

# *The First Presbyterian Church* *in the City of New York*

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
*Service for the Lord's Day*  
December 18th, 2022 | 11 a.m.

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*The Annunciation* by James He Qi, China/USA - He Qi © 2021 All rights reserved.

# WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

*The Session and members of First Church extend a sincere welcome to all persons regardless of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and service as an officer of the church.*

Welcome to the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York. Over 800 members call this place our spiritual home and we are grateful you are worshipping with us today. We believe First Church is a community of people called to stand on the intersection of faith and life as we witness to the love, grace and justice of God for all people.

Wherever you are in your journey of faith, I pray today's service will be a blessing for you. If this is your first time here, a member of the pastoral staff would love to greet you at the door and answer any questions you may have about the life and ministries of this church.

We are glad you are here. May you experience God's welcome in this place today!

Greg Stovell  
*Senior Pastor*

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Join us for Coffee Fellowship on the North Lawn after the Postlude to meet one another, say hello to new faces, and enjoy refreshments.

## GET INVOLVED



## GIVE



## INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?



# GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Carillon”

Leo Sowerby

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ,  
joining our voices with the joyful song of his mother Mary.

**My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

For you, O Lord, have looked with favor on your servants.

You have filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

**Our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord;  
our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.**

HYMN 104

“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of the future,  
you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule.**

**We confess that we have not expected your kingdom,  
for we live casual lives,  
ignoring your promised judgment.**

**We accept lies as truth,  
exploit neighbors,  
abuse the earth,  
and refuse your justice and peace.**

**In your mercy, forgive us.**

**Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,  
and to seek things that will endure  
when Christ comes to judge the world....**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

## RESPONSE

MAGNIFICAT (TAIZÉ)



## LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## ANTHEM

African American spiritual

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born! While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. -African American spiritual; stanza, John W. Work

English carol

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep. Nowell, born is the King of Israel. -English carol; Some Ancient Christmas Carols, 2nd ed.

## CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Children are invited to come forward to the steps for the prayer. Following the prayer, all children are invited to the Parlor for Church School and should be picked up there by their parents at the end of the worship service.*

**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.**

## HEARING THE WORD

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:46-56

*pew Bible, New Testament page 57/large print, New Testament page 69*

### SERMON

“A Prayer from the Heart, Part 2”

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### HYMN 110

“Love Has Come”

BRING A TORCH

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

based on a 20th century South African creed

**Jesus taught us to speak of hope as the coming of God's kingdom.**

**We believe that God is at work in our world,  
turning hopelessness and evil into good.**

**We believe that goodness and justice will triumph in the end  
and that tyranny and oppression cannot last forever.**

**One day all tears will be wiped away;  
the lamb will lie down with the lion,  
and justice will roll down like a mighty stream.**

**True peace and true reconciliation.**

**This is our faith.**

**This is our hope.**

## OFFERTORY

14th century Irish carol; David Willcocks, arr.

Gabriel to Mary came, and entered at her dwelling. With his salutation glad, her maiden fears dispelling. "All hail, thou queen of virgins bright! God, Lord of earth and heaven's height. Thy very Son shall soon be born in pureness; the Savior of all. Thou art the gate of heaven bright; the sinners' healer kind."

"How could I a mother be that am to man a stranger? How should I my strong resolve, my solemn vows endanger?" "Power from the Holy Ghost on high shall bring to pass this mystery. Then have no fear: be of good cheer, believing that still thy chastity in God's almighty keeping shall all unsullied be."

Then to him the maid replied, with noble mien supernatural "Lo! the humble handmaid I of God the Lord eternal. With thee, bright messenger of heaven, by whom this wondrous news is given. I well agree and long to see fulfilled thy gracious prophecy. As God my Lord doth will it, so be it unto me!"

Hail! thou Mother of the Lord, who bringest of gifts the rarest. Peace to angels and to all when Christ the Lord thou barest! Do thou, we pray, entreat thy Son. For us our longed redemption Himself to win. And from our sin release us; His succor for to give that, when we hence are take we too in heaven may live. -Latin text; William Adair Pickard-Cambridge, trans.

## DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Please stand in body or spirit.*



*Traditional* Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him, all crea - tures

*Inclusive* Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Christ, all peo - ple



here be - low; praise Him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host;

here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more;



praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## SENDING

### HYMN 121

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

### BLESSING

### POSTLUDE

“Magnificat on the First Tone, BuxWV 204” Dietrich Buxtehude

*The congregation is invited to continue worshiping through the postlude,  
which is offered as a thanksgiving to God.*

The cross which leads the procession today is dedicated  
“In memory of all those who died from AIDS in our church and community.”  
Our cross-bearer today is Meg Harper.

### LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

Nicky, Demian, Aurora & David Ordway

### LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*  
Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*  
Emma Gritsch, *Seminary Intern*

Student Choristers  
Martha Sue Allen, *Interim Family Music Coordinator*

The First Church Choir  
Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

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## THIS WEEK AT FIRST

### Today

9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology

11:00 a.m. Church School

11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship - Fourth Sunday of Advent

12:00 p.m. Coffee Fellowship

4:00 p.m. Candlelight Carols Service

### Wednesday

12:30 p.m. Bible Study

### Thursday

8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing

### Friday

7:00 p.m. Current Events

### Saturday

10:15 a.m. St. Joe's Soup Kitchen

12:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

### Next Sunday

11:00 a.m. Christmas Day Worship

12:00 p.m. Coffee Fellowship



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Join us today for our Candlelight Carols service at 4:00 p.m.** With the Sanctuary bathed in candlelight, the First Church Choir leads this beautiful service of lessons and carols, this year based on the Great 'O' Antiphons – seven ancient ascriptions for Christ: *Wisdom, Lord, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Radiant Dawn, Ruler of the nations, God with us*. A festive carol sing on the north lawn (weather permitting) follows the service.

**There will be no Coffee & Theology on Christmas and New Year's Day.** Coffee and Theology will begin a new series in the new year (starting on January 8th) – *Down by the Riverside: Crossings, Stillness and Sacrament*. Using a variety of scripture stories each week, we will explore the significance of water in the biblical narrative and what those crossings mean for us today. The topic of the day for our first meeting will be Jesus and John. All are welcome before Sunday worship on Zoom and in the Morrow Room at 9:30 a.m.

**Church School concludes study on the practice of joy today** in the Parlor during worship and begins a new series called Sing a New Song on January 8th. Childcare is available on the third floor for children under three years old.

**Bible Study continues this Wednesday, December 21st at 12:30 p.m.** on Zoom and in the library with the book of Romans.

**Prayer Writing continues this Thursday, December 22nd at 8:30 a.m. online.** We will use selections from All about love to evoke personal reflection and meditation during this Advent season. All are welcome to this time of quiet prompts for meditation and prayer, participants are not asked to share their writing. Please contact Rev. Barbara Davis (bdavis@fpcnyc.org) for Zoom information.

**The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee at First Church is looking for candidates to fill the Social Justice and Mission pastoral role, and they want to hear from you!** They are seeking a leader with at least two years of experience who is an energetic motivator with a heart for mission to galvanize our congregation by broadening and deepening member involvement in opportunities to serve. If you want to refer someone, please email apnc@fpcnyc.org.

**Childcare will be available on Christmas Eve** at the 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. services for children 3 years old and younger.



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# CHRISTMAS EVE

Worship Services

Saturday, December 24 at 12:00,  
5:00, and 11:00 p.m.

# CHRISTMAS DAY

Worship Service

Sunday, December 25 at 11:00 a.m.



**For more information on the Advent season at First Church**

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