

The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Service for the Lord's Day | May 3, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.



The Sermon of the Beatitudes (La sermon des béatitudes), James Tissot, 1886–1896

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.

We are an open and inclusive community, gathered by God's grace and shaped by many cultures, identities, and experiences.

Together, we are a tapestry of God's children, seeking to respond to God's call in our lives and to witness to God's love, grace, and justice in the world.

Wherever you are in your journey of faith, we pray today's service will be a blessing to you. If this is your first time here, a member of the pastoral staff would be glad to greet you and answer any questions 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 after worship for Coffee & Fellowship in the Great Hall to meet one another, greet new faces, and enjoy refreshments and the artwork that has been installed for the Creatives Create Exhibition.

Gender-neutral restrooms are located at the back of the Sanctuary, as well as through the wooden doors at the front on the south side. Additional restrooms are located in the lobby on the north side.

GET INVOLVED

STAY CONNECTED



Scan to receive our weekly newsletter, *First Matters*.

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?



Learn more about becoming part of our community.

GIVE



Support the life and ministries of the church.

If you are in need of care, such as prayer, a call from a pastor, or a ride to the church, 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.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Voluntary in A major on the 100th Psalm”

Henry Purcell

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand in body or spirit.

We gather in your presence, God,
with our needs and the needs of the world.
We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus,
and you know by experience what human life is like.
We come with our faith and with our doubts;
we come with our hopes and with our fears.
We come as we are, because you, God, have invited us;
and you have promised never to turn us away.

HYMN 385

“All People That on Earth Do Dwell”

OLD HUNDREDTH

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious and merciful God,
forgive what our lips tremble to name.
Set us free from a past we cannot change;
open to us a future in which we can be changed;
and grant us grace to grow more and more
in your likeness and image...

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

sing 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

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Children are welcome to come forward for the prayers. Afterward, children ages 3–6th grade are invited to Church School; families may pick them up at the end of the service.

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 5:38–47a

pew Bible, New Testament page 5/large print, New Testament page 6

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“How to Love Our Enemies”

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

**and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

Tom Trenney

Father, Mother, God, thank you for your presence during the hard and mean days. For then we have you to lean upon. Thank you for your presence during the bright and sunny days, for then we can share that which we have with those who have less. Thank you for your presence during the holy days, for then we are able to celebrate you and our families and our friends. For those who have no voice, we ask you to speak. For those who feel unworthy, we ask you to pour your love out in waterfalls of tenderness. For those who live in pain, we ask you to bathe them in the river of your healing. For those who are lonely, we ask you to keep them company. For those who are depressed, we ask you to shower upon them the light of hope. Father, Mother, God, you, the borderless sea of substance, we ask you to give to all the world that which we need most—peace.

—“Prayer,” Maya Angelou

HYMN 754

“Help Us Accept Each Other”

BARONITA

Please stand in body or spirit.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

COMMUNION
INVITATION

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Almighty God,

Your desire called all of creation into being,
and Your breath has sustained us at every turning,
but we struggle to trust in your provision.

We make the earth mourn; we fill the seas with noise.

**Though you put your word in the mouths of prophets,
we stop our ears, so we do not hear.**

Nations rage; kingdoms totter.

And the world groans and grieves yet again.

Still you do not give us up.

The one you sent out of love for the world

still meets us in this bread, this cup, this community.

Hear us, as that community, as we join in the song of your unending greatness:

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!

Even when we fled from Jesus, denied and crucified Jesus,
even then you were not done with us.

Christ's empty grave still dares us to hope

that nothing can ever separate us from your love,

that pain and grief and hatred will not have the final word.

Holy Spirit, move among us now.

Be known to us in the breaking of bread...

...In the strong name of our risen Lord 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 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

AUSTIN C. LOVELACE

Beloved, let us love: for love is of God; in God alone love has its true abode. Beloved, let us love: for those who love, they only, are their children from above. Beloved, let us love: for love is light, and those who do not love still live in night.

Beloved, let us love: for only thus shall we see God, the Lord who first loved us. —Horatius Bonar, based on I John 4:7

HYMN 515

“I Come with Joy”

DOVE OF PEACE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Loving and gracious God,
as with generations before us,
you have gathered us at your table,
called us your beloved and fed us from your body.
Transform us to be your body in the world,
to love and serve all your children.
Let us be your agents of peace and hope and justice,
this day and always. Amen.

SENDING

HYMN 826

“Lift High the Cross”

CRUCIFER

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

“Allegro, from *Voluntary VIII, op. 5, no. 8*”

John Stanley

*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 Daniel Duque.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*

Rev. Dr. Mark Hostetter, *Associate Pastor*

Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*

The First Church Choir

Rick Bassett, *Pianist*

Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Creatives Create: Deep & WIDE | Exhibition Opens Today, May 3

Join us after worship for the opening of “Deep & WIDE”, a creative exhibition on partnerships around the world. What do deep and wide partnerships mean to YOU? Discover diverse interpretations of partnership, reflecting on the rich tapestry of connections which inspire thought and conversation. For more information please email creativescreate@fpcnyc.org.

Inquirer’s Class | Saturday, May 9 | 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Interested in joining the church? Join us for an Inquirer’s Class to learn more about who we are, what we believe, and how to get involved. To reserve a spot, please email Aileen Caba at acaba@fpcnyc.org.

Senior Luncheon | Thursday, May 14 | 12:30 p.m.

The Elder Care Committee invites you to attend the Senior Luncheon. Laurie Petersen, the Communications Director at Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS), will be our speaker. She will share about the many programs and resources available for seniors.

Clean it Up and Make it Pretty | Saturday, May 16 | 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Join us anytime throughout the day as we care for our neighborhood together. Help clean up our surrounding streets and plant flowers to bring beauty to our shared space. All are welcome—come for as long as you are able. Rain or shine.

The Voices Project: A City Church Film Screening | Saturday, May 16 | 11:30 a.m.

Join us at Cinema Village for a screening of *The Voices Project: A City Church*, an 80-minute film presented by First Church’s Elder Care Committee. Directed by Steve Umberger, this oral history shares the story of First Church through the voices of some of our older members, reflecting on moments that have shaped our life together. The screening will be followed by a talkback and a reception at the church. Tickets are available at cinemavillage.com.

New Member BBQ and Potluck | Thursday, May 21 | 6:00–8:00 p.m.

All First Church members are invited to a BBQ and potluck on the North Lawn as we welcome our new (and newish) members, especially those who joined through the Inquirer’s Class beginning February 2024. Burgers, buns, and condiments will be provided. Please bring a side dish to share and anything you would like to grill. To RSVP, email Mark Fontaine at mkfontaine@gmail.com and include the number attending.

Summer Music and Community for All Ages | June and July

Join us this summer for music for all ages: Summer Choir (high school and up, Sundays in June; mshake@fpcnyc.org), Summer Strummers (intergenerational ukulele, select Sundays in June and July; rbarkerasto@fpcnyc.org), Summer Worship Circle with Babies & Toddlers (select Sundays in June and July; jbennett@fpcnyc.org), and Family Summer Music (Fridays outdoors in June and July; rbarkerasto@fpcnyc.org).

Adult Education

This season, our hybrid adult education offerings explore hope through ancient and contemporary voices. All are welcome.

- **Bible Study | Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. | May 6, 13, 20, 27; June 10, 17** Join us as we explore the Gospel of John, engaging themes from Dorothy A. Lee’s commentary. Together, we will reflect on ideas central to this late first-century community, including wisdom, glory, light, and revelation. (Hybrid)
- **Virtual Prayer Writing | Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. | May 7, 14, 21, 28** A quiet, reflective space to explore prayer through writing and shared practice. (Virtual only)
- **Coffee & Theologians | Sundays at 9:30 a.m. | May 10, 17, 31; June 14** *The Work of Discipleship in Today’s World*. Gather for thoughtful conversation as we consider what it means to live out our faith today. (Hybrid)

For details and Zoom links, contact the front desk at frontdesk@fpcnyc.org.

Youth & Family Ministries

- **Worship Circle with Babies and Toddlers (ages 0–3)**, 9:30–10:15 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 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 Sunday, May 17. All are welcome to come sing!
- **Confirmation (grades 7–9)**, select Sundays at 12:30 p.m.; **the next meeting is after worship today, May 3.**

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

Deacons of the Month

The May deacons of the month are **Aurora Jones and Diane Fairbank**. They’ll be wearing a name badge at coffee hour and would be happy to answer questions about the church.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

**Today,
May 3** 9:30 a.m. Childcare
9:30 a.m. Worship Circle with Babies & Toddlers
11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship
11:15 a.m. Church School
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
12:00 p.m. Opening Reception of Creatives Create
12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
12:30 p.m. Confirmation
12:30 p.m. Presbyterian Women

**Monday,
May 4** 5:30 p.m. Qigong (virtual)
7:00 p.m. Current Events (virtual)

**Tuesday,
May 5** 6:30 p.m. LGBTQ Action Group (virtual)
8:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women (virtual)

**Wednesday,
May 6** 12:30 p.m. Bible Study (hybrid)
5:30 p.m. Conversational Spanish (virtual)
6:00 p.m. Art at First (virtual)

**Thursday,
May 7** 8:30 a.m. Prayer Writing (virtual)
9:00 a.m. NY Artist Circle
5:00 p.m. Elder Care Committee (virtual)

**Saturday,
May 9** 10:00 a.m. Inquirer's Class for New Membership
10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen
11:30 a.m. Presbyterian Women Potluck

**Sunday,
May 10** 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: Creatives Create
12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
12:30 p.m. LGBTQ Brunch (offsite)



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

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