Music at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church • 2025–26 Season

JOBY TALBOT'S

PATH OF MIRACLES

Friday, February 6, 2026 · 7 pm

Sanctuary

The Fifth Avenue Chamber Choir
Ryan Jackson, director

PRESENTED BY THE ARTS & OUR FAITH COMMITTEE

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

Welcome to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and thank you for joining us.
This evening's program will be sung without an intermission.
Please refrain from taking flash photos during the performance.

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Music at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

We hope you enjoy this evening's concert, the third in the thirteenth season of our annual concert series. Please read on for more information about upcoming music events at Fifth Avenue. Be sure to mark the dates in your calendar and join us again!

Tickets for choral concerts are available online at *fapc.org/tickets*.

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Bach: *St. John Passion*

Friday, March 27, 2026 • 7 pm, Sanctuary & Livestream

Join us for our annual Lent concert featuring Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. John Passion*—a gripping and deeply moving account of Christ's final hours, and one of Western music's greatest masterpieces. Through intimate arias, urgent choruses, and some of the most beautiful chorales ever written, Bach brings the Passion story vividly to life with unmatched emotional and spiritual depth. Whether you're hearing it for the first time or returning to a cherished favorite, this powerful work offers a profound musical gateway into the heart of Holy Week.

Patrick Kreeger Organ Recital

Sunday, May 24, 2026 • 12 pm, Sanctuary

Free and open to all!

Path of Miracles

Joby Talbot (b. 1971)

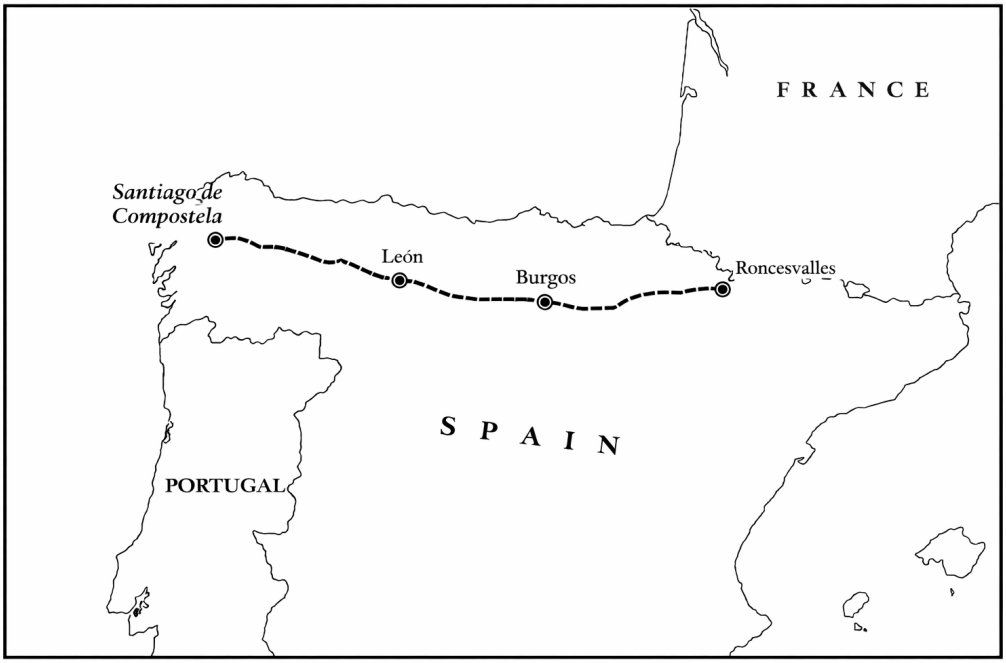
The Fifth Avenue Chamber Choir
Stella Perlic, percussion
Ryan Jackson, director

I. Roncesvalles

II. Burgos

III. León

IV. Santiago



In presenting this evening's concert, the Arts and Our Faith Committee acknowledges the generous support of the Dr. Reid and Marguerite Pitts Special Music Fund.

A NOTE ABOUT THIS EVENING'S PROGRAM

Dear Friends,

Welcome, and thank you for joining us for this evening's presentation of Path of Miracles. This remarkable modern masterpiece traces the legendary pilgrimage route through northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela, the final resting place of St. James the Apostle. James, brother of John and one of Christ's closest companions, was the first of the apostles to be martyred, executed in Jerusalem around the year 44. According to tradition, his followers carried his body across the sea to Spain, where it lay hidden for centuries until its miraculous rediscovery in the ninth century. The shrine that grew around his tomb became one of the most important destinations in medieval Christianity, and St. James emerged as a powerful intercessor: a saint to whom pilgrims prayed for protection, healing, forgiveness, and safe passage.

The road that leads to his shrine, the Camino Francés, has been a significant thoroughfare for centuries. Long before the cult of St. James took hold, this ancient route carried Romans, traders, soldiers, and seekers westward toward what was once believed to be the end of the world at Cape Finisterre. Today, the Camino is walked by people of all faiths and no faith, drawn by the physical challenge of the journey and by the possibility of personal transformation along the way. Talbot's work embraces this universality, treating pilgrimage not only as a religious act, but as a shared human experience.

Roncesvalles begins both the work and the pilgrimage itself. The movement evokes the legend of St. James: his preaching in Spain, his martyrdom in Jerusalem, and the miraculous return of his remains. The piece opens with a striking vocal effect inspired by *Pasiputput*, a traditional chant of the Bunun people of Taiwan, in which voices gradually rise in pitch and intensity. Small, tuned cymbals (crotales) mark a transition, and a solo alto singing in Greek introduces verses from Acts 12:1–2. This text is taken up by different sections of the choir in six languages: Latin, Spanish, Basque, French, English, and German, alongside *Herr Santiago,* a medieval pilgrim greeting from a twelfth-century hymn. Talbot weaves these voices together to reflect the many languages pilgrims encounter as they set out on the road.

In *Burgos*, the hardships of pilgrimage come sharply into focus. A trudging rhythmic motif mirrors the long miles underfoot, punctuated by rumors and stories of tragedies along the way. The dangers described here are both physical and spiritual, ending with a plaintive plea from Psalm 61 in the lowest voices of the choir: "From the end of the earth I cry to you."

With *León*, the journey turns inward. Light floods the music, marked by a radiant high soprano ostinato: "The sun that shines within me is my joy, and God is my guide." The walking pulse remains, but the steps are lighter, especially after the work's profound insight: "Here is a miracle. That we are here is a miracle."

The final movement, *Santiago*, carries us through the last descent toward the cathedral and beyond, to the sea at Finisterre. Ecstatic rhythms and medieval texts from the *Carmina Burana* propel us forward before the pilgrim's hymn returns once more, slowly fading into the distance—a journey completed, and a life changed.

With gratitude that your path led you to us this evening,

Dr. Ryan Jackson
William S. Perper Director of Music & Fine Arts Ministries

Path of Miracles · *Joby Talbot (b. 1971)*
Text: Robert Dickinson (b. 1962), interspersed with passages from the Bible, the 12th-century Codex Calixtinus, and other medieval sources.

I. Roncesvalles

Herr Santiagu,
Grot Sanctiagu,
Eultreya esuseya,
Deius aia nos.

Holy St. James,
Great St. James,
God help us now
and evermore.

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.

...in Greek
Κατ εκεινον δε τον καιρον επεβαλεν ηρωδηζ ο βασιλευζ taζ χειραζ κακωσαι τιναζ των απο τηζ εκκλησιαζ. Ανειλεν δε ιακωβον τον αδελφον ιωαννου μαχαιρα.

...in Latin
Eodem autore tempore misit Herodes rex manus ut adfligeret quosdam de ecclesia occidit autem Iacobum fratrem Iohannis gladio.

...in Spanish
En aquel mismo tiempo el rey Herodes echó mano a algunos de la iglesia para maltratarles. Y mató a espada a Jacobo, hermano de Juan.

...in Galician
Aldi hartan, Herodes erregea eliz elkarteko batzuei gogor erasotzen hasi zen. Santiago, Joanen anaia, ezpataz hilarazi zuen.

...in French
Ver ce temps-là, le roi Hérode se mit à persécuter quelques-un de membres de l'Église. Il fit mourir par l'épée Jacques, frère de Jean.

...in German
Um dieselbige Zeit legte der König Herodes die Hände an, etliche von der Gemeinde, sie zu peinigen. Er tötete aber Jakobus, den Bruder des Johannes, mit dem Schwert.

Before this death the Apostle journeyed,
preaching the word to unbelievers.
Returning, unheeded, to die in Jerusalem—
a truth, a truth beyond Gospel.

Jacobus, filius Zebedaei, frate Johannis,
Hic Spaniae et occidentalia
loca praedicat.
Foy el o primeiro que preegou en Galizia.

James, son of Zebedee, brother of John,
at that time preached in Spain
and the Western places.
He was the first to preach in Galicia.

Herod rots on a borrowed throne,
while the saint is translated to Heaven and Spain,
the body taken at night from the tomb,
the stone of the tomb becoming the boat
that carries him back ad extremis terrarium ("to the ends of the earth"),
back to the land that denied him in life.

Huius beatissimi apostoli sacra
ossa ad Hispanias translata.
Et despois que o rrey Erodes
mãdou matar en Iherusalem,
trouxerõ o corpo del os diçipolos
por mar a Galiza.

The sacred bones of the blessed apostle
taken to Spain.
After King Herod
killed him in Jerusalem,
his disciples took the body
by sea to Galicia.

From Jerusalem to Finisterre,
from the heart of the world to the end of the land.
In a boat made of stone, without rudder or sail.
Guided by grace to the shore of Galicia.

Abandonnant à la Providence
la soin de la sepulture.

Abandoning to Providence
the care of the tomb.

Herr Santiagu,
Grot Sanctiagu,
Eultreya esuseya,
Deius aia nos.

Holy St. James,
Great St. James,
God help us now
and evermore.

O ajutor omnium seculorum,
O decus apostollorum,
O lus clara galicianorum,
O avocate peregrinorum,
Jacobe, suplantatur viciorum
Solve nostrum Cathenes delitorum
E duc a salutum portum.

O judge of all the world,
O glory of the apostles,
O clear light of Galicia,
O defender of pilgrims,
James, destroyer of sins,
Deliver us from evil
and lead us to safe harbor.

At night on Lebredon by Iria Flavia the hermit Pelayo at prayer and alone,
Saw in the heavens a ring of bright stars shining like beacons over the plain.
And as in Bethlehem the Magi were guided the hermit was led by this holy sign.
For this was the time given to Spain for St. James to be found after eight hundred years
in Compostella, by the field of stars.

Herr Santiagu,
Grot Sanctiagu,
Eultreya esuseya,
Deius aia nos.

Holy St. James,
Great St. James,
God help us now
and evermore.

II. Burgos

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
The devil waits at the side of the road.
We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones.

We know that the world is a lesson,
As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta,
Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven.

St. Julian of Cuenca, pray for us,
Santa Casilda, pray for us.

Remember the pilgrim robbed in Pamplona,
Cheated of silver the night his wife died;
Remember the son of the German pilgrim,
Hanged as a thief at the gates of the town,
Hanged at the word of an innkeeper's daughter.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
The devil waits at the side of the road.
We trust in words and remnants, prayers and bones.

Santiago Peregrino ("St. James the Pilgrim"):
His arm is in England, his jaw in Italy,
And yet he works wonders.
The widower, the boy on the gallows,
He did not fail them.

One given a horse on the road by a stranger,
One kept alive for twenty-six days,
Unhurt on a gallows for twenty-six days.
His jaw is in Italy, yet he speaks.

The widower robbed in Pamplona:
Told by the Saint how the thief
Fell from the roof of a house to his death.

His arm is in England, yet the boy,
The pilgrim's son they hanged in Toulouse,
Was borne on the gallows for twenty-six days,
And called to his father: Do not mourn,
For all this time the Saint has been with me.

O beate Jacobe ("O blessed St. James").

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal.
We are sick of body, worthy of hell.

The apostles in the Puerta Alta
Have seen a thousand wonders;
The stone floor is worn with tears,
With ecstasies and lamentations.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven.

Santiago Peregrino ("St. James the Pilgrim"):
The devil waits in a turn in the wind,
In a closing door in an empty room.
A voice at night, a waking dream.
Traveller, be wary of strangers,

Sometimes the Saint takes the form of a pilgrim,
Sometimes the devil the form of a saint.
Pray to the Saints and the *Virgen del Camino,*
To save you as she saved the man from Lyon,
Who was tricked on the road by the deceiver,
Tricked by the devil in the form of St. James,
And who killed himself from fear of hell.

The devil cried out and claimed his soul.
Weeping, his companions prayed.
Saint and Virgin heard the prayer,
And turned his wound into a scar,
From mercy they gave the dead man life.

Innkeepers cheat us, the English steal,
We are sick of body, worthy of hell.
We beat our hands against the walls of heaven,
And are not heard.

We pray for miracles and are given stories,
Bread, and are given stones.
We write our sins on parchment,
To cast upon his shrine in hope they will burn.

We pray to St. Julian of Cuenca, to St. Amaro the Pilgrim,
To Santa Casilda, to San Millan and the Virgin of the Road.
We pray to Santiago.

We know that the world is a lesson,
As the carved apostles in the Puerta Alta,
Dividing the damned and the saved are a lesson.
We pray the watching saints will help us learn.

Ora pro nobis, Jacobe,
A finibus terrae ad te clamavi.

Pray for us, James,
From the end of the earth I cry to you.

III. León

Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis,
Et Dieus est mon conduis.

The sun that shines within me is my joy,
And God is my guide.

We have walked in Jakobsland:
Over river and sheep track,
By hospice and hermit's cave.

We sleep on the earth and dream of the road,
We wake to the road and we walk.
Wind from the hills, dry as the road,
Sun overhead, too bright for the eye.

Rumors of grace on the road, of wonders:
The miracles of Villasirga,
The Virgin in the apple tree.
The Apostle on horseback—
a journey of days in one night.
God knows we have walked in Jakobsland:

Through the Gothic Fields, from Castrogeriz to Calzadilla,
Calzadilla to Sahagun, each day the same road, the same sun.

Quam dilecta tabernacula tua,
Dominum virtutem.

How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of Hosts.

Here is a miracle.
That we are here is a miracle.
Here daylight gives an image of
The heaven promised by His love.

Beate, qui habitant in domo tua,
Domine,
In saecula saeculorum laudabant te.

Blessed are they that dwell in your house,
Lord,
They will always be praising you.

We pause, as at the heart of a sun
That dazzles and does not burn.

Li soleus qui en moi luist est mes deduis,
Et Dieus est mon conduis.

The sun that shines within me is my joy,
And God is my guide.

IV. Santiago

The road climbs through changing land.
Northern rains fall on the deepening green of the slopes of the valley,
Storms break the summer's heat;
At Foncebadon a pass can be lost, in one night, to the snow.
The road climbs for days through the highlands of Bierzo,
To the grassland and rocks of the Valcarce valley.
White broom and scrub-oak, laburnum and gorse
Mark the bare hills beside the road.
At O Cebreiro, mountains.
The road follows the ridgetop
By meadows of fern, by fields of rye.

By Fonfria del Camino, by Triacastela.
Towns are shadows the road leaves behind.
It moves over the slate hills.
Palas do Rei. Potomarin.
The names are shadows.

Then, from the stream at Lavacolla
To the foot of Monte de Gozo, a morning;
From the foot of Monte de Gozo
To the summit of Monte de Gozo
The road climbs, before the longed-for final descent
To Santiago.

Herr Santiagu,
Grot Sanctiagu,
Eultreya esuseya,
Deius aia nos.

Holy St. James,
Great St. James,
God help us now
and evermore.

Ver redit optatum, cum gaudio,
Flore decoratum purpureo;
Aves edunt cantus quam dulciter,
Cantus est amoenus totaliter.

Longed-for spring returns, with joy,
adorned with shining flowers. The birds
sing so sweetly, the woods burst into leaf,
there is pleasant song on every side.

Jacobo dat parium omnis mundus gratis
Ob cuius remedium miles pietatis
Cunctorum presidium est
ad vota satis.

The whole world gives thanks to James;
through his sacrifice, he, the warrior of
godliness, is a great defense to all
through their prayers.

O beate Jacobe, virtus nostra vere,
Nobis hostes remove
tuos ac tuere
Ac devotos adibe nos
tibi placer.

O blessed James, truly our strength, take our
enemies from us
and protect your people,
and cause us, your faithful servants,
to please you.

Jacobo, propicio veniam
speramus,
Et quas ex obsequio merito debemus,
Patri tam eximio dignes laudes demus.

Herr Santiagu,
Grot Sanctiagu,
Eultreya esuseya,
Deius aia nos.

James, let us hope for pardon
through your favor,
and let us give the worthy praise, which we
rightfully owe to so excellent a father.

Holy St. James,
Great St. James,
God help us now
and evermore.

At the Western edge of the world
We pray for our sins to fall from us
As chains from the limbs of penitents.
We have walked out of the lives we had
And will return to nothing, if we live,
Changed by the journey, face and soul alike.

We have walked out of our lives
To come to where the walls of heaven
Are thin as a curtain, transparent as glass.
Where the Apostle spoke the holy words,
Where in death he returned, where God is close,
Where saints and martyrs mark the road.

Santiago, *primus ex apostolis* ("the first of the apostles"),
Defender of pilgrims, warrior for truth,
Take from our backs the burdens of life.
What we have done, who we have been;
Take them as fire takes the cloth
They cast into the sea at Finisterre.

Holy St. James, great St. James,
God help us now and evermore.

THE FIFTH AVENUE CHAMBER CHOIR

Ryan Jackson, *Director*
Rachel Mikol, *Choir Administrator*

SOPRANO

1. Hannah Penzner
2. Howell Petty
3. Adrienne Lotto
4. Rachel Mikol
5. Erinn Sensenig

ALTO

1. Francesca Lionetta
2. Devony Smith
3. Jared Marshall
4. Garrett Eucker

TENOR

1. Sam Denler
2. Nathan Fletcher
3. Cristóbal Arias
4. Kev Schneider

BASS

1. Emery Kerekes
2. Fredy Bonilla
3. Max Parsons
4. Matthew Marinelli
5. Nicholas Hay

SPECIAL THANKS

...to all the members of the Arts and Our Faith Committee (chaired by Nancy Moore) for their vision, leadership, and hands-on support of this series, and to our dedicated team of volunteer ushers and greeters. This series could not take place without you!

...to Fifth Avenue's wonderful Communications and Facilities teams for all the ways they support this series and make it possible.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP AT FIFTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church is home to a versatile program of arts in worship that endeavors to to uplift, inspire, challenge, and comfort all who encounter it, and to provide opportunities to share our wealth of artistic gifts. Music is at the heart of worship and, hand in hand with the Word, strives to create a genuine encounter with the holy.

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The Choirs of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

The Fifth Avenue Choir is a select vocal ensemble of sixteen to twenty-five of New York's finest professional singers. Striving always to achieve the highest standard of ensemble singing, this choir presents several concerts each season, of repertoire ranging from Renaissance polyphony through contemporary American.

The Community Choir is an ensemble for those who would like to learn more about singing and music in general, and have a good time with like-minded people in the process! There is no audition to join this group—we meet on Wednesday from 6 until 8 pm, and spend our time learning about our voices and improving our varied abilities to read music. Approximately twice a month, the Community Choir sings at the 11 am worship service.

To learn more about our music ministries, or to find out how you can get involved, visit *fapc.org/music-in-worship* or write to *music@fapc.org*.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

7 West 55th Street • New York, NY 10019