

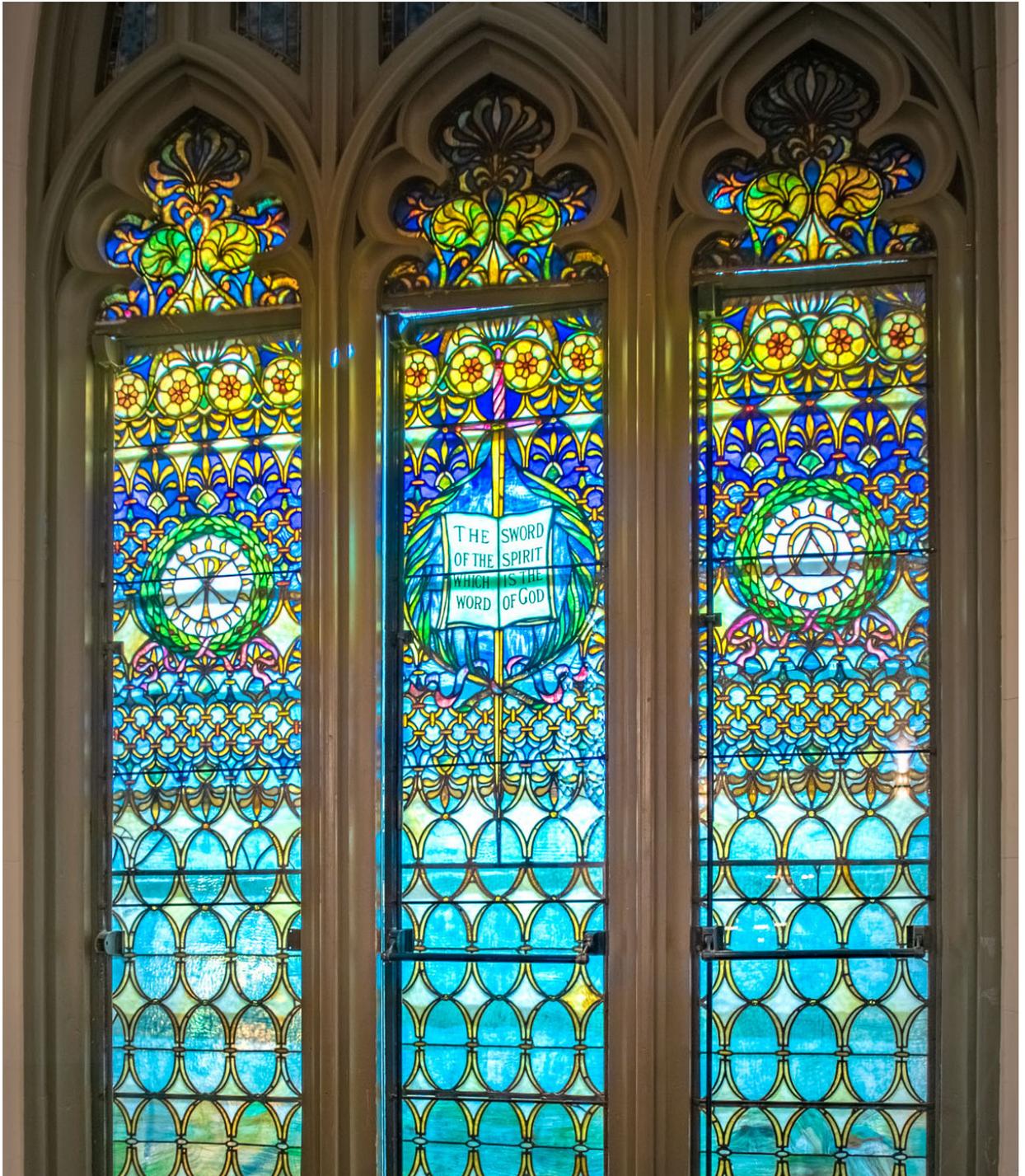
# *The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York*

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SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

*Service for the Lord's Day* | March 1, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.

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# 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 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 Great Hall 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 2026**



*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 "Master Tallis' Testament" Herbert Howells

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

What shall we return to the Lord  
for all the good things God has done for us?

**We will lift up the cup of salvation  
and call on the name of the Lord.**

God gathers us today.

**Let us worship God!**

HYMN 415 "Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy" RESTORATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Margaret Burk  
—ancient liturgical text

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**We confess, Anointed One, that we excuse ourselves  
from reaching out to those who need your care.**

**We take your words — that there will always be unmet needs —  
as a reason not to try to meet the needs we can.**

**Forgive us, and help us to change.**

**Renew our determination to live**

**as faithful followers, faithful disciples, faithful Christians.**

**Help us to work with you for the well-being of your creation,  
that the fortunes of all your peoples may be restored ...**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

CHORAL AMEN

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

CHILDREN'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.*

## HEARING THE WORD

LESSON

Mark 14:3–9

*pew Bible, New Testament page 51/large print, New Testament page 62*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Thin Places: An Unexpected Guest"

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

From the Iona Community

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

**We believe that God is present  
in the darkness before dawn;  
in the waiting and uncertainty  
where fear and courage join hands,  
conflict and caring link arms,  
and the sun rises over barbed wire.**

**We believe in a with-us God  
who sits down in our midst  
to share our humanity.**

**We affirm a faith  
that takes us beyond the safe place  
into action, into vulnerability.  
and into the streets.**

**We commit ourselves to work for change,  
to bear responsibility, to take risks,  
live powerfully and face humiliation;  
to stand with those on the edge;  
to choose life and be used by the Spirit  
for God's new community of hope.**

**Amen.**

### OFFERING INVITATION

### OFFERTORY

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm: for love is strong as death. Many waters cannot quench love,  
neither can the floods drown it.

René Clausen

—Song of Solomon 8:6–7

### HYMN 833

“O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”

ST. MARGARET

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### COMMUNION

#### INVITATION

Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;  
let those who have no money come and eat.  
**God will satisfy our souls with a rich feast,  
and we will bless the Lord as long as we live.**

### PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,  
O God our creator and redeemer...

...Therefore we praise you,  
joining our voices with choirs of angels  
and with all the faithful of every time and place,  
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

*Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

*Hosanna in the highest!*

*Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*Hosanna in the highest!*

You are holy, O God of majesty,  
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord...

...Through Christ,  
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,  
with the Holy Spirit in the holy church,  
now and forever.

Hear us now as we pray together.

**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 OF 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. The cups contain unfermented juice, so all may partake.*

### ANTHEM

Maurice Duruflé

*Tantum ergo sacramentum veneremur cernui: et antiquum documentum novo cedat ritui: præstet fides supplementum sensuum defectui.*

Therefore, so great a sacrament; let us worship with bowed heads. Let the ancient practice give way to the new rite. Let faith supply a substitute for the failure of the senses.

*Genitori, genitoque laus et jubilatio, salus, honor, virtus quoque sit et benedictio: procedenti ab utroque compar sit laudatio.*

*Amen.* To the begetter and the begotten be praise and jubilation. Hail, honor, virtue also, and blessing. To the one proceeding from both, let there be equal praise. Amen.

—St. Thomas Aquinas; sung in Latin

### HYMN 517

“Here, O Our Lord, We See You”

MORECAMBE

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

### SENDING

### HYMN 65

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

CWM RHONDDA

*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.*

*Please remain standing in body or spirit through the conclusion of the choral response.*

### POSTLUDE

“Pièce Héroïque”

César Franck

*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 Ryan Tirre.

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*

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## THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

**Today,  
March 1**

- 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 with Communion
- 11:15 a.m. Church School
- 12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 12:00 p.m. Opening Reception: "Connecting Dot: The Art of Dorothy C. Sheppard"
- 12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation
- 12:30 p.m. Presbyterian Women
- 12:30 p.m. Earth Care Seminar

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**Monday,  
March 2**

- 5:30 p.m. Qigong (virtual)
- 7:00 p.m. Current Events (virtual)

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**Tuesday,  
March 3**

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

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**Wednesday,  
March 4**

- 12:00 p.m. Music Meditation
- 12:45 p.m. Open Sanctuary
- 5:30 p.m. Conversational Spanish (virtual)
- 6:00 p.m. Art at First (virtual)
- 7:00 p.m. LGBTQ Bible Study (virtual)

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**Thursday,  
March 5**

- 8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing (virtual)
- 9:00 a.m. NY Artist Circle
- 12:30 p.m. Lenten Bible Study (hybrid)
- 5:00 p.m. Elder Care Committee (virtual)

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**Saturday,  
March 7**

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

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**Sunday,  
March 8**

- 9:30 a.m. Childcare
- 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
- 12:00 p.m. Open Gallery of "Dottie Sheppard" Show
- 12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
- 12:30 p.m. Facing Racism Book Discussion Series

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Stay connected with all that's  
happening at First Church.  
Scan to receive our weekly  
newsletter, **First Matters**.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Earth Care Seminar | Sunday, March 1 | 12:30 p.m. Lunch • 1:00 p.m. Program**

Join us in the Morrow Room for an Earth Care Seminar with Taige Rambarran, Environmental Educator and Outreach Coordinator with TreesNY. Learn how to care for neighborhood street trees, discover how they support our environment and reduce energy costs in New York City, and get your questions answered. Taige will also help us begin organizing a spring tree planting event. All are welcome.

## **Connecting Dot: The Art of Dorothy C. Sheppard | Open now through April 19**

This exhibition honors the life and work of Dorothy C. Sheppard through paintings, prints, and theatrical masks, with live mask demonstrations during the run of the show. Join us for the opening reception on **Sunday, March 1 from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m.** Gallery hours are Sundays 12:00 to 4:30 p.m. (except March 22), Tuesdays 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., and Thursdays 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.; scheduled use of the space may occasionally pre-empt open hours.

## **Lent Midweek Music Meditation with Juilliard School Organ Department Students | Wednesday, March 4 | 12:00–12:45 p.m.**

Pause midweek in the historic Sanctuary at First Church for a time of reflection and quiet, with music offered by three rising star organists from the studio of GRAMMY award winner, Paul Jacobs: Alex Leonardi, Aletheia Teague, and Cecily Demarco. All are welcome to step away from the day and be renewed through music in this Lenten season.

## **Elder Care Luncheon | Thursday, March 12 | 12:30 p.m.**

Join us for our Elder Care Luncheon featuring guest speaker Lyndsie Katz, a physical therapist at Bellevue Hospital, who will share a presentation on movement and healthy aging. All are welcome.

## **Artificial Intelligence: Ethics, Dangers, and Tools | Sunday, March 15 | 12:30 p.m.**

Join Pastor Greg in the Library on Sunday, March 15 at 12:30 p.m. for a one-hour presentation exploring what AI is, how it works, its risks, and how it can be used responsibly. Drawing on his background in engineering and decades of experience with AI, Greg will share insights and live demonstrations alongside his AI assistant, “Connie.” A light lunch will be served. All are welcome, no reservation needed.

## **Holy Week at First Church | Sunday, March 29–Sunday, April 5**

Save the date for our Holy Week worship services as we gather in prayer, remembrance, and celebration. Join us for Palm Sunday on March 29 at 11:00 a.m., Maundy Thursday with Communion on April 2 at 7:00 p.m., and Good Friday worship on April 3 at 12:00 p.m. Easter Sunday services on April 5 are at 8:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., and 11:00 a.m. Learn more and find the Lenten devotional at [fpcnyc.org/lent2026](http://fpcnyc.org/lent2026).

## **Vespers Festival of Music: Handel’s *Messiah***

SAVE THE DATE! We celebrate 180 years of First Church on Fifth Avenue with a complete performance featuring the First Church Choir, soloists, and orchestra. Sunday, April 26 at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Free; no tickets required.

## **Adult Education**

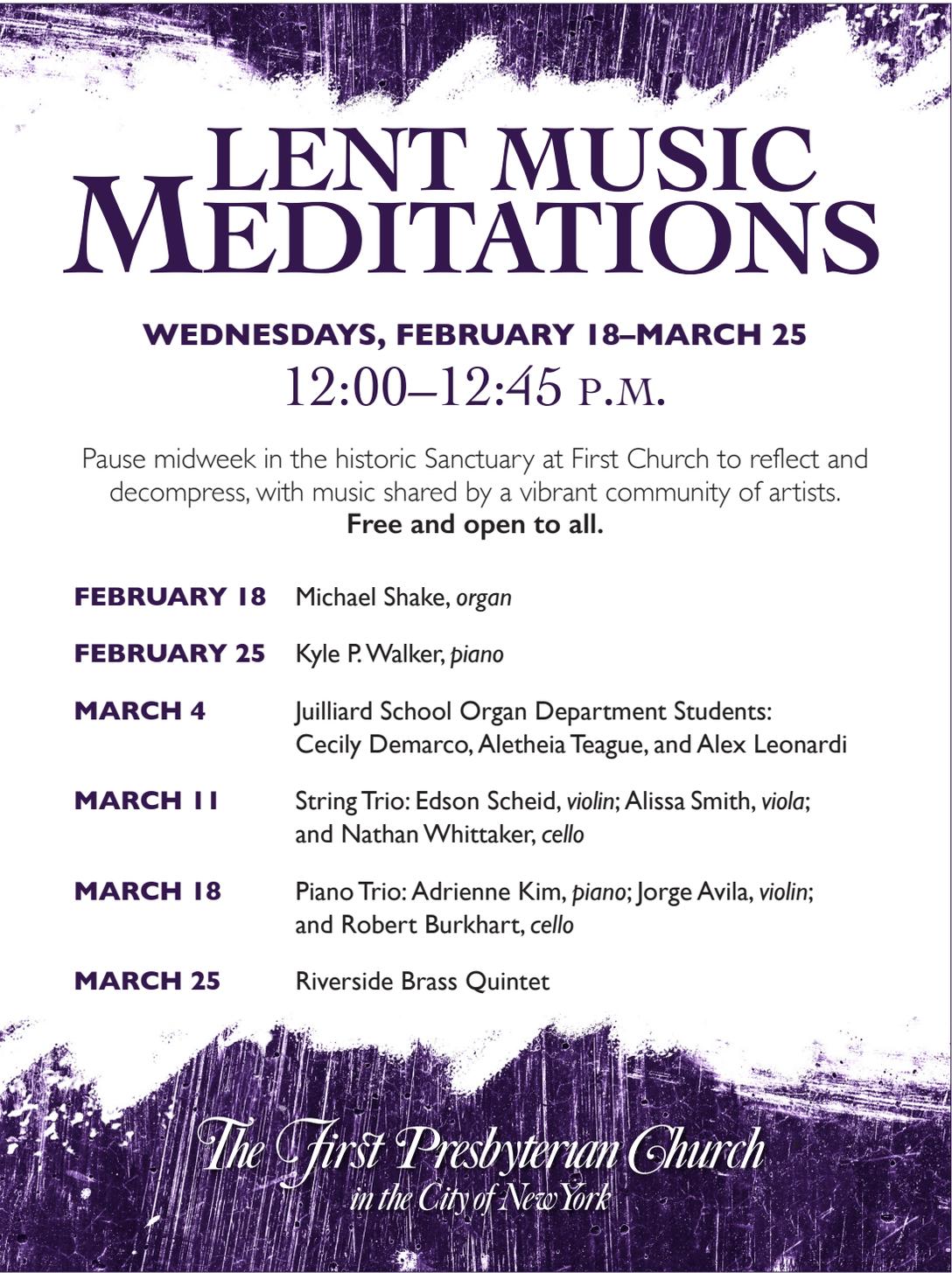
This year’s hybrid adult education programs explore hope through ancient and contemporary voices.

- **Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. LGBTQ Bible Study: Queer Bodies, Boundaries, and Healing** We invite you to join this two-part LGBTQ Bible Study as we explore themes of queer bodies, boundaries, and healing through the story of the Woman with the Flow of Blood. Together we will consider how this powerful story speaks to inclusion, wholeness, and the sacredness of our lived experience, meets virtually on March 4 and 18.
- **Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing**, Encountering the Holy, meets virtually on March 5 with themes including Fire, Water, Sky, Sea, Creatures, Humans, and Garden.
- **Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. Bible Study** Join us for Lenten Bible Study: Stories of Resistance, hybrid, March 5.
- **Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theologians** will gather for a hybrid book study of *An Altar in the World*, exploring chapters 4 and 5 on March 1 and 8.

For details and Zoom links, contact the front desk at [frontdesk@fpcnyc.org](mailto:frontdesk@fpcnyc.org).

## **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. Children ages 4–6 are warmly invited to join the Chorister rehearsals. Young singers will prepare alongside our Student Choristers and share in leading worship on Palm Sunday, March 29. All are welcome to come sing!
- **Confirmation (grades 7–9)**, select Sundays at 12:30 p.m.; **the next meeting is after worship on Sunday, March 1.**
- **Club 345 (grades 3–5)**, fourth Sundays at 10:00 a.m. **The next meeting will be Sunday, March 22.**



# LENT MUSIC MEDITATIONS

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 18–MARCH 25

12:00–12:45 P.M.

Pause midweek in the historic Sanctuary at First Church to reflect and decompress, with music shared by a vibrant community of artists.

**Free and open to all.**

**FEBRUARY 18** Michael Shake, *organ*

**FEBRUARY 25** Kyle P. Walker, *piano*

**MARCH 4** Juilliard School Organ Department Students:  
Cecily Demarco, Aletheia Teague, and Alex Leonardi

**MARCH 11** String Trio: Edson Scheid, *violin*; Alissa Smith, *viola*;  
and Nathan Whittaker, *cello*

**MARCH 18** Piano Trio: Adrienne Kim, *piano*; Jorge Avila, *violin*;  
and Robert Burkhart, *cello*

**MARCH 25** Riverside Brass Quintet

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

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