

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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Service for the Lord's Day
May 7th, 2023 | 11 a.m.



The Parable of the Talents, Willem de Poorter, Czech Republic, 17th c.

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 worshiping 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

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

Gender-neutral restrooms are located at the back of the sanctuary as well as through the wooden doors at the front of the sanctuary on the south side. More restrooms can be found in the lobby on the north side of the sanctuary.

GET INVOLVED



GIVE



INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?



GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Master Tallis’ Testament”

Herbert Howells

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand in body or spirit.

The time for harvest is close at hand.

What have we done with the life God has given us?

We draw near bringing all that we are to the house of the Lord.

We praise God for all the ways in which our lives have been blessed.

May our generous God accept our lives offered this day.

May our loving God accept our praise and gratitude.

Let us worship God.

HYMN 24

“God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens”

HOLY MANNA

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One,

we long to be faithful stewards of your abundant grace.

To serve each other in love and humility.

To serve your world with wisdom and energy.

**Forgive us when we stumble over pride,
when our words and actions are not guided by love.**

Turn our hearts when we act in folly.

Restore our energy when it is gone.

Sometimes, many times, O God, our efforts fail;

**but your abundant grace is strong and eternal,
and forgiveness is possible through Jesus Christ.**

Hear us as we confess our sins in silence....

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

MFURAHINI, HALELUYA; TANZANIAN MELODY

Christ has a - ris - en to set us free.
Je - sus is liv - ing! Let us all sing;
Al - le - lu - ia, to him prais - es be.
he reigns tri - um - phant, heav - en - ly King.
Let us sing praise to him with end - less joy. Death's fear - ful
sting he has come to de - stroy. Our sin for - giv - ing,
al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN'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.

ANTHEM

Volckmar Leisring; Clarence Dickinson, arr.

Now is Christ risen, victorious King! To all eternal life doth bring. Alleluia! Let all the world
rejoice and sing. Alleluia!

—Helen A. Dickinson, English text

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 25:24–30

pew Bible, New Testament page 28/large print, New Testament page 35

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“The God We See”

Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Romans 8:1, 28, 38, 39

Please stand in body or spirit.

**We believe there is no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus;
for we know that all things work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purpose.
We are convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

OFFERTORY

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and king! The heavens are not too high, his praise may thither fly: the earth is not too low, his praises there may grow. Let all the world..... The church with Psalms must shout. No door can keep them out: but above all, the heart must bear the longest part. Let all the world.....

—George Herbert

COMMUNION

INVITATION

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

We offer you praise, Eternal God, and hearts lifted high, for in the communion of your love Christ comes close to us and we come close to Christ.

Therefore with the whole realm of nature around us, with earth, sea, and sky, we sing to you.

**With the angels of light who envelop us,
with all the saints before and beside us,
with brothers and sisters, east and west, we sing to you.**

And with our loved ones, separate from us now, who yet in this mystery are close to us, we join in the song of your unending greatness:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is our brother Jesus,
who walks with us the road of our world's suffering,
and who is known to us in the breaking of bread.

**And as the bread and cup
which we now eat and drink from
are changed into us,
may we be changed again into you,
bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh,
loving and caring in the world.**

Now hear us as we pray together that prayer which Jesus taught those who asked for a way to pray:

**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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Please come forward at the direction of the ushers, those in the back of the center aisle will be invited forward first. The servers will give you bread; please take a juice glass from the tray. You may take the juice in your own time and leave your cup in the pew holders. Gluten-free bread and self-contained bread and juice are available, please ask your server.

HYMN 494

“Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts”

QUEBEC

ANTHEM

T. Frederick H. Candlyn

The text may be found at *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 295.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Living God,
in this sacrament we have shared in your eternal kingdom.
May we who taste this mystery forever serve you in faith, hope, and love.
We ask this in the name of Jesus,
who invites us to this table
and shares this meal with us. Amen.**

SENDING

HYMN 716

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

BEACH SPRING

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

CHORAL RESPONSE

Anglican Chant; George S. Talbot

POSTLUDE

“Paeon”

Kenneth Leighton

*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 Sally Collins.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee and Theology continues next Sunday, May 14th at 9:30 a.m. This session, titled *Christian Ethics and the Artificial Intelligence Revolution*, will be led by Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell.

Church School continues the Love God, Neighbor, Enemy curriculum today in the Parlor during worship. Childcare is available on the third floor for children under three years old.

Join us after worship service today for a special sermon talk with Dr. Tom Long at 12:30 p.m. in the parlor. Tom will discuss his research on the parables and lead a discussion on the sermon.

Please visit the Great Hall during coffee hour today for the opening of the Creatives Create! Bending the Arc Toward Justice exhibition featuring creative works from the FPC community that explore race and other areas of justice and faith. This non-juried exhibition features works in a variety of mediums and will be on view each Sunday through June 18, 2023, and at other times by appointment. On May 21st and June 18th from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. the visual exploration will be enhanced with original performances, readings and music related to the theme of justice. Each performance will end with light refreshments and an opportunity to discuss with artists. For more information email (creativescreate@fpcnyc.org).

After the service next Sunday, May 14th, please join us in coffee fellowship as we celebrate the work and ministry of Emma Gritsch, our seminary intern, as she finishes her work with us. Emma will graduate from Union Theological Seminary on Friday, May 19th and will be seeking a call in Connecticut.

Calling all Young Adults! Join us today after worship for a discussion on spirituality and service with Rev. Emily Brewer. Grab a beverage at coffee hour and we'll meet in the Mezzanine at 12:15 p.m. Contact Emily Dawson (emilydawson1992@gmail.com) for more info.

Beginning today, a group of FPCNYC teens will be offering tech support to seniors on the first Sunday of each month during coffee hour. Seniors who need help with technology can bring their phones, laptops, iPads, and other devices to church, and the teen tech squad will work with them one-on-one. No need to sign up in advance - just show up! Members who are unable to attend church or require immediate assistance may request a home visit. Please email Jonathan Metzler (jonathanpmetzler@gmail.com) if you are a senior interested in these services or a teen interested in volunteering with tech support.

Bible Study continues Wednesday, May 10th at 12:30 p.m. on Zoom and in the library with a study of the Psalms led by guest leader Michael Shake.

Prayer Writing continues Thursday, May 11th at 8:30 a.m. All are welcome to this time of quiet prompts for meditation and prayer, no writing experience necessary! Writing prompts will be based on the poetry of Mary Oliver.

First Church is participating in the AIDS Walk on May 21st from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Central Park. The walk will raise awareness and funds for HIV/AIDS research and treatment. We do the walking and the fundraising together as a team. If you'd like to join the First Church Team, contact Emily Brewer (ebrewer@fpcnyc.org) and Jeff Nichols (jqnichols@gmail.com) or stop by the sign-up table at coffee hour.

Join us in the sanctuary on June 25th at 11 a.m. for our Pride Sunday service. It's a day to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community and show our support. After the service, we will pass out water to participants in the march. If you're interested in volunteering, please send an email to Emily Brewer (ebrewer@fpcnyc.org).

TODAY WE WELCOME DR. TOM LONG TO THE PULPIT

Dr. Long is the Professor Emeritus of Preaching at Emory's Candler School of Theology. He is a sought out speaker, author and preacher and is regarded as one of the most effective preachers in the English language according to Baylor University. Dr. Long's book *The Witness of Preaching* is considered one of the 25 most influential books in preaching for the last 25 years. He is an ordained minister in the PC(USA) and serves as editor of numerous homiletical publications. Dr. Long is currently working on a book centered on the parables of Jesus. He will present some of his findings and lead a discussion in the Parlor today at 12:30 p.m.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long, *Guest Preacher*

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*

Emma Gritsch, *Seminary Intern*

The First Church Choir

Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

JOINING FIRST CHURCH

Elizabeth Safford Adams

Sophie Rose Barry

Carrie Michele Fowle

THIS WEEK AT FIRST

Today

9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology

11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship

11:15 a.m. Church School

12:00 p.m. Coffee Fellowship

12:15 p.m. Young Adult Fellowship

12:30 p.m. Dr. Tom Long Sermon Talk

12:30 p.m. Creatives Create –

Bending the Arc Towards Justice Opening

12:30 p.m. Presbyterian Women

2:00 p.m. Make It Meaningful

Wednesday

12:30 p.m. Bible Study

5:30 p.m. Conversational Spanish

Thursday

8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing

12:30 p.m. Elder Care Luncheon

Friday

7:00 p.m. Current Events

Saturday

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

12:00 p.m. Facing Racism Field Trip (Offsite)

1:00 p.m. Gardening Day

Next Sunday

9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology

11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship

11:15 a.m. Church School

12:00 p.m. Coffee Fellowship

2:00 p.m. Make It Meaningful

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