my new ones aren't yet operational. There's been a death of sorts, but without a few days in hell, no resurrection is possible.”

- Mary Karr, *Lit*