

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

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

*Service for the Lord's Day* | January 18, 2026 | 11 a.m.



Rembrandt, *The Widow's Mite*, 1650-1655

# 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*

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Join us for Coffee Fellowship in the Lobby 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

“Reverie,” from *Suite Sebastienne*  
“Solemn Processional”

Thomas H. Kerr  
Robert A. Harris

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

INTROIT

African American spiritual; Richard Smallwood, arr.

The words may be found in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 799.

HYMN 366

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

HYFRYDOL

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Sovereign God, we confess we have given idols power over us,  
the idols of power and wealth, fame and security.**

**We confess we have fallen into the ways of this world  
and have forgotten our kindred in Christ.**

**We have lost sight of the reign of God here on earth,  
and instead have allowed the idols of the world to rule over us.**

**Forgive us.**

**Call us into your reign,  
to declare you the One who has power over us  
because your power is love.**

**Call us to love our neighbors as ourselves,  
and to work for justice, show mercy, and love one  
another in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord...**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

O QUANTA QUALIA



How shall we stray, with your hand to di - rect us,



you who the stars in their cours - es are guid - ing?



What shall we fear, with your pow'r to pro - tect us,



we who walk forth in your great - ness con - fid - ing?

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Children are invited to come forward to the steps for the prayers, and afterward, children age 3 - 6th grade are invited to Church School and should be picked up by their families at 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

Gilbert Martin

The words may be found in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 223.

## HEARING THE WORD

### MOMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 12:41-44

*ew Bible, New Testament page 50/large print, New Testament page 60*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### SERMON

"10 Things I Seriously Dislike About This Text." Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### HYMN 343

"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

GERMANY

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

A New Creed (United Church of Canada)

**We are not alone;  
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.**

**We are not alone.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## CALL TO OFFERING

## OFFERTORY

God's got the whole world in God's hands. God has you and me, God's got you and me in those hands.

Mark A. Miller  
-African American spiritual; Mark A. Miller, adapt.

## DOXOLOGY

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

OLD HUNDREDTH



*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;



praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## SENDING

### HYMN 725

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

NYLAND

## BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

“Fanfare and Chorale”

Calvin Fuller

*The congregation is invited to continue worshiping 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*

Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*

The First Church Choir

Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

### **Today**

- 9:30 a.m. Childcare
- 9:30 a.m. Worship Circle with Babies & Toddlers
- 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theologians (hybrid)
- 11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship
- 11:15 a.m. Church School
- 12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
- 12:30 p.m. ClimART Café
- 1:30 p.m. Literary Group (hybrid)

### **Monday - Building closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

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

### **Tuesday**

- 6:30 p.m. Earth Care Action Group (virtual)
- 6:30 p.m. Facing Racism Action Group Meeting (virtual)

### **Wednesday**

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

### **Thursday**

- 8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing (virtual)
- 6:30 pm LGBTQ Bible Study (virtual)

### **Friday**

- 6:30 p.m. Youth Dinner (offsite)

### **Saturday**

- 10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen

### **Next Sunday**

- 9:30 a.m. Childcare
- 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theologians (hybrid)
- 10:00 a.m. Club 345
- 11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship
- 11:15 a.m. Church School
- 12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 12:00 p.m. Open Gallery of "Climate"
- 12:15 p.m. Annual Congregational Meeting
- 12:20 p.m. Student Choristers

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2025 CALL FOR ANNUAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Corporate and Congregational Meeting of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, on Fifth Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets, New York, New York, will be held in person in the sanctuary and by Zoom video teleconference on Sunday, January 25, 2026 immediately following the 11:00 a.m. worship service. This meeting is for the purpose of electing elders and deacons to replace those whose terms expire and for electing successors to the following trustees: Buffy Barton, Alyssa Browne, and Timothy Warmath and to transact such other business as may properly come before it. Nominees for election to the Trustee Class of 2029 are Thomas Hoscheid, Buffy Barton and Daniel Mapes. This meeting is open to all members of First Church.

Childcare will be extended allowing for attendance for all at the annual meeting. Childcare for infants through elementary-aged children will be provided. For more information, please reach out to Jenny Bennett at [jbennett@fpcnyc.org](mailto:jbennett@fpcnyc.org).

### POSTPONED - Lunch & Learn: Belonging and Connection with guest speaker Eric Klinenberg

Please note that the Lunch & Learn scheduled for today is postponed. Keep an eye out for the new date!

### LGBTQ Bible Study | January 22 @ 6:30 p.m. on Zoom

Is God male? Is God female? Both? Neither? What does the Bible say?? Rev. Dr. Susan DeGeorge, Stated Clerk of Hudson River Presbytery, will lead our study and discussion as we consider these questions from the Biblical perspective. Contact [lgbtq.fpcnyc@gmail.com](mailto:lgbtq.fpcnyc@gmail.com) to receive the Zoom link. All are welcome!

### reRooting | Curated by Nicole Cooper and Danielle Warren

On view now until February 8 in the Great Hall. Join us for the ClimART Café on January 18 from 12:30 to 4 pm and the Curator's Talk Lunch and Learn on February 1 at 12:30 pm. The Closing Reception on February 8 from 2 to 4 pm will include a live "Umbilical Walk" performance. Presented by the New York Artists Circle.

### Adult Education

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

- **Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. – Bible Study** meets Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. in the library and on Zoom. This winter we are studying The World of Paul, focusing on 1 Corinthians on January 21, February 4, and February 11.
- **Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Coffee and Theologians** will explore Jonathan Edwards on January 18, Harry Emerson Fosdick on January 25, and Phyllis Tribble on February 1.
- **Thursdays at 8:30 a.m., virtual January 22, 29 Prayer Writing** on zoom. These sessions create a meditative space as we write in response to prompts from scripture and additional writings. No one is asked to share their work, nor is any writing experience needed. For details and Zoom links, contact the front desk at [frontdesk@fpcnyc.org](mailto:frontdesk@fpcnyc.org).
- **Young Adults Bible Study** - Calling all 20s and 30s young adults! Join us after worship on **February 8 and February 15 from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. in the library for a bible study led by Dr. Barbara Davis**. Come to one or both! To get on the email list for future young adults events contact Emily Dawson at [emilydawson1992@gmail.com](mailto:emilydawson1992@gmail.com).

### Deacons of the Month

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

### Youth & Family Ministries

- **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; the next dinner will be on January 23.
- **Club 345 (grades 3–5)**, fourth Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Our next meeting is January 25.
- **Confirmation (grades 7–9)**, select Sundays at 12:30 p.m.; the next meeting is after worship on Sunday, February 8. For more information, contact Jenny at [jbennett@fpcnyc.org](mailto:jbennett@fpcnyc.org).

### Soup Kitchen Volunteers Needed

St. Joe's Soup Kitchen, which takes place at First Church every Saturday, needs volunteers! There are two shifts—morning food prep (10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.) and afternoon food service (1:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.)—to help cook and serve 300-plus meals to New York City's homeless and hungry. No experience is necessary, but please sign up in advance to volunteer. [volunteer@sjsk.nyc](mailto:volunteer@sjsk.nyc) or [sjsk.nyc](http://sjsk.nyc).

# who we are

## Stewardship 2026

**God spoke: “Let us make human beings in  
our image, make them reflecting our nature...”  
Genesis 1:26**

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This year, our stewardship theme is Who We Are. Stewardship is one way we live out our identity as a community shaped by faith, generosity, and shared responsibility. A pledge is a promise made in advance that helps First Church plan faithfully and sustain the worship, care, music, and outreach that define our life together. Even a modest, steady gift can make a meaningful difference.

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