

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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Service for the Lord's Day
April 28, 2024 | 11 a.m.



Dive In (Inspired by Acts 8:26-40), Lauren Wright Pittman.

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

Join us for Coffee Fellowship on the North Lawn, weather permitting, or the Morrow Room 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?**



**STEWARDSHIP
2024**



If you are in need of care, such as prayer or a call from a pastor, a ride to the church, etc., please contact our church office at (212) 675-6150. Our staff will connect you with one of our pastors or a deacon from our caring ministry who can assist with your needs.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Come Away to the Skies”
“There Is a Happy Land”

George Shearing

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

INTROIT

O Holy Spirit, Lord of grace, eternal source of love; inflame, we pray, our inmost hearts with fire from heaven above. As thou dost join with holiest bonds the Father and the Son. So fill us all with mutual love and knit our hearts in one.

Christopher Tye

-Charles Coffin; trans. John Chandler

HYMN 485

“We Know That Christ Is Raised”

ENGLELBERG

Please stand in body or spirit.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious and loving God,
open our hearts so that we are able to admit to you
the fullness of our lives –
that which is beautiful and good,
and that which is hurtful and hateful.**

We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do.

We love with condition.

We judge and condemn.

We cast the first stone, and keep the logs in our own eyes.

We do not turn to You as the source of our healing.

Forgive us, we pray.

Forgive our sin,

**and empower us to be imitators
of Christ in love and service...**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

MFURAHINI, HALELUYA

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

CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Children are invited to come forward to the steps for the prayer. Following the Children's Prayer, all children are invited to Church School and should be picked up by their parents and 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.**

ANTHEM

Herbert Howells

My eyes for beauty pine, my soul for God's grace, no other care nor hope is mine, to heaven I turn my face. One splendor thence is shed from all the stars above: 'tis named when God's name is said, 'tis love, 'tis heavenly love. And every gentle heart that burns with true desire is lit from eyes that mirror part of that celestial fire.

-Robert Bridges

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Acts 8:26-40

pew Bible, New Testament page 127/large print, New Testament page 154

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Anatomy of a Church Meeting"

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 301

“Let Us Build a House”

TWO OAKS

Please stand in body or spirit.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from the *Belhar Confession*

We believe that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells; that God’s life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God’s life-giving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.

MOMENT FOR MISSION

OFFERTORY

John Rutter

Christ the Lord is risen again; Christ hath broken every chain! Hark, the angels shout for joy, singing evermore on high: Alleluia. He who gave for us his life, who for us endured the strife, is our Paschal Lamb today! We, too, sing for joy and say: Alleluia. Christ who bore all pain and loss comfortless upon the cross, lives in glory now on high, pleads for us and hears our cry: Alleluia. Now he bids us tell abroad how the lost may be restored, how the penitent forgiven, how we, too, may enter heaven. Alleluia. Thou, our Paschal Lamb indeed, Christ, today thy people feed, take our sins and guilt away, that we all may sing for joy: Alleluia.

—Michael Weisse; trans. Catherine Winkworth

DOXOLOGY WITH ALLELUIAS

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures
high and low. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise
God, in Je - sus ful - ly known: Cre - a - tor, Word, and Spir - it
one. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

SENDING

HYMN 318

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

ST. PETER

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

“Paeon”

Kenneth Leighton

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

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*

Rev. Ashley Bair, *Associate Pastor*

Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*

The First Church Choir

Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST

Today

- 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology (hybrid)
- 11 a.m. Sunday Worship
- 11:15 a.m. Church School
- 12 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 12 p.m. Art at First - Open Gallery Closing
- 12:15 p.m. Student Choristers
- 12:20 p.m. Bibles & Bagels
- 12:45 p.m. Confirmation
- 1:30 p.m. Literary Group (hybrid)

Tuesday

6 p.m. PRISM

Wednesday

- 5:30 p.m. Conversation Spanish (virtual)
- 12:30 p.m. Bible Study (hybrid)

Thursday

- 5 p.m. Elder Committee Meeting (virtual)
- 8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing (virtual)

Friday

7 p.m. Current Events (virtual)

Saturday

- 10 a.m. St. Joe's Soup Kitchen
- 10 a.m. RIF Asylum Support

Next Sunday

- 11 a.m. Sunday Worship
- 11:15 a.m. Church School
- 12 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 12 p.m. LGBTQ & Allies Brunch
- 12 p.m. Teen Tech Squad
- 12 p.m. Creative Create - Open Reception
- 12:15 p.m. Student Choristers
- 12:20 p.m. Bibles & Bagels
- 12:30 p.m. Presbyterian Women
- 12:45 p.m. Confirmation
- 4 p.m. Vespers
- 5:15 p.m. Vespers Reception



Looking for more?

Sign up for our weekly newsletter, First Matters, to be informed about upcoming events and learn about the initiatives that define us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join Art at First today at noon for their closing reception of “Imaginarium: Making the Invisible Real” in the Great Hall Gallery. Don’t miss this meaningful and thought-provoking exhibit.

The Elder Care Committee is sponsoring a request for First Spanish for toiletries. We are going to request contributions from the congregation to be brought to the Church till **May 5th**. A donation box can be found in the Mellin-Macnab building, near the reception desk, for the collection. Toiletries requested are: shampoo, lotion for children and adults, disposable razors, deodorant (unisex), bars of soap, toothpaste, lip balm, small packages of wipes, tooth brushes (children and adults) and hair brushes for children. Seniors will put toiletry bags together at our luncheon on May 11th.

Family ministries offerings this Sunday Children ages 3 - 6th grade are invited to join us for Church School after the Children's Prayer. Directly after worship, 3-5 year olds can be picked up from the Parlor, and 1st - 6th graders can be picked up from the Rooftop Classroom. Afterwards, all 1st - 6th graders are encouraged to join Rachel for Student Choristers in the Parlor, and middle schoolers and high schoolers can meet Jenny for Bibles & Bagels Youth Group in the Mezzanine. We'll have pizza and prepare care packages to send to our church community's college students.

Summer Family Offerings in June and July Please spread the word! Our Family Music Ministries is offering special community programs in June and July for infants up to 10 year olds, including Family Summer Music programs and ukulele classes. Please reach out to Rachel at rbarkerasto@fpcnyc.org to learn more and register before space runs out!

Calling all graduates! We are excited to honor and celebrate all high school and college graduates in our community during Graduation Sunday Worship on June 9th. If you are graduating this year, or if you have a graduate in your family, please email Jenny, Director of Youth and Family Ministries, at jbenett@fpcnyc.org.

Teen Tech Squad is available after services on the first Sunday of the month during coffee fellowship for any questions you might have about your electronic devices. For home visits from Teen Tech Squad and for more information please contact Jonathan at JonathanPMetzler@gmail.com.

Adult Education The next session of **Coffee & Theology** will meet today in person and online. Look forward to our regular programs including our hybrid **Wednesday Bible Study** continues on May 1st at 12:30 p.m. with a study of Hebrews. **Prayer Writing** will resume on May 2nd. Please email Barbara at bdavis@fpcnyc.org to learn more about our programming.

LGBTQ+ & Allies Brunch on the first Sundays of each month Following worship next Sunday, we will be hosting an LGBTQ+ brunch for those in the community and allies! Please RSVP with Ashley at abair@fpcnyc.org to join us. Those attending the brunch will meet with at coffee hour!

Vespers Festival of Music: *Ein Deutsches Requiem* by Johannes Brahms Sunday, May 5th, at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Free admission. The First Church Choir, soloists, and chamber ensemble offer one of the most powerful works of the Romantic era. Brahms' deeply personal testament is a human requiem, addressing the universal experience of grief and healing. Sung in the original German, hear this masterpiece with Iain Farrington's chamber orchestration that draws upon the intimacy and personal expression of the work, “creating a rich and satisfying experience.” A reception, sponsored by Art at First, follows in the Great Hall. For live stream access, please contact Aileen at acaba@fpcnyc.org.

AIDS Walk NYC 2024 First Church is participating in the AIDS Walk to raise awareness and funds for HIV/AIDS research and treatment on **Sunday, May 19th at 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. We will meet on the East side of Central Park.** We do the walking and fundraising together as a team. If you would like to join the First Church Team, contact Ashley at abair@fpcnyc.org and Barron at Barron.Flood@gmail.com. You can also register or donate directly through the AIDS Walk Website.

Join us for First Saturday's at St. Joe's Soup Kitchen Volunteers are invited to sign up with Ashley at abair@fpcnyc.org to serve at St. Joe's on the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. Don't miss this chance to make a difference in the community by giving back through service.

Stewardship 2024 We appreciate your participation in stewardship of 2024! We continue with a follow up campaign if you have yet to contribute. You may fill out a pledge card in the pews in front of you and drop them in the box in the narthex or scan the QR code on the inside cover of this bulletin.

VESPERS FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

Ein deutsches Requiem

Johannes Brahms

The First Church Choir
and chamber ensemble
Shanelle Woods, *soprano*
Nathaniel Sullivan, *baritone*

Sunday, May 5th

4:00 p.m.

Sanctuary

Free Admission - Reception follows in the Great Hall
hosted by Art at First

One of the most powerful works of the Romantic era, Brahms' deeply personal testament is a human requiem, addressing the universal experience of grief and healing. Sung in the original German, hear this masterpiece with Iain Farrington's chamber orchestration that draws upon the intimacy and personal expression of the work, "creating a rich and satisfying experience."

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