

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

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Service for the Lord's Day
May 5, 2024 | 11 a.m.



If Love is the Sky, Lisle Gwynn Garrity, 2017.

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 “Andante sostenuto, from *Symphonie gothique*” Charles-Marie Widor

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand in body or spirit.

With what shall we come before the Holy One,
and bow ourselves before God on high?

Shall we come before God with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

God has showed you, O people,
what is good, and what does the Holy One require of you?

To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

HYMN 396

“Brethren, We Have Met to Worship”

HOLY MANNA

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Eternal God, we confess that we have failed
to respond fully to your gracious presence in our lives.**

**You offer us new life, fulfillment,
and the freedom to serve you.**

We confess that we are captive to other desires.

**Our sin binds us with false pride,
and the wrong we do is made worse by the good we leave undone.**

Reconcile us to you and to all people.

**God of mercy, forgive our sin
and strengthen us anew for life as you desire for us...**

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

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.

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 15:9-17

pew Bible, New Testament page 109/large print, New Testament page 134

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Choosing Love"

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

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.**

OFFERTORY

Maurice Duruflé

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est. Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor. Exullemus, et in ipso iucundemur. Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum. Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero. Amen.

Where charity and love are, God is there. Christ's love has gathered us into one. Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him. Let us fear, and let us love the living God. And may we love each other with a sincere heart. Amen.
—Liturgy for Maundy Thursday; sung in Latin

HYMN 515

“I Come with Joy”

DOVE OF PEACE

Please stand in body or spirit.

COMMUNION

adapted from the Iona Community

INVITATION

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Let us pray: 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...

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.

On the night of his arrest Jesus took bread and having blessed it he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples, saying, This is my body, given to you. In the same way Jesus took cup and having given thanks for it, Jesus poured it out and gave the cup to the disciples, saying, This cup is the new relationship with God, sealed with my blood. Take this and share it.

**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.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION
ANTHEM

Text may be found in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 516.

Craig Carnahan

HYMN 703

“Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me”

ST. CATHERINE

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 761

“Called as Partners in Christ's Service”

BEECHER

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

CHORAL RESPONSE

Anglican Chant, George S. Talbot

Text may be found in pew Bible, Old Testament page 583/large print, Old Testament page 717.

POSTLUDE

“Marche épiscopale, from *Trois Improvisations*”

Louis Vierne

*The congregation is invited to continue worshipping 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 Emily Dawson.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*
Rev. Ashley Bair, *Associate Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Mark Hostetter, *Associate Pastor*
Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and
Family Ministries*

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

TODAY AT FIRST

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vespers Festival of Music: Ein deutsches Requiem by Johannes Brahms today 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 Sophia at scanfield@fpcnyc.org.

Join Creatives Create for the opening of "New York: A City of Immigrants," which will run for six weeks until June 16th. Performance dates are scheduled for May 19th and June 9th. The gallery will be open every Sunday from 12 - 2 p.m., starting today and extending through June 12th. Additionally, the gallery will be open following the Vespers Festival of Music for a reception today in the Great Hall Art Gallery.

Join LGBTQ+ & Allies for brunch today after worship! We will gather at 12:45 p.m. in the church lobby then we will head to Ribalta on 48 E 12th St. Please contact Mark Fontaine for more details at mfontaine@gmail.com.

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 today. Join us Thursday, May 9th, for our monthly Senior Luncheon at 12:30 p.m. and this special service project, where we will compile the toiletry bags. 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.

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 the service, all children can be picked up from the Parlor. After worship, middle schoolers and high schoolers can meet Jenny for Bibles & Bagels Youth Group in the Mezzanine. We'll have pizza and learn about the new Youth Leadership Council starting in Fall 2024!

Summer Family Offerings in June and July Please spread the word! Our Family Music Ministries is offering special community programs for infants up to 10 year olds, including Family Summer Music programs and ukulele classes. Please reach out to Rachel Barker-Asto 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 jbennett@fpcnyc.org.

Adult Education The next session of **Coffee & Theology** will meet on May 12th at 9:30 a.m. in person and online with a study of Genesis chapters 1-3. Look forward to our regular programs including our hybrid **Wednesday Bible Study** of Philemon on May 8th at 12:30 p.m. **Prayer Writing** will continue on May 9th at 8:30 a.m. Please email Barbara at bdavis@fpcnyc.org to learn more.

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 at the South West corner of 72nd and 5th Avenue.** 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.

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.



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.

VESPERS FESTIVAL OF MUSIC
*Ein deutsches
Requiem*

Johannes Brahms

*Today at 4:00 p.m.
Sanctuary
Free Admission - Reception follows in the
Great Hall hosted by Art at First*

**AIDS
WALK
NEW YORK
MAY 19, 2024**

**First Church is
participating in the AIDS
Walk to raise awareness
and funds for HIV/AIDS
research and treatment.**

*We will meet at the south
west corner of 72nd and 5th
Avenue at 10 a.m. Walk and
fundraise with us as a team!*

*If you would like to join
the First Church Team,
contact Ashley
at abair@fpcnyc.org*

*You may also register or donate directly through the
AIDS Walk Website by scanning here:*



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