

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

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service for the Lord's Day | September 6, 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

“Grave and Adagio, Sonata no. 2 in C minor”

MENDELSSOHN

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 121

Please stand in body or spirit.

Maker of the heavens,
Lift our eyes to you.

Maker of the earth,
ground us in your love.

Maker of us all,
take us, shape us, soften our hearts.
We place this time together into your hands.

HYMN 1

“Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!”

NICAEA

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, who wanted and willed us into life,
so often we come to you with needs to be met.
Seldom we come with joy for all that has been given.

Re-sensitize us today to
the silent ministries of your quiet gifts,
the rest and renewal of last night,
the freshness and feeling of this morning,
the trust of a friend, the smile of a child.

In the living of this new day,
let us fight off any self-pity and fear...
with memories of having been loved,
with actions of good-will and caring,
with the quiet and confidence of faith.

Let us not add to the
hopelessness of anyone today,
but let us live out this day as a touch of grace. Amen.

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

The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom then shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?
Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid;
And though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in him.
For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle,
Yea in the secret places of his dwelling shall he hide me,
And set me up upon a rock of stone.

FRANCES ALLITSEN

—from Psalm 27

HEARING THE WORD

LESSON

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

Romans 13:8–14
pew Bible, New Testament page 162/large print, New Testament page 197

SERMON

“A New Day”
(A Summer in Rome, Part 5)

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

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.

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

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

Panis angelicus fit panis hominum, dat panis coelicus figuris terminum; O res mirabilis manducat Dominum, pauper, servus et humilis.

CESAR FRANCK

The bread of the angels becomes bread for people. The heavenly bread is a sign of ultimate fulfillment. O wondrous thing! The poor, the servant and the humble feast at the Lord’s table.
—Saint Thomas Aquinas, 13th 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

COMMUNION

INVITATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Praise to you, O God, for all your works. You created the world and called it good and made us in your image to live together in love. You made a covenant with us, and even when we turned from you, you remained ever faithful.

Thank you, O God, for sending us your Son. He lived among us and told your story. He healed the sick and welcomed sinners. He shared our pain and died our death, then rose to new life that we might live, and all creation be restored.

Remembering your boundless love revealed to us in Jesus Christ, we break bread and share the cup, giving ourselves to you to live for him in joy and praise.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ and that we may be his body for the world.

By your Spirit unite us with Christ and one another until we feast with him and with all your saints in your eternal realm of justice and peace. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Hear us now as we lift our voices together in prayer saying

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.

MUSIC FOR MEDITATION

“Exalted Ritual” from *Five Dances for Organ*

CALVIN HAMPTON

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of abundance,

with this bread of life and cup of salvation

you have united us with Christ,

making us one with all your people.

Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit

that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world

and continue forever in the risen life

of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SENDING

HYMN 772

Please stand in body or spirit.

“Live into Hope”

TRURO

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

“Allegro maestoso e vivace, Sonata no. 2 in C minor ”

MENDELSSOHN

*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 Jack Griem.

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

Andrew Martens, *Bass*
John Stansell, *Visiting Musician*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Today, September 6	9:30 a.m. Child Care 11:00 a.m. Worship with Communion 12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
Monday, September 7	Church Office Closed for Labor Day
Thursday, September 10	12:00 p.m. Senior Luncheon
Friday, September 11	8:00 a.m. Remembering 9/11 with Hope
Saturday, September 12	10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen
Homecoming Sunday, September 13	9:30 a.m. Child Care 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology (hybrid) 11:00 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Bibles & Bagels 11:15 a.m. Church School 12:00 p.m. Homecoming Celebration



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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senior Luncheon | Thursday, September 10 | 12:30 p.m.

The Elder Care Committee invites you to attend the Senior Luncheon on Thursday, September 10 at 12:30 p.m. Join us for “The Artist at Work,” featuring Barbara Sherman, First Church member, artist, and Chair of the Art at First program. Barbara will give us a glimpse of what she does and talk about how she seeks inspiration. We might even have a project to participate in!

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

Next Sunday, we celebrate Homecoming Sunday and the beginning of 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 welcoming you back and beginning this new season together!

FPCNS Applications for 2027–28 Are Now Open!

We’re delighted to share that the application for admission to FPCNS for the 2027–28 school year is now available online. Children who will be 2 years old (or older) on or before August 31, 2027 will be eligible to apply for the 2027–28 school year. The option of Early Decision Notification is offered to sibling applicants, children of alumni, and First Presbyterian Church members who are active in the life of the Church and who have joined the Church by October 2024. Families who meet these eligibility requirements may elect Early Decision Notification in the fall of 2026, applying for the 2027–28 school year. Please note that Early Decision Notification is never a guarantee of admission. Please contact Ashleigh Roscishewska at aroscishewska@fpcnyc.org or (646) 230-3923 for additional information.

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 Travelers Poets & Friends.

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.

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.

Deacon of the Month

The September deacon of the month is **Maged Shenouda**. He’ll be wearing a name badge at coffee hour and would be happy to answer questions about the church.

HOME COMING 2026



The God of
Small Things
Sept. 13

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