

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

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service for the Lord's Day | August 30, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.



Hinton St. Mary Mosaic, British Museum, London, ca. 350 C.E.

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 Lobby or on the North Walkway, 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 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

“Andante espressivo, Opus 30”

MENDELSSOHN

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Romans 13:11-14

Please stand in body or spirit.

Awake from your sleep, for night is gone,
and the dawn of a new day has arrived!
Darkness once ruled our lives,
but now the light of Christ
brings our salvation to life.
Let us worship God.

HYMN 667

“When Morning Gilds the Skies”

LAUDES DOMINI

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God,
you love us, but we have not loved you;
you call, but we have not listened.
We walk away from neighbors in need,
wrapped up in our own concerns.
We have gone along with evil,
with pride, quarreling, and divisiveness.

Holy God, help us to face up to ourselves,
so that, as you move toward us in mercy,
we may repent, turn to you, and receive mercy.
Hear us as we open our hearts to you in prayer...

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

JULION



Though the shad - ows dim our vi - sion, hope is dawn - ing like the sun.



Give us strength to tend the wound - ed, till your new world has be - gun.



Word of Jus - tice, Liv - ing Prom - ise, be our life, O Ris - en One!

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

ANTHEM

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, My Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

—George Herbert

HEARING THE WORD

LESSON

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Romans 12:9–21
pew Bible, New Testament page 162/large print, New Testament page 197

SERMON

“Hold on to What Is Good”
(A Summer in Rome, Part 4)

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 697

“Take My Life”

HENDON

Please stand in body or spirit.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from Brief Statement of Faith, PC(USA), 1983

**We trust in Jesus Christ,
fully human, fully God.**
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
preaching good news to the poor
and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed
and blessing the children,
healing the sick
and binding up the brokenhearted,
eating with outcasts,
forgiving sinners,
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

ERIC H. THIMAN

Jesus, the very thought of Thee with sweetness fills my breast;
but sweeter far Thy face to see, and in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
nor can the memory find a sweeter sound than thy blest name,
O Saviour of mankind.

O Hope of every contrite heart,
O Joy of all the meek, to those who fall how kind Thou art,
how good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah, this nor tongue nor pen can show;
the love of Jesus what it is none but His loved ones know.

Jesu, our only joy be Thou, as Thou our prize will be;
Jesu, be thou our glory now, and through eternity.

—Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th c.

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 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.

SENDING

HYMN 835

Please stand in body or spirit.

"Just A Closer Walk With Thee"

CLOSER WALK

CHARGE

Go forth into the world in peace.

Be of good courage.

Hold on to what is good.

Render to no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the faint-hearted.

Support the weak.

Help the afflicted.

Honor all persons.

Love and serve the Lord,

rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

"Praeludium in F Major, BuxWV 144"

DIETRICH BUXTEHUDE

*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."

LEADING THIS MORNING
Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*
Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*
Emily Dawson, *Lay Leader*

Andrew Wannigman, *Baritone*
Colin Fowler, *Visiting Musician*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Today,
August 30

9:30 a.m. Child Care
11:00 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship

Tuesday,
September 1

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

Wednesday,
September 2

6:00 p.m. Art at First (virtual)

Thursday,
September 3

5:00 p.m. Elder Care Committee (virtual)

Saturday,
September 5

10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen

Sunday,
September 6

9:30 a.m. Child Care
11:00 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship



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

The Voices Project
A City Church



Sunday, September 27 | 12:20 p.m.
Cinema Village
22 East 12th Street

Join us for the final screening of this 80-minute oral history of First Church
created by the Elder Care Committee and directed by Steve Umberger.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remembering 9/11 with Hope | Friday, September 11 | 8:00 a.m.

On Friday, September 11, at 8:00 a.m., we will gather for a special worship service marking the 25th anniversary of September 11. Together, we will remember, reflect, pray, and look toward hope.

Homecoming 2026 | Sunday, September 13

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for Homecoming Sunday on September 13 as we begin a new program year at First Church. This year's theme, The God of Small Things, celebrates the ways God works through faithfulness in ordinary things, quietly shaping our lives and the life of our church. We look forward to beginning this new season together!

Children & Youth Registration

Church School begins on Homecoming Sunday, September 13! Registration for the 2026–27 program year is now open for Church School, Worship Circle, and other children and youth opportunities. Please complete one registration form per family. Find the registration page under Connect → Children & Youth on our website.

Coffee with the Pastor | Tuesdays Beginning September 15 | 11:30 a.m.

Drop by for coffee and conversation with Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell about life, church, faith, current events, or simply to get to know one another. All are welcome, and no RSVP is required. Join us Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m., beginning September 15, at a local coffee shop (location TBD).

Village Campus Ministry Kicks Off September 15

Calling all college and graduate students! First Church's student ministry partner, Village Campus Ministry, kicks off its program year on Tuesday, September 15. Students from any university are welcome to join Village for weekly dinner and Bible study on Tuesdays from 6:00–7:30 p.m. in the Parlor. Village also hosts retreats, service projects, learning trips, small groups, and more throughout the year. Learn more at villagecampusministry.org.

The Gospel According to the Beatles

Join Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell on Thursday nights beginning September 17 at 6:00 p.m. for a six-week journey through the music of the Beatles and the enduring themes of faith, love, hope, loneliness, memory, and resurrection. Through song, scripture, and conversation, we'll explore how some of the most beloved music of the twentieth century continues to speak to the deepest questions of our lives.

Adult Education Fall Program: The Bible, Theology, and *The New Yorker*

This past spring, *The New Yorker* published two fascinating theological articles: *How Did American Christianity End Up Like This?* and *St. Paul Remade Human History. How Did He Do It?* Join us beginning September 13 for Coffee and Theology (Sundays at 9:30 a.m.) and Bible Study (Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.) as we explore these articles in more depth.

Music at First Church: 2026–27 Season

At the intersection of the Village and the City, our musicians invite you to encounter the beauty of holiness, to live in wonder, and resonate in rhythm. Join us for another inspiring season of music at First Church. The 2026–27 season brings back cherished traditions while introducing exciting new musical offerings throughout the year. Whether you've attended these events for years or are joining us for the first time, we hope you'll be part of this season of worship, beauty, and community. Stay tuned for more details about each event in the months ahead.

Donations Needed for the Yard Sale & Tartan Fair

As we prepare for the Yard Sale in September, we are seeking donations of gently used, high-quality items, including children's toys and clothing, kitchen goods, housewares, electronics, jewelry, books, and home décor. We are also collecting designer handbags, scarves, wallets, sunglasses, and belts for this year's Accessories Boutique. Donations may be dropped off in the lobby on weekdays from 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. To make other arrangements, call the Front Desk or email tartanfair@fpcnyc.org. Volunteers are also needed to help sort and price items on Sundays from 1:00–4:00 p.m.

2026 Mission & Social Justice Grants

First Church is now accepting applications for the 2026 Grant Program. Grants support PC(USA)-related agencies and New York City nonprofit organizations working in areas such as environmental stewardship, food insecurity, immigration & refugee support, interfaith dialogue, LGBTQ advocacy, poverty relief, racial equity, and special needs populations. Know an organization that could benefit? Applications are open through September 30, 2026. You can find the application on our website at fpcnyc.org/serve/grants. Questions? Contact mission@fpcnyc.org.

Deacons of the Month

The August deacons of the month are **Bob Reiter** and **LouAnne Gilleland**. They'll be wearing name badges at coffee hour and would be happy to answer questions about the church.

HOME COMING 2026



The God of
Small Things
Sept. 13

PERMISSIONS All public domain except: *Response*. JULION; David Hurd, 1974. Words: Chris Shelton, 2019. Music ©1983 GIA Publications, Inc. Used under ONE LICENSE #73497-A. Words ©2021 GIA Publications, Inc. Used under ONE LICENSE #73497-A. *Doxology*. OLD HUNDREDTH; Genevan Psalter, 1551. Words: Thomas Ken, 1695, 1709 (Traditional); Neil Weatherhogg, 1988 (Inclusive). Inclusive Words ©1990 Neil Weatherhogg. *When Morning Gilds the Skies*. Music: Joseph Barnby, 1868. Words: German hymn, c. 1800; trans. Edward Caswall, 1853, 1858, alt. *Take My Life*. Music: H. A. César Malan, 1827. Words: Frances Ridley Havergal, 1874



This paper contains 100% post-consumer waste content, is made with windpower and made carbon neutral.

Neenah Paper is certified by Preferred by Nature for FSC® standards and Green Seal Certified. 3-05077-F