The First Presbyterian Church
in the City of New York

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service for the Lord's Day | October 18, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.



Hilma af Klint, *The Swan, No. 17,* 1915

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 "Cantabile" César Franck

Pealing of the Carillon

Welcome

Introit CHRISTOPHER TYE

O come, you servants of the Lord, and praise God's holy name; from early morn to setting sun God's might on earth proclaim. The laws of God are just and right, they make the heart rejoice: O praise the Lord, with heart, and soul, and voice.
—paraphrase of Psalm 113:1, 3

Hymn 81 "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" AUSTRIAN HYMN

Please stand in body or spirit.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy,
we place our trust in tangible things
and question your provision and faithfulness.
Forgive us, Holy One,
when we fail to recognize
your presence and your glory.
Help us when we lose our way,
and forgive us when we forget
to whom we truly belong.
Lover of justice,
open our eyes to see you;
open our ears to hear you;
open our hearts to love you;
and open our hands to serve you.
Hear our prayers...

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.

Sacrament of Baptism 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 — Lena J. McLin

See what love the Father has given us, that we may be called the children of love. And everyone who hopes in him through the Lord is blessed. —1 John 3:1, 3 (alt.)

Hearing the Word

Lesson — Matthew 22:15-22

pew Bible, New Testament page 24/large print, New Testament page 30

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

Sermon — "Divided Loyalties" — Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

Responding to the Word

Hymn 716 — "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending" — BEACH SPRING

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.

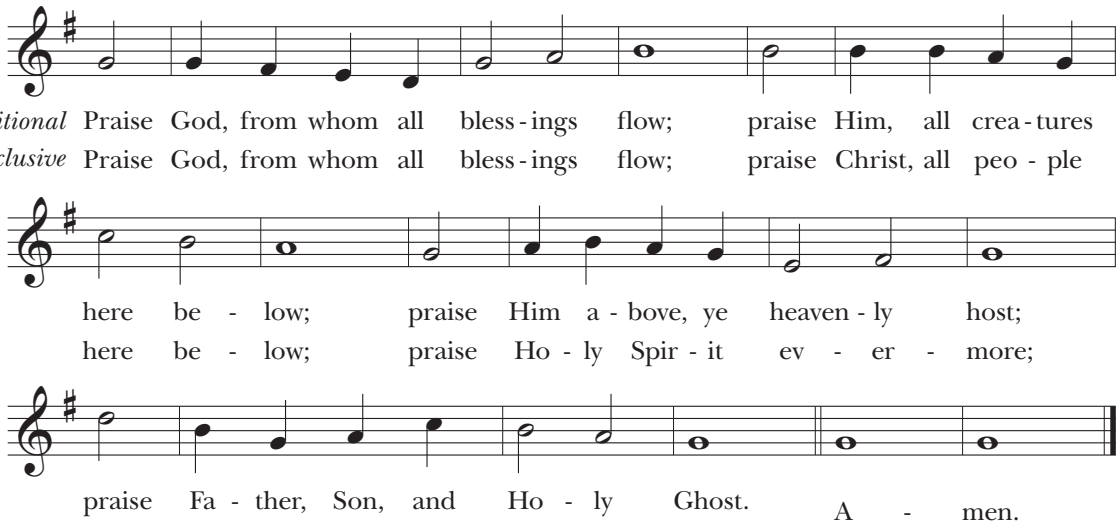
Offering Invitation

Offertory — John Ireland

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. Love is strong as death. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus; Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
—Song of Solomon 8:7, 6; John 15:13; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 2:9; Romans 12:1

DOXOLOGY OLD HUNDREDTH

Please stand in body or spirit.



PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SENDING

HYMN 307 "God of Grace and God of Glory" CWM RHONDDA

Please stand in body or spirit.

BLESSING

POSTLUDE "Marche, from *Trois Pièce pour Orgue, op. 7*" Augustin Barié

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

RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM
Ryan Edward Lipscomb
Son of Max Ferris Lipscomb & Jennifer Standish Ward

Anthony Dale Garrett
Son of Katherine Adams & Zachary Garrett

Harper Beacham-Scott
Daughter of Christopher Beacham & Adam Scott

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

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

This Week at First Church

Today, 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
Monday, October 19	5:30 p.m.	Qigong
	6:30 p.m.	Earth Care
	7:00 p.m.	Current Events
Tuesday, October 20	11:30 a.m.	Coffee with the Pastor
	5:30 p.m.	Village Campus Ministry
Wednesday, October 21	12:30 p.m.	Bible Study
Thursday, October 22	6:00 p.m.	Gospel According to The Beatles
Saturday, October 24	10:00 a.m.	St. Joe's Soup Kitchen
Sunday, October 25	9:30 a.m.	Child Care
	9:30 a.m.	Coffee & Theology
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Church School Pumpkin Decorating
	11:15 a.m.	Bibles & Bagels
	12:20 p.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	12:20 p.m.	Student Choristers
	12:30 p.m.	Art Print Fair Exhibition Opening/First Acts Program
	1:00 p.m.	Young Adult Bible Study
	1:30 p.m.	Literary Group

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

Mission Review Congregational Survey
Deadline Extended to This Wednesday, October 21

Responses to the Mission Review survey are coming in, and we are grateful to everyone who has already participated! To give more people an opportunity to share their thoughts, the deadline has been extended to Wednesday, October 21. The survey is open to everyone in the First Church community, whether or not you are a member. Scan the QR code to complete the survey.

Announcements

New Handbell Choir Begins Today
Have you ever wanted to try playing handbells? Join Rachel Barker-Asto for a new intergenerational handbell choir at First Church! No experience is necessary, and everyone is welcome to take part in this fun opportunity to make music together. Rehearsals begin today at 1:30 p.m. and continues October 25 and November 1, 8, and 15, as we prepare to share music in worship on Sunday, November 22. Questions? Contact Rachel at rbarkerasto@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.

Young Adult Bible Study | Sunday, October 25 | 1:00 p.m.
Calling all Young Adults (20s & 30s)! Join us for a special ghost stories edition of Bible Study, led by Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis. We'll examine two Bible passages and enjoy Halloween-themed treats. No RSVP needed. Contact Emily Dawson (emilydawson1992@gmail.com) if you'd like to be added to the Young Adults email list.

Art Print Fair Exhibition Opening | Sunday, October 25
Join us for the opening of *Art Print Fair,* a traveling social justice poster exhibition making its final stop at First Church this November. Meet the curators and enjoy *First Acts'* special program, *E Pluribus Unum: Out of Many, One,* reflecting on our nation's founding ideals and the pursuit of social justice in honor of its 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.

RIF Annual Coat Drive | Drop off by Wednesday, November 4
Help keep our neighbors warm this winter! The Deacons are collecting 40 new, heavy-duty winter coats in all sizes for RIF Asylum Support. Sign up at the front desk or during Coffee Hour with the coffee servers, and drop off coats in the lobby by Wednesday, November 4. Monetary donations are also welcome by check payable to First Church, with "Annual RIF Coat Drive" in the memo. Questions? Contact mvireland92@gmail.com.

Inquirers Class | Saturday, November 21 | 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Interested in joining the church? Join us for an Inquirers 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

Coffee with the Pastor | Tuesdays at 11:30 a.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 11:30 a.m. at Travelers Poets & Friends.

The Bible, Theology, and *The New Yorker*
This fall, our Adult Education programs will explore the Bible and theology alongside contemporary questions for our faith.

- Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Join us for a hybrid conversation on the *Theology of Humanity* as we explore questions raised by AI, including conversations with selections from Pope Leo XIV's *Magnifica Humanitas* and the PC(USA) *The Algorithm and The Almighty*.
- Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. Join us in a hybrid format for a deeper exploration of Paul's impact on Christianity as we discuss 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.

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.




2026–27 MUSIC AT FIRST CHURCH







11/1	All Saints' Day: Requiem
12/6	Vespers Festival: Welcome All Wonders
12/20	Candlelight Carols
2/9	Beer, Beverages & Hymns
2/10–3/17	Wednesday Lenten Music Meditations
3/26	Good Friday Seven Last Words of Christ
4/25	Vespers Festival: Rejoice in the Lamb
5/16	Music Ministry Celebration

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