

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

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service for the Lord's Day | September 13, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.



Johannes Vermeer, *The Milkmaid*, (c. 1658–1660)

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 our Homecoming Celebration on the North and South Lawns to meet one another, say hello to new faces, and enjoy refreshments. In the event of rain, the celebration will move to the South Wing.

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

"Courante and Aria from Partita no. 4, BWV 828"

J.S. BACH

PEALING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand in body or spirit.

Come, all of you who have been filled with abundance and joy;

here we will find humility and gratitude.

Come, all of you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens;

here we will find rest for our souls.

Come, all of you who are injured and have been weighed down by yesterday;

here we will find hope.

For the mercy of God is sure,

and Christ's peace will fill our hearts this day.

HYMN 401

"Here in this Place"

GATHER US IN

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God,

Holy One,

our hearts long for you.

Our souls seek you.

Yet we confess that we often search for you in the grand and exuberant,

and fail to see you at work in the simple, the routine, and the faithful.

We look for you in the burning bush,

and fail to see you in our neighbor in need.

Heal our lack of sight.

Guide our wills, that our lives may bring you glory.

Cleanse our souls.

Hear our prayers...

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

CORVEDALE



For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of the mind;
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE
The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS AND LORD’S PRAYER
Children are welcome to come forward for the prayers. Afterward, children ages 3–5th grade are invited to Church School; families may pick them up at the end of the 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 SAMUEL WESLEY
Wash me throughly from my wickedness, and forgive me all my sin.
For I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me. —Psalm 51:2–3

HEARING THE WORD

FIRST LESSON 2 Kings 5:1–14
pew Bible, Old Testament page 336/large print, Old Testament page 416
This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON Zechariah 4:10 “Who dares despise the day of small things?”
pew Bible, Old Testament page 881/large print, Old Testament page 1078
This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON “The God of Small Things” Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 726 “Will You Come and Follow Me” KELVINGROVE
Please stand in body or spirit.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from Brief Statement of Faith, PC(USA), 1983
**In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth,
praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”**

MOMENT FOR MINISTRY Mission Review Committee

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL, ARR. HARRY T. BURLEIGH

Deep river, my home is over Jordan.

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go to that gospel feast?

That promised land, where all is peace?

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SENDING

HYMN 719

“Come Labor On”

ORA LABORA

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE

“Fugue in C Major, BWV 545”

J.S. BACH

*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*
Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*
Rev. Dr. Mark D. Hostetter, *Associate Pastor*
Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*

The First Church Choir
Colin Fowler, *Visiting Musician*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

**Today,
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

**Monday,
September 14**

5:30 p.m. Qigong (virtual)
6:30 p.m. Tartan Fair Meeting (virtual)

**Tuesday,
September 15**

11:30 a.m. Coffee with the Pastor
5:30 p.m. Village Campus Ministry
6:00 p.m. Mission Review Listening Session (virtual)

**Wednesday,
September 16**

12:30 p.m. Bible Study (hybrid)

**Thursday,
September 17**

6:00 p.m. Gospel According to The Beatles

**Saturday,
September 19**

10:00 a.m. Annual Yard Sale
10:00 a.m. Soup Kitchen

**Sunday,
September 20**

9:30 a.m. Child Care
9:30 a.m. Mission Review Listening Session
9:30 a.m. Worship Circle with Babies & Toddlers
9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology (hybrid)
11:00 a.m. Worship
11:15 a.m. Church School
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Fellowship
12:20 p.m. Student Choristers
12:30 p.m. LGBTQ Brunch (offsite)
1:30 p.m. Literary Group (hybrid)



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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

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 in 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.

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.

Annual Yard Sale | Saturday, September 19 | 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Our Annual Yard Sale is coming up! Donations will be accepted through today, Sunday, September 13. Volunteers are needed to help with set-up, the sale, and pack-up, with a variety of shifts available throughout the day. Sign up to volunteer online through SignUpGenius, at the Front Desk, or during Coffee Hour. The rain date is Saturday, September 26.

Inquirers Class | September 26 | 10:00 a.m.

Interested in joining First Church? Join us for an Inquirers Class to learn more about our congregation, what we believe, and how you can become more involved in the life of the church. To reserve your spot, please email acaba@fpcnyc.org.

Children & Youth Registration

Church School begins today! Registration for the 2026–27 program year is still 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.

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.

Voices Project Film Screening | Sunday, September 27 | 12:20 p.m. | Village Cinema

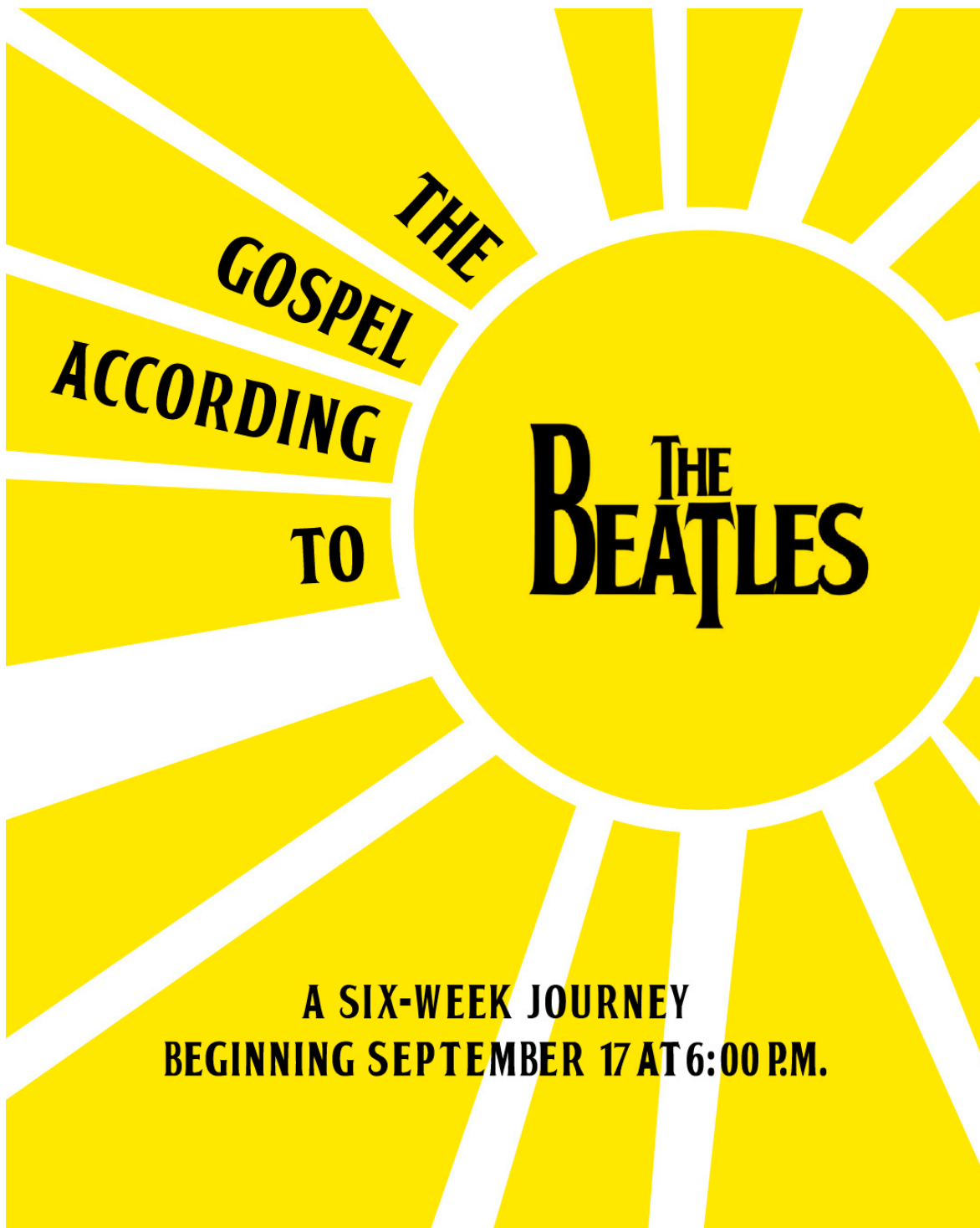
Missed the first screening? Join us for another opportunity to experience *The Voices Project: A City Church*, an 80-minute documentary presented by First Church's Elder Care Committee. Directed by Steve Umberger, the film tells the story of First Church through the voices of some of our older and longest-standing members. Through interviews, group conversations, and archival material, it reflects on pivotal moments in our shared history, including the Civil Rights Movement, LGBTQ advocacy, and the events of September 11. You can buy tickets on the Village Cinema website.

2026 Mission & Social Justice Grants Due September 30

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.

FPCNS Applications for 2027–28 Are Now Open!

We're delighted to share that applications for FPCNS's 2027–28 school year are now available online. Children who will be age 2 or older by August 31, 2027 are eligible to apply. Early Decision Notification is available to sibling applicants, children of alumni, and First Presbyterian Church members who are active in the life of the Church and joined by October 2024. Eligible families may elect Early Decision Notification in fall 2026 for the 2027–28 school year. Early Decision Notification does not guarantee admission. For more information, contact Ashleigh Roscishewska at aroscishewska@fpcnyc.org or (646) 230-3923.



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