

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

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## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

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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*

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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

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

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

RESPONSE

IN THE LORD I’LL EVER BE THANKFUL

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the first line of the response. The second staff contains the second line, with a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' above them. The third staff contains the third line, ending with a double bar line.

In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful; in the Lord I will re - joice!  
Look to God; do not be a - fraid. Lift up your voic - es,  
the Lord is near. Lift up your voic - es; the Lord is near.

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.**

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

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

stanzas 1, 3, 5-6

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

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;



## 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 worshipping 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.

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Lighting the Advent Wreath are  
Laura Goodman and Tommy Hoscheid.

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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](http://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 Ešēvalds' 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](http://tartanfair.org).

Contact [tartanfair@fpcnyc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.**



2025 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL  
WRITTEN BY TERI MCDOWELL OTT

## Draw Near

LIGHTING THE ADVENT PATH  
WITH HOPE, PEACE, JOY AND LOVE

SCAN TO JOIN US IN FOLLOWING THE ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



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