The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Service for the Lord's Day | November 30, 2025 | 11 a.m.



George Bandele. Adoration. Yoruba Christmas, Nigeria

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 or 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 in the Lobby or on the North Lawn (weather permitting) 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?

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

"Sleepers, Wake!' A Voice Astounds Us, BWV 645"

J. S. Bach

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

Introit

Springfield Antiphonal, c. 1300

O Emmanuel, our Sovereign and lawgiver, desire of the nations and Savior of all: come and save us, O Lord our God.

-from the 'O' Antiphons

Hymn 88

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" stanzas 1, 4, 6-7

VENI EMMANUEL

CALL TO CONFESSION

Please stand in body or spirit.

Prayer of Confession

Faithful God,

your promises stand unshaken through all generations.

Forgive our lack of faith.

Forgive our reliance on ourselves instead of turning to you.

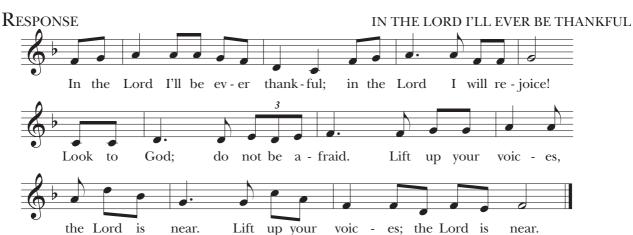
Have mercy on us.

Renew us in hope,

that we may be awake and alert as we watch for Jesus Christ, our redeemer and savior...

SILENT CONFESSION

Assurance of Pardon



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Hugo Distler, arr.

The text may be found at Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal, 129.

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 7:10-17

pew Bible, Old Testament page 636/large print, Old Testament page 779

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Yearning for Christmas: Isaiah"

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Hymn 108 Please stand in body or spirit.

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" stanzas 1, 3, 5-6

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Affirmation of Faith

Matthew 16:16; Revelation 22:13; and, John 20:28

This is the good news which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved, if we hold it fast: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared first to the women, then to Peter, and to the Twelve, and then to many faithful witnesses. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the beginning and the end;

our Lord and our God. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY Cristóbal de Morales

Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium et vocabitur nomen ejus: Admirabilis, Deus Fortis. Super solium David, et super regnum ejus sedebit in aeternum.

The young woman is with child and shall bear a son: and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God. For the throne of David and his kingdom, he will establish and uphold it from this time onward and forevermore.

—Isaiah 8:14; 9:6, 7; sung in Latin

-18aidii 0.14, 9.0,

praise

DOXOLOGY Please stand in body or spirit.

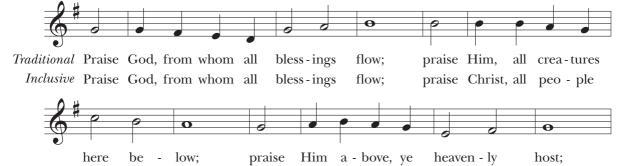
here

be

low;

OLD HUNDREDTH

more;



Ho - ly

Spir - it



PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SENDING

Hymn 93 Please stand in body or spirit. "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

TRURO

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

"Toccata on O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Andrew Carter

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

The cross is dedicated
"In memory of all those who died from AIDS in our church and community."

Our cross-bearer today is Robert Reiter.

Lighting the Advent Wreath are Laura Goodman and Tommy Hoscheid.

The small candle on the communion table is lit as a prayer for peace in this Advent season.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, Executive Minister Jenny Bennett, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

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

MUSIC NOTE Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) composed approximately 1,100 individual works. Of these, approximately a dozen individual works and collections were printed for publication during his life. Unique among these are the Sechs Choräle or Six Chorales published in 1748. Referred to as the Schübler Chorales, after the collection's engraver, Johann Georg Schübler, these chorale (hymn) preludes are not original organ works, but transcriptions of vocal arias and duets from cantatas composed by Bach during 1724 and 1725.

"Sleepers, Wake! A Voice Astounds Us" is based on the tenor aria of Cantata BWV 140 by the same name. Set to the text of the chorale's second stanza, the lilting, dance-like accompaniment that adorns the chorale melody musically expresses the words "joyful hope [that] is springing."

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Today

9:30 a.m. Childcare 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theologians (on hiatus this week) 11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship 11:15 a.m. Church School (on hiatus this week) 12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship

Monday

7:00 p.m. Current Events (virtual)

Tuesday

8:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women (virtual)

Wednesday

12:30 p.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Conversational Spanish (virtual)

Friday

4:00 p.m. Tartan Fair

Saturday

10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen 10:00 a.m. Tartan Fair 12:00 p.m. RIF Asylum Support

Next Sunday

9:30 a.m. Childcare
9:30 a.m. Worship Circle with Babies and Toddlers
9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theologians (hybrid)
11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship with Communion
11:15 a.m. Church School
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class
12:30 p.m. Presbyterian Women
1:00 p.m. Tartan Fair
4:00 p.m. Vespers Music Festival

Announcements

Advent Devotionals

Advent devotionals are now available! You can pick up a physical copy at the back of the church, or read it online at fpcnyc.org/advent2025.

Vespers Festival of Music: Behold New Joy | Sunday, December 7 | 4:00 p.m.

A journey of musical joy through the centuries with Benjamin Britten's timeless *A Ceremony of Carols*, Ēriks Ešenvalds' radiant *Trinity Te Deum*, Shawn Kirchner's exuberant *Behold New Joy*, and rousing carol singing accompanied by brass, percussion, and organ. Featuring the First Church Choir conducted by Michael Shake. Free admission. Childcare available: infant-age 3.

A Tartan Christmas Fair | December 5, 6, and 7

A Tartan Christmas Fair is the church's largest fundraiser and this year's proceeds will go to Bank Street Headstart School on E. Fifth Street and the Voices History Project. Friday December 5, 4 p.m.-8 p.m., Saturday December 6, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday December 7, after worship until 3 p.m. and then again after the concert.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to work a shift or two at the fair, help set-up, bake, cook, decorate, clean-up, etc. You name it, we need you! Shifts run from 11/30 - 12/11. For more information visit **tartanfair.org**. Contact **tartanfair@fpcnyc.org** with questions.

Christmas Flowers Contributions

Celebrate or honor a loved one this Christmas with a contribution toward the beautiful flowers that will adorn the Sanctuary. Contribution forms are available in the lobby and the narthex. Forms must be received by Thursday, December 11 to be listed in the Christmas bulletin. Contact Aileen (acaba@fpcnyc.org) for information.

Memorial Service for Bill Buice | Saturday, December 13 | 3:00 p.m.

We are saddened to announce the passing of our church member and friend Bill Buice, who entered the church triumphant this Monday. Keep his family and friends in prayer. A memorial service to celebrate his life will be held Saturday, December 13 at 3:00 p.m.

Service of Candlelight Carols | Sunday, December 21 | 4:00 p.m.

A community highlight of the season! The First Church Choir and Student Choristers offer this beautiful annual service of lessons and carols. A festive carol sing on the north lawn (weather permitting) follows. Childcare available: infant-age 3.

Deacons of the Month

The November deacons of the month are **Jeanne Gordon** and **Michael Judkiewicz.** They'll be wearing a name badge at coffee hour and would be happy to answer questions about the church.

Adult Education

This year's hybrid adult education programs explore hope through ancient and contemporary voices.

- Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. Midweek Bible Study: Will be on hiatus 11/30. The Bible Study topic for December 3 & 10 is The World Turned Upside Down: Gospel Beginnings; Bible Study begins again in the new year.
- Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Coffee and Theologians: Will be on hiatus next week, 11/30. December Coffee and Theologians topics are Anne Lamott (12/7) and Barbara Brown Taylor (12/14); Coffee and Theologians begins again in the new year.

For details and Zoom links, contact Barbara at bdavis@fpcnyc.org.

Youth & Family Ministries

Youth and Family Ministries returns next week! Church School, Student Choristers, and our other offerings are off today and return next week. We look forward to seeing you soon!

The Family Ministries Christmas Party is Saturday, December 13, from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. We're so excited to celebrate the season with you with crafts, snacks, caroling, and a special Nativity where children are invited to participate and help tell the Christmas story. Please email Jenny to learn more: jbennett@fpcnyc.org.

- Worship Circle with Babies and Toddlers (ages 0-3), 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. first and third Sundays.
- Church School (ages 3–6th grade), children should be picked up in the parlor after worship.
- Student Choristers (grades 1-6), 12:20 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Youth Leadership Council (grades 6-12), monthly dinners; if you want to sign up for the one on December 19, contact Jenny.
- Club 345 (grades 3-5), fourth Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Our next meeting is January 25, 2026.
- Confirmation (grades 7–9), select Sundays at 12:30 p.m.; the next meeting is after worship on Sunday, December 7.

For more information, contact Jenny at jbennett@fpcnyc.org.

Draw Near this Advent

ALL ARE WELCOME TO GATHER, REFLECT AND SHARE THE HOPE OF THE SEASON

TARTAN FAIR CHRISTMAS **December 5-7**

VESPERS FESTIVAL OF MUSIC: BEHOLD NEW JOY

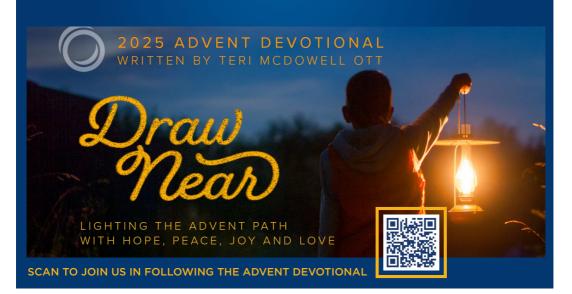
December 7 | 4:00 p.m.

SERVICE OF CANDLELIGHT CAROLS

December 21 | 4:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

December 24 | 4:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.



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