The First Presbyterian Church
in the City of New York

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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



Simon Kick, *The Parable of the Unworthy Wedding Guest,* c. 1644

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 Coffee & Fellowship in the Lobby and on the North Lawn, 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.

Mission Review Survey
Scan to complete the Congregational Survey.

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 "Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness, BWV 654" J.S. Bach

Pealing of the Carillon

Welcome

Introit

I will arise and go to Jesus; he will embrace me in his arms. In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms. Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore; Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love, and power. Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome; God's free bounty glorify, true belief and true repentance, every grace that brings you nigh. Come, ye weary, heavy laden, lost and ruined by the fall; if you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all. *I will arise and go to Jesus...* –Joseph Hart

Hymn 619 "Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven" LAUDA ANIMA

Please stand in body or spirit.

Call to Confession

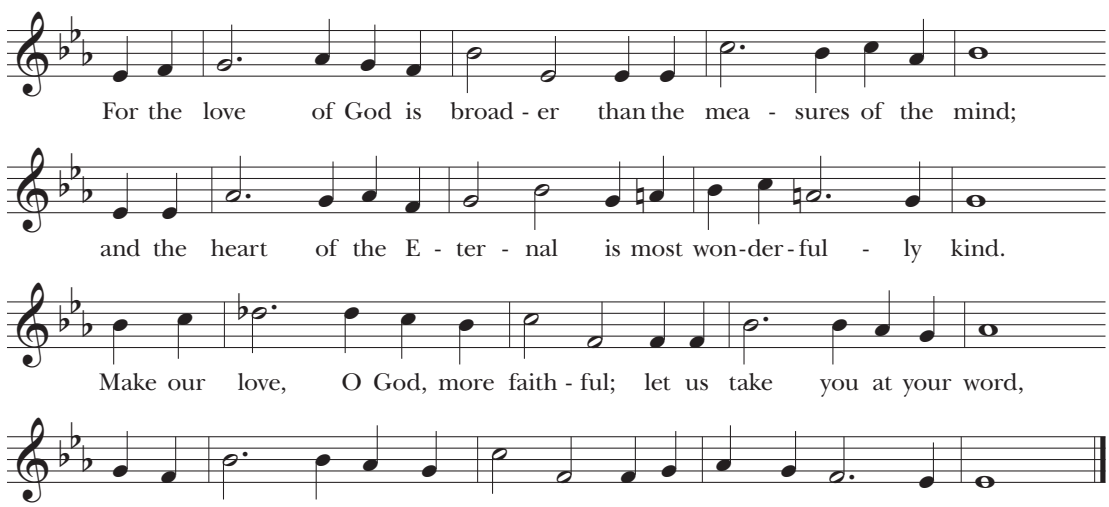
Prayer of Confession

God of mercy,
in our impatience for answers,
we sometimes turn to idols of our own making
and forget our covenant with you.
Passionate for what is right,
we wrong those with whom we differ.
Pleased at the invitation to your banquet,
we fail to arrive with humility and thanksgiving.
Forgive us when our faith is weak
and our zeal too strong...

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Response CORVEDALE



Lighting of the Peace Candle and Sharing Signs of Peace

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

Children's Prayer and the 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 — David Hurd

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back, guilty of dust and sin. But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack from my first entrance in, drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, if I lacked anything.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here: Love said, you shall be he. I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear, I cannot look on thee. Love took my hand, and smiling did reply, who made the eyes but I?

Truth, Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame go where it doth deserve. And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame? My dear, then I will serve. You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat: so I did sit and eat. —George Herbert

Hearing the Word

First Lesson — Exodus 32:1–14

pew Bible, Old Testament page 78/large print, Old Testament page 96

Second Lesson — Matthew 22:1–14

pew Bible, New Testament page 24/large print, New Testament page 29

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

Sermon — "When Church is Unsettling" — Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

Responding to the Word

Hymn 343 — "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" — GERMANY

Please stand in body or spirit.

Affirmation of Faith — from *Voices United: The Hymn and Worship Book of The United Church of Canada*

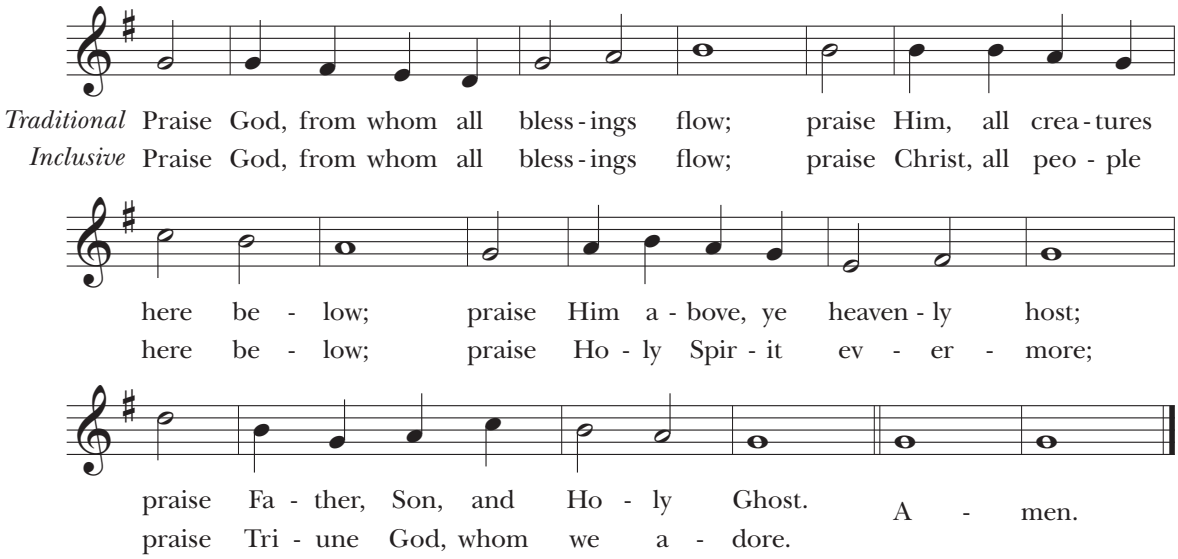
We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God: who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us. We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

Offering Invitation

OFFERTORY — Philip W.J. Stopford

O clap your hands together, all ye people; O sing unto God with a voice of melody. For the Lord is high, and to be feared; he is the great King of all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us and the nations under our feet. He shall choose out an heritage for us, even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved. God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. O sing praises, sing praises unto our God; O sing praises, sing praises unto the Lord our King. For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen; God sitteth upon his holy seat. —Psalm 47

DOXOLOGY — OLD HUNDREDTH



PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SENDING

HYMN 804 — "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!" — MARION

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE — Toccata on "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart" — Albert Travis

The congregation is invited to continue worshiping through the postlude, which is offered as a thanksgiving to God.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*
Jenny Bennett, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*
Sally Collins, *Reader*

The First Church Choir
Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*
Michael Genese, *Assisting Conductor*

This Week at First Church

Today, October 11	9:30 a.m.	Child Care
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Bibles & Bagels
	11:15 a.m.	Church School
	12:00 p.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	12:20 p.m.	Student Choristers
	12:30 p.m.	LGBTQ Brunch
	2:00 p.m.	Make it Meaningful
Monday, October 12	**Building Closed for Indigenous People's Day**	
	5:30 p.m.	Qigong (virtual)
	6:30 p.m.	Tartan Fair (virtual)
	7:00 p.m.	Current Events (virtual)
Tuesday, October 13	12:00 p.m.	Coffee with the Pastor
	5:30 p.m.	Village Campus Ministry
Wednesday, October 14	12:30 p.m.	Bible Study (hybrid)
Thursday, October 15	6:00 p.m.	Gospel According to The Beatles
	6:30 p.m.	Facing Racism Action Group Meeting (Virtual)
	6:30 p.m.	LGBTQ Bible Study (Virtual)
Saturday, October 17	10:00 a.m.	Soup Kitchen
Sunday, October 18	9:30 a.m.	Child Care
	9:30 a.m.	Coffee & Theology
	9:30 a.m.	Worship Circle with Babies & Toddlers
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Church School
	12:00 p.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	12:20 p.m.	Student Choristers
	1:30 p.m.	Handbell Choir

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

Announcements

Mission Review Congregational Survey
Please complete the Congregational Survey by this Wednesday, October 14 using the QR code inside the front cover of your bulletin. If you have any questions, please contact MissionReview@fpcnyc.org.

LGBTQ Brunch | Today, October 11 | 12:30 p.m.
Join us after worship for the monthly LGBTQ Action Group brunch in the library. We would love to have you and allies are very welcome!

Coffee with the Pastor | Tuesdays at 12:00 p.m. | Travelers Poets & Friends
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 12:00 p.m. at Travelers Poets & Friends.

The Bible, Theology, and *The New Yorker*
This fall, our adult education programs will explore the Bible, theology, and *The New Yorker* through recent articles examining American theology and the life and influence of the Apostle Paul.

- Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Theology gathers for hybrid conversation and theological reflection. The next meeting will be Sunday, October 18.
- Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. Bible Study meets in a hybrid format for a deeper exploration of the articles alongside scripture. Bible Study will continue with a study of the *New Yorker* article, *World on a String: What Prepared St. Paul to Transform Human History*.

For Zoom links, see *First Matters* or contact the front desk at frontdesk@fpcnyc.org.

The Gospel According to the Beatles | Thursday nights through October 22 | 6:00 p.m.
Join Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell for a six-week journey through the music of The Beatles and the enduring themes of faith, love, hope, loneliness, memory, and resurrection.

Youth & Family Ministries
This year, our Youth & Family Ministries programs offer children and young people opportunities to grow in faith, build friendships, ask big questions, and experience God's love through worship, learning, music, and fellowship.

- Worship Circle with Babies and Toddlers (ages 0–3 and their caregivers), 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. first and third Sundays of each month
- Church School (ages 3–grade 5), Sundays, 11:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Student Choristers (grades 1–6), Sundays, 12:20 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.
- Club 345 (grades 3–5), last Sunday of the month, 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
- Youth Leadership Council (grades 6–12), seasonal weeknight dinners throughout the year
- Bibles & Bagels (middle and high school), twice a month during worship

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

Literary Group | Sunday, October 25 | 1:30 p.m. | Hybrid
The Literary Group meets monthly at 1:30 p.m. in a hybrid format for thoughtful conversation and fellowship. The October 25 selection is *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Contact the front desk at frontdesk@fpcnyc.org for the Zoom link.

Print Fair Exhibition Opening | Sunday, October 25
Join us for the opening of Print Fair, a traveling social justice poster exhibition making its final stop at First Church this November. Meet the curators and enjoy a special performance by First Acts in honor of our nation's 250th anniversary.

Art at First: Call for Submissions | Due November 1
Art at First invites artists to submit work for Tell Me a Story, an exhibition exploring narrative through contemporary art. Artists may submit up to three pieces of two-dimensional work, along with a short statement about how the work connects to the theme. Submissions are due November 1. The exhibition will be on view in the Great Hall beginning January 17, 2027. Questions may be directed to sherman.barbara@gmail.com.

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.

FPCNS Applications for 2027–28 Are Now Open!
Applications for FPCNS's 2027–28 school year are now available online for children who will be age 2 or older by August 31, 2027. Early Decision Notification is available to eligible sibling, alumni, and First Church member families. For more information, contact Ashleigh Roscishewska at aroscishewska@fpcnyc.org or (646) 230-3923.

WORSHIP CIRCLE

WITH BABIES & TODDLERS



First and third Sundays
of each month
9:30 a.m.–10:15 a.m.
0–3 years and caregivers

Email JBennett@fpcnyc.org for more information.

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