

**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.

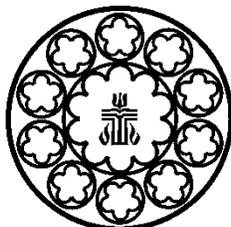
It shall be our aim to bring joy to little children, instruction and high ideals to youth, inspiration to men and women in the midst of life, and comfort to those in life's later years; and to labor together for the betterment of humankind.

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.



February 7, 2016



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. 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 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.

Transfiguration Sunday

February 7, 2016

*The congregation may stand.

PRELUDE

Eric Marczak
Dawn Standing Woman

The meaning of "all my relations"

Wichita (water song)

Ohen:ton Karihwaterkwen

(The words that come before all others)

10:00 a.m.

GREETING

Stacey Midge

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ORIENTATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bill Levering

INTROIT

Psalm 122:1

Franklin G'vnn

* HYMN

Lord Most High

**From the end of the earth, (echo)
from the depths of the sea, (echo)
from the heights of the heavens (echo)
your name be praised**

**From the hearts of the weak, (echo)
from the shouts of the strong, (echo)
from the lips of all people (echo)
this song we raise, Lord.**

(Chorus)

*Throughout the endless ages
you will be crowned with praises,
Lord Most High.*

*Exalted in every nation,
sovereign of all creation,
Lord Most High, be magnified.*

* OUR NEED FOR GOD (unison)

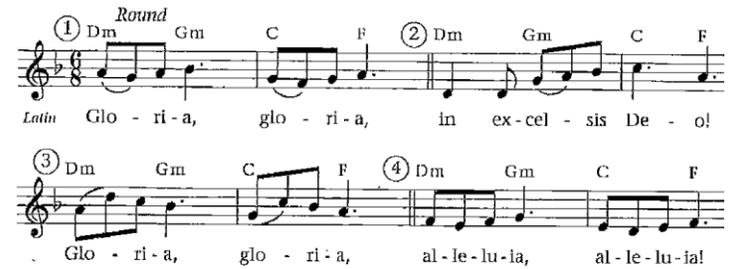
O God, of darkness and light, help us, we pray. We have failed to connect with the suffering of those who live in the shadows. We have not admitted to our own gloating or gloom. As light dawns on the world in

this new year, lead us out of the gloaming into the grace of sharing our lives, whatever they may be, with each other, and with you.

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

Gloria, Gloria



Latin 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 (unison)

from Our Song of Hope

Our only hope is Jesus Christ.

After we refused to live in the image of

God, He was born of the virgin Mary,

sharing our genes and instincts,

entering our culture, speaking our

language, fulfilling the law of our God.

Being united to Christ's humanity,

we know ourselves when we rest in Him.

*PASSING THE PEACE

ANTHEM

Otsitsya (flower)

Eric Marczak

FIRST LESSON

Carol Troost

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

Amen.

Exodus 34:29-35 (pg 81)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE and

MISSION TRIP COMMISSIONING

Today we commit to partnering with God

and you, our mission team, to reveal the

good news and hope of Jesus Christ. We

will wear the mission trip bracelets with

you as a sign of our support and prayer.

We will pray for you, support you, love

you, and eagerly await your return!

SECOND LESSON

Luke 9:28-43a (pg 69)

SERMON

Bill Levering

The Unspoken History

*HYMN *The Church's One Foundation* #442

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

In This Place

Donna Butler

In this place we honor all the spirits
who dreamed this sacred space,
Reaching out and reaching in
to share the gift of faith.
Ev'ry soul is welcome
in this covenant of grace.
Beloved child of God,
join our table, take your place.

It was only brick and stone
when I first walked through the door,
but something stirred my spirit here
and now it's so much more.
Our hearts and doors stand open,
surely God is in this place.
May the light of loving kindness
shine from each and ev'ry face,
in this place.

In this place we gather
to soar on hope and awe.
With your wisdom, clear our vision,
help us face our flaws.
Equip us with a growing
understanding of your grace.
Then, send us out to those
in need of your embrace.

What is the future?
What are we called to do?
We're filled with possibility
because we follow you.

*DOXOLOGY #592

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

COMMUNION PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

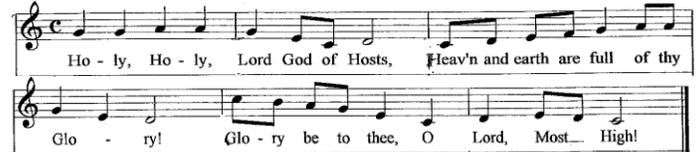
Lift up your hearts.

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 (*sung in unison*) Carl Steubing



COMMUNION

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 *Be Thou My Vision* #339

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Threefold Amen

Dale Wood

POSTLUDE

Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing

Sicilian Mariners

+ + +

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:

*Janet Schwem, Janice Flom, Raymond Fisher,
Janet Gardner, Philip Mathews, Lois Joyce
Berner Mix, Esther Langworthy, Myrtle Wilson*

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 Janet Gardner, by her husband Richard Gardner.

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 Risseuw, 2140 Niskayuna Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309.

Music Notes

Eric Marczak wrote today's Anthem in honor of the recent canonization (2012) of Kateri Tekakwitha by the Catholic church. Kateri, baptized at age 20 as Catherine and informally known as Lily of the Mohawks, was an Algonquin–Mohawk laywoman. She is the patroness of ecology and the environment, people in exile, and Native Americans. Kateri had smallpox as a child and was not in good health much of the time. She died at age 24 in 1680, the same year our church was founded.

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Jazz Vespers Every Sunday ~ 5:00 pm

Today: Skip Parson's Riverboat Jazz Band

Feb 14: Nat Phipps Trio

Feb 21: Peg Delaney Trio

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: Heritage Sunday

Charting our Historical Voyage

Caroline Welch, Dale Brown, and James Gonda as Rev. William E. Griffis

Feb 14: Schenectady, Mayor Gary McCarthy

Feb 21: Basic Climate Science, Phil Falconer

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: Parents/participants will meet briefly after worship. There will be no 5pm meeting on this date.

Feb 14-21 Mission Trip no Youth Group Mtgs.

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.

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

We all have something to offer: a talent, a life experience, a sport, or simply time. Our children need all of us. You can talk to me about your ideas at coffee hour most Sundays. You can also reach me at blytheg.rn@gmail.com.

We Would Love Your Help

Please sign up to host February post-service refreshments. Thank you.

New Member Class – TODAY

Dr. Levering leads a membership meeting which 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.

Faith Bookshop

In recognition of Heritage Month (Feb.), we have reduced the price of small framed pictures of First Reformed Church to \$12, plus tax, and are offering note cards featuring the stained glass windows in Poling Chapel at no charge.

Stitch Group

Our church PHD* stitch group meets most every Thursday, in Poling Conference room. Work on whatever project you have; finish something old, or make something new. For more info, contact Joan Lindsay, 399-3153. *Projects Half Done.

Horizons Bible Study

We meet every Tuesday at 10am in the Poling Conf. room. The study on Luke's gospel continues through March 1. Study guides are \$10, payable to Peg Miller. All are welcome.

Tuesday Evening Bible Study

Hope to see you at the new Bible Study on Tuesday evenings at 7pm led by Paige Convis in Room 22. We are beginning in the book of Job.

Prayer Shawl Knit Group

We meet on the 4th Thursday of the month at 10am in the home of Ronnie Bartholic, 2305 Almeria Road.

Heritage Sunday is TODAY

Caroline Welch will host "Charting our Historical Voyage" in Poling Chapel during First Forum. Two speakers will be featured: Dale Brown will give a PowerPoint presentation on our six different church buildings since 1680, and James Gonda, in period costume, will recite an abridged version of the "Historical Sermon" once given by the Rev. William Elliot Griffis to celebrate our 200th anniversary. Items from our historical collection will be on display.

Special Post Service Treats - TODAY

The Justice Action Council is pleased to share some biscotti with you this morning. This is in honor of our youth mission trip to Palermo, Italy. Biscotti was used by Roman travelers in the first century. It was a convenient food that lasted the whole journey without spoiling. Please remember our travelers in your prayers and consider making a donation to support their trip.

SICM "Souper" Bowl Fund Drive – TODAY

100% of the monies raised from this drive will be used to help the SICM Emergency Food Pantry feed those who are hungry throughout Schenectady County. There will be "Souper" Bowl canisters around the church today for your contributions. *Checks made payable to SICM with Souper Bowl in memo line please.*

A Note on Stewardship

Today we remember the Transfiguration, when God proclaims to Jesus and the disciples "This is my Son, my chosen, listen to him!" Jesus is affirmed by God. Each Sunday at FRC we are affirmed as beloved children of God. Your generous gifts of time, ability, and money make this affirmation possible both within and outside these walls. Thank you.

Ash Wednesday – February 10

We usher in the season of Lent on Feb. 10 with our annual Ash Wednesday service, held at 7pm in Poling Chapel. This family-friendly service will include simple music, prayers, and marking our foreheads with ashes. A simple but sustaining supper will be served at 6pm in Assembly Hall.

The Short-Short Writing Group – Feb. 10

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.

Kent Busman at WORD Service February 12

Kent Busman, Lyn Gordon, Kathy and Rudy Petersen, Bill and Abby, and Paige will tell stories of **patience** or lack thereof at our February WORD service. Avery will hold forth on the piano. 7pm. Poling Chapel.

Tuesday Ladies – February 16

Meetings are every third Tuesday of the month in the home of Connie Young, 1400 Keyes Avenue. Please call Connie at 393-7061 if you have any questions or for more info.

First Futures Feedback Session – Feb. 28

Our Children's Church Experience

Do you have concerns or are you excited about the future of our children's programs with respect to the building campaign? Come share your thoughts with the Youth Ed committee right after worship in Poling Conference Room.

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

Our fourth meeting is Sunday, **February 28**, at noon on the Mezzanine. We will finish up the book, covering chapters 5 & 6. Contact either Mary Alice Jewett or Jeanne Shoulder with any questions. Lunch will be provided.

Mission Shares

Maybe we can't all go to Italy, but we can all be part of supporting the Youth Group as they travel to Palermo to work with immigrant and refugee populations, in partnership with the Waldensian Church and RCA missionaries JJ and Tim TenClay. Mission Shares are \$25 each. With each mission share purchased, you will receive a ticket to our annual Mission Shareholders' Dinner, where the youth will tell about their experiences in Italy. This year, for the first time, you will also receive a bracelet - the same as those that will be given to the youth today when they are commissioned -to remind you to pray for our youth during their trip.

Kids Cooking is Back!

Wednesdays 4-5pm on school days at State Street Presbyterian Church. Adult help needed. This is a mission supported by our church. Contact Jeanette Davidson at 393-1898 for details.

SICM Food Pantry Needs Volunteers

Can you help?!? The SICM food pantry is looking for volunteers who are able to commit to helping at the pantry 1 day a week or every other week from 9am to 12pm to help distribute groceries to our pantry guests. Volunteering for the pantry is a great way to serve your community and to spend time with a fun group of people. Please contact Shelly Ford 346-4445 or sford@sicm.us or Ellie Rowland 250-4302 for more information on this and other volunteer opportunities at the SICM food pantry.

Call for Submissions

The Beverwyck Anthology is now accepting submissions for its March 2016 issue. The deadline is February 29. Submissions should be appropriate for a church publication. Please email submissions to Rudy and Kathy Petersen, Editors-in-Chief, at thebeverwyck@gmail.com.

Fellowship Luncheon Program Change

Join us on Friday, **February 26** at 11:30am in Assembly Hall. We are so pleased that Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill, producing Artistic Director of Capital Repertory Theatre, will be sharing what is planned for the 2016-2017 Cap Rep Season. She will also be interpreting the just announced cross-over subscriptions with Proctor's. Maggie has been at the helm of Cap Rep for the past 20 years and will talk about how Cap Rep's affiliation with Proctor's is creating a new model for the development of professional theatre in the Capital Area. Our hostesses are Peg Miller and Carol Troost. Jim Miller has arranged the program.

Please come, bring a dish to share and enjoy our special program! Oh, and do bring a friend. Sign-up in Assembly Hall or call Sally Bestgen at 346-0304 or Amy Brule at 785-8201.

Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday, February 10

6pm ~ Dinner

7pm ~ Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesdays, February 17 – March 16

6pm ~ Dinner

7pm ~ Lenten Programs

8pm ~ Lenten Evening Worship

Dinner

Dinners will be simple-but-hearty meals with provisions for vegetarian and vegan diners. To help cover the cost of the meal a free will offering, with the suggested amount of \$5 per person, will be collected.

Programs

To begin our spiritual journey to Easter Sunday on March 27 the Adult Education and Nurture Committee will be sponsoring three group programs, weekly worship services, and dinners.

Activities for children will be provided by the Youth Education and Nurture Committee.

Childcare will be available in Kinderwyk.

Lenten Evening Worship

Following class and before heading home, join others for an abbreviated service of song, communion, and prayers.

Additional Ash Wednesday Service at Union

Campus Protestant Ministries is hosting an Ash Wednesday Service at 1:15pm on February 10 in Reamer Campus Center in the Prayer and Meditation Room. Join us for prayer, communion and the imposition of ashes.



Jesus in Jerusalem

A book study led by Covenanter and Pastoral Intern, Paige Convis, *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Final Days in Jerusalem*. Books available for sale (\$11) at Ash Wednesday Dinner and in the Faith Bookshop.

Science and Religion

FRC member Norm Kuchar will speak about:

Feb. 17: *Church & Galileo*

Feb. 24: *Church & Darwin*

History Class

Presented by the Archives & Historical Concerns Committee. Charting Our Historical Voyage; Five Notable Ministers of our Congregation.

Feb 17: Paul Gorgen, a local researcher will speak about our 2nd minister, Domini Bernardus Freerman, in a presentation *Mohawks of Schenectady: First Nation, First Families – Members of First Reformed*.

Feb. 24: Joe Doolittle will tell of our 7th minister, Domini Dirck Romeyn, in *Frontier Collaborator – Forming a New Nation*.

Lenten Series For Kids

Join the Wonderful Wednesday Wackers in the music office after dinner each Wednesday during Lent. Adam Mason and Jamie Ipsen will be teaching the group rhythms, riffs, and improvs using the Boomwackers and Orff instruments. They hope to perform several spiritual and contemporary songs at the completion of the series. Regular attendance is encouraged but not mandatory. No musical experience is needed.

Lenten Volunteers Needed

Two or three people are needed to set tables on Wednesday afternoons. Three or four people are needed for clean up after the dinners. We also need people to help prepare food. This can be done at home and at least part of the cost of the food will be reimbursed from the offering. If you can help, please contact Marilyn Leach at 374-1022 or marilyn.leach64@gmail.com.

Sunday, February 7 - Heritage Sunday

- 10:00 am Worship/Communion
- 10:15 am Church School K-5
- 11:00 am Refreshments
- 11:15 am First Forum
- 11:15 am Kirk Ringers & Singers
- 3:00 pm New Member Class
- 5:00 pm Mardi Gras Jazz Vespers

Monday, February 8

- 9:00 am Men's Newsgroup
- 7:00 pm Klokken Tower Ringers

Tuesday, February 9

- 10:00 am Morning Prayer
- 10:00 am Horizons Bible Study
- 6:30 pm Standing Committees
- 7:00 pm Evening Bible Study
- 7:30 pm Consistory

Wednesday, February 10

- 9:30 am Kerygma Conversations
- 1:00 pm Thursday Belles
- 1:00 pm Archives

Wednesday, February 10, continued

- 2:00 pm Staff Meeting
- 1:15 pm Ash Wednesday Service at Union
- 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Dinner
- 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service
- 7:00 pm The Short-short Writing Group

Thursday, February 11

- 7:30 am Breakfast Bible Bunch
- 10:00 am Stitch Group
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, February 12

- 7:00 pm WORD Service - *Patience*

Sunday, February 14

- 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
- 5:00 pm Jazz Vespers

Sunday Volunteers	This Sunday	Next Sunday
Counting Deacons	Bill Martin and Carol Troost	Cathy Lewis and Therese McCarty
Greeters	Joe & Ann Gotwals Ken & Nancy Rimany	Norma & Dale Brown Marlene Risseeuw
Flower Delivery	Vickie & Mike Horan Joanne & Kip Arnold	Cynthia Hamilton and Ellie Rowland
Faith Bookshop	Committee Member	Committee Member
Liturgist	Stacey Midge	Daniel Carlson
Preacher	Bill Levering	Daniel Carlson
Processing Elders	Birdie Blackmer, Jeanette Davidson, James Gonda, Keith Muse, Del Pierce, Jeanne Shoulder, Gay Doolittle, Adam Mason	George Davidson, Phil Falconer, Brad Lewis, Cathy Lewis, Joyce & Jerry Griggs
Reader	Carol Troost	George Trimarco
Refreshments	Sarah Howes and Mary Carlson	Volunteers Needed
Ushers	Glenn Blinckmann (head usher), Gerry Myers, Crystal Mongillo, Justine Ochal, Ralph Rosenthal	Tom Burgoyne (head usher), David Bundy, Joe Gotwals, Karen Gonda, Berta & Nat Phipps

“We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making every nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us.” — John Muir, *My First Summer in the Sierra*

“Those who travel to mountain-tops are half in love with themselves, and half in love with oblivion.” — Robert Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind: A History of a Fascination*

“Every mountain top is within reach if you just keep climbing.” — Barry Finlay, *Kilimanjaro and Beyond*

“Long, blue, spiky-edged shadows crept out across the snow-fields, while a rosy glow, at first scarce discernible, gradually deepened and suffused every mountain-top, flushing the glaciers and the harsh crags above them. This was the alpenglow, to me the most impressive of all the terrestrial manifestations of God. At the touch of this divine light, the mountains seemed to kindle to a rapt, religious consciousness, and stood hushed like devout worshippers waiting to be blessed.” — John Muir, *The Wild Muir: Twenty-Two of John Muir's Greatest Adventures*

“Climb if you will, but remember that courage and strength are nought without prudence, and that a momentary negligence may destroy the happiness of a lifetime. Do nothing in haste; look well to each step; and from the beginning think what may be the end.” — Edward Whymper, *Scrambles Amongst the Alps*

“The greatest gift of life on the mountain is time. Time to think or not think, read or not read, scribble or not scribble -- to sleep and cook and walk in the woods, to sit and stare at the shapes of the hills. I produce nothing but words; I consumer nothing but food, a little propane, a little firewood. By being utterly useless in the calculations of the culture at large I become useful, at last, to myself.” — Philip Connors

“Chasing angels or fleeing demons, go to the mountains.” — Jeffrey Rasley

“Mountains seem to answer an increasing imaginative need in the West. More and more people are discovering a desire for them, and a powerful solace in them. At bottom, mountains, like all wildernesses, challenge our complacent conviction - so easy to lapse into - that the world has been made for humans by humans. Most of us exist for most of the time in worlds which are humanly arranged, themed and controlled. One forgets that there are environments which do not respond to the flick of a switch or the twist of a dial, and which have their own rhythms and orders of existence. Mountains correct this amnesia. By speaking of greater forces than we can possibly invoke, and by confronting us with greater spans of time than we can possibly envisage, mountains refute our excessive trust in the man-made. They pose profound questions about our durability and the importance of our schemes. They induce, I suppose, a modesty in us.” — Robert Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind: Adventures in Reaching the Summit*

“You don't need to climb a mountain to know that it's high.” — Paulo Coelho, *Aleph*

“I like the mountains because they make me feel small,' Jeff says. 'They help me sort out what's important in life.’” — Mark Obmascik

“How to get the best of it all? One must conquer, achieve, get to the top; one must know the end to be convinced that one can win the end - to know there's no dream that mustn't be dared. . . Is this the summit, crowning the day? How cool and quiet! We're not exultant; but delighted, joyful; soberly astonished. . . Have we vanquished an enemy? None but ourselves. Have we gained success? That word means nothing here. Have we won a kingdom? No. . . and yes. We have achieved an ultimate satisfaction. . . fulfilled a destiny. . . To struggle and to understand - never this last without the other; such is the law. . .” — George Mallory, *Climbing Everest: The Complete Writings of George Mallory*

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land! — Dr. Martin Luther King

“There is no such sense of solitude as that which we experience upon the silent and vast elevations of great mountains. Lifted high above the level of human sounds and habitations, among the wild expanses and colossal features of Nature, we are thrilled in our loneliness with a strange fear and elation – an ascent above the reach of life's expectations or companionship, and the tremblings of a wild and undefined misgivings.” — Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu

“Thomas Merton wrote, “there is always a temptation to diddle around in the contemplative life, making itsy-bitsy statues.” There is always an enormous temptation in all of life to diddle around making itsy-bitsy friends and meals and journeys for itsy-bitsy years on end. It is so self-conscious, so apparently moral, simply to step aside from the gaps where the creeks and winds pour down, saying, I never merited this grace, quite rightly, and then to sulk along the rest of your days on the edge of rage.

I won't have it. The world is wilder than that in all directions, more dangerous and bitter, more extravagant and bright. We are making hay when we should be making whoopee; we are raising tomatoes when we should be raising Cain, or Lazarus.

Go up into the gaps. If you can find them; they shift and vanish too. Stalk the gaps. Squeak into a gap in the soil, turn, and unlock-more than a maple- a universe. This is how you spend this afternoon, and tomorrow morning, and tomorrow afternoon. Spend the afternoon. You can't take it with you.” — Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

Heritage and Transfiguration Sunday

As well as Heritage Sunday, today is Transfiguration Sunday, an important celebration in Christianity. In many Protestant churches, the Sunday before Lent begins is designated Transfiguration Sunday, while other Christian denominations, including Catholics and Orthodox, celebrate this at different times, often in August. The Transfiguration of Jesus is an episode in the New Testament in which Jesus is transfigured (metamorphosed in the original Greek) and becomes radiant in glory upon a mountain. The event is recorded explicitly by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and referred to by John.

In these accounts, Jesus and three of his apostles, Peter, James and John, go to a mountain to pray. On the mountain, Jesus' face changes and his garments shine with bright rays of light. Then the prophets Moses and Elijah appear next to him and he speaks with them. Jesus is then called "Son" by God's voice, much like Jesus' Baptism.

Thomas Aquinas considered the Transfiguration "the greatest miracle" in that it complemented baptism and showed the perfection of life in Heaven. In Christian teachings, the Transfiguration is a pivotal moment, and the setting on the mountain is presented as the point where human nature meets God: the meeting place for the temporal and the eternal, with Jesus himself as the connecting point, acting as the bridge between heaven and earth.



