

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 16, 2025 • 11:00 AM



Domenico Fetti, *The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant*, 1620

This Is God's House. All Are Welcome.

Welcome to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

Whether you are visiting for the first time, or are a longtime member, we are blessed to have you with us.

The cover of this bulletin reads, “This Is God’s House. All Are Welcome.” We take these words seriously. We strive to be a community as diverse and hospitable as God’s kingdom. We don’t all look or act alike; God knows we don’t all think alike. We don’t all read the Bible the same way. We bring different questions, and we carry different burdens. But every Sunday, gathered in the Sanctuary and online, we worship together as one.

In this grand old church, we do Sunday morning in some pretty traditional (very Presbyterian) ways. We study the teachings and the actions of Jesus. We sing many of the same hymns our grandparents sang. Yet, in our preaching and our prayers, we wrestle with the challenges of the modern world. I hope your heart will hear something personal and relevant this morning—a word of comfort, a spur to action, a call to a deeper relationship with God.

After the service, please stick around. Introduce yourself to one of our clergy or someone at our Welcome Table. We have lots of programs and community groups to feed your soul and expand your spirit. Try one out. You never know—you just might be home!

Scott Black Johnston
Senior Pastor

➔ New to Fifth Avenue?

Please fill out the welcome card you will find in your pew. Place the card in the offering plate, hand it to an usher, or drop it off at the Welcome Table (inside the Fifth Avenue entrance). You may also complete the welcome form online at fapc.org/welcome. Our friends at the Welcome Table can provide you with information about our ministries, programs and volunteer opportunities.

➔ Large-Print Bulletins

Please speak with an usher if you would like to use a large-print bulletin or hymnal to follow the service.

➔ Families with Children

Children are always welcome! You will find children’s Bibles in the first 10 rows of pews on the far north side of the Sanctuary (to the right when looking down the aisle). Ushers can also provide children’s bulletins and worship bags. If you need to leave the service with your child, the ushers can direct you to the nearest changing table and livestream monitor. Every Sunday, we provide childcare for infants and toddlers from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm in the LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center. Sunday School for pre-K through fifth grade follows the Litany of Parting during the 11 am worship service.

➔ Worship Resources Online

A replay of today’s service will be available this afternoon at fapc.org/playback. This morning’s Prayers of the People can be found at fapc.org/pray. Details about the upcoming service each week can be found at fapc.org/this-sunday. For information about future worship services, visit fapc.org/worship.

➔ Parking

We have a parking arrangement with the garage at 51 W. 56th St. For \$16, you may park for up to three hours, seven days a week. Please provide your mobile phone number or an email address to the staff person at the 55th Street reception desk. You will receive a QR code to use at the garage. (The garage no longer provides physical validation stickers.)

ORDER OF WORSHIP

*As the Prelude begins, we invite you into a period of quiet reflection as we prepare for worship.
Please **silence all electronic devices** and **do not take flash photos** during the service.*

PRELUDE

Berceuse á la mémoire de Louis Vierne
("Lullaby in memory of Louis Vierne")
Pierre Cochereau (1924–1984)

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Elder Patrick Obeng-Frimpong

from *Lamentations 3*

One: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;

All: God's mercies never come to an end.

One: They are new every morning;

All: Great is God's faithfulness.

One: Let us worship God, tender and just.

* HYMN 309

Come, Great God of All the Ages

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Barron Flood, Outreach & Engagement Intern

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**In your mercy, forgive what we have been,
help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be,
so that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.**

Silent Reflection and Confession

* SUNG RESPONSE

(Cantor sings once; then the congregation sings once.)

Send your Ho - ly Spir - it on your gath - ered peo - ple,

mer - ci - ful and lov - ing God, hear us, as we pray.

Music & Words: Jim Strathdee, 1993.

Copyright © 1993 Desert Flower Music. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-721169.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

* RESPONSE OF PRAISE



Music: Jacques Berthier, 1979.

© 1979, 1981 Les Presses de Taizé, admin. GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-721169.

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: And also with you.

*Children (pre-K through fifth grade) are invited to exit the Sanctuary for Children's Church.
If this is your child's first time at Fifth Avenue, please accompany them downstairs.*

LITANY OF PARTING

All: May God be with you there.
Children: May God be with you here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Werner Ramirez

MOMENT FOR COMMITMENT *Trustee Glenn Hubbard*

ANTHEM

Discipline • *Benjamin Stein (b. 1966)*
Text by *George Herbert (1593–1633)*

Throw away thy rod,
Throw away thy wrath:
O my God, Take the gentle path.
For my heart's desire
Unto thine is bent:
I aspire To a full consent.

Not a word or look
I affect to own,
But by book, And thy book alone.
Though I fail, I weep:
Though I halt in pace,
Yet I creep To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove;
Love will do the deed:
For with love, Stonie hearts will bleed.
Love is swift of foot;
Love's a man of warre,
And can shoot, And can hit from farre.

Who can 'scape his bow?
That which wrought on thee,
Brought thee low, Needs must work on me.

Throw away thy rod;
Though man frailties hath,
Thou art God: Throw away thy wrath.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

One: This is the Word of God; for the People of God.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

"Unforgiven"

* PRAYER FOR THE DAY

**Gracious God,
teach us mercy.
Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
Help us escape the world's spiraling cycles of wrath.
Steep us in the ways of mercy.
Amen.**

* HYMN 445

God, How Can We Forgive

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

CALL TO GIVE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*Kyrie from Solemn Mass in C-sharp minor
Louis Vierne (1870–1937)*
*Kyrie eleison, Lord have mercy,
Christe eleison, Christ have mercy,
Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.*

* DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.**

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

* HYMN 307

God of Grace

* BENEDICTION

Please remain in your pew until the conclusion of the Choral Response.

* CHORAL RESPONSE

May the Blessing of God Be upon You • *William H.M. Wright*
Text by R. Gordon Nodwell

May the blessing of God be upon you.
May God's love light all your way.
May the grace of Christ enfold you and peace around you stay.
May the Spirit of God dwell within you.
May you live in joy each day.

POSTLUDE

Sonata no. 1 in F minor: *Allegro assai vivace*
Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

The ministry of music this morning is offered by the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Choir
Dr. Ryan Jackson, *William S. Perper Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministries*
Dr. Patrick Kreeger, *Associate Organist*

WORSHIP NOTES

The composer of today's Anthem, Benjamin Stein, is a freelance musician who sings, composes, plays, and conducts throughout the greater Toronto area. Stein serves in the chancel choir at Toronto's Metropolitan United Church. He composed his touching setting of George Herbert's "Discipline" following the unexpected death of a fellow choir member in 1999.

The composer of this morning's Offertory Anthem was one of the greatest in the 20th-century French organist/composer tradition: Louis Vierne. Nearly blind from birth, Vierne showed unusual musical talent as a child. His parents promptly enrolled him in the Paris Conservatory. At the conservatory, Vierne studied with and assisted Charles-Marie Widor, composer of the famed Toccata, our traditional Easter postlude. In 1900, Vierne was appointed to be the organist at the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris, a position he held until his death in 1937.

Much of Vierne's music is characterized by an underlying melancholy, often attributed to a lifetime of physical and emotional trials. Within the overall moodiness of his music, there are also moments of peace and perspective, reflective of the kind and generous nature described by so many of Vierne's students and colleagues.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

If You Are in Need of Prayer

Deacons (wearing white stoles) are available to pray with you after the service. Your prayers are confidential unless you request that they be shared with our Congregational Care staff. You may also complete a prayer request card (available in the pews and at the entrances) and place it in the offering plate or hand to an usher. You may submit prayer requests online at fapc.org/prayer-requests.

Please pray for:

Ann Alexander, Pat Backus, Eliseo Batuan, Neta Beberino, Helen Betzaia, Becky Bjornstad Patricia Blair, Teresita Block, Sarah Boyce, Benjamin Bradley, Britta Cabanos, Ella Calderon Denise Campbell, Nina S. Campbell, Phoebe Chiu, Sookjoong Choi, Anne Coffey, Dr. Johanna Cook Edna Craddock, William Cuffee, Athanassia Doucas, Sherian Edgreen, David Elissa and Barbara Mitchell, Michael Elissa, Narmella Elissa, Daniele Engome, Jeanne Lehman French David Getz, Irene P. Gilman, Anthea and Neville Graham, Florence Hall, Torian Hall Peter S. Hawkins, Carol Healy, Christopher Henderson, Donna Marie Henderson, Emi Iwaida Tara Kay Johnson, Juliet Kaldanie, Ceciwa Khonje, Louis Sterling King, Janet Lamberth Richard J. Lawson, Violet Lorenzen, Mary Lowry, Lauren Ma, The McCall Family, Octavia McLaren Epifania Mercado, Ryan Moloughney, Gerry Nagy, Joyce Nolen, Frank Owarish, Emmett Raitt Dexter Ramcharan, Debbie Rogers, Ramon Rosa, Norma Santos, Robert Scheuer, Taylor Shultz Bonnie Smith, Monica Smith, Spencer Robert Smith, Willie Gerald Smith, Frieda Sompotan Neva Strom, Rocco Tannehill, Harold Tither, Susan Tobiason, Henny Waisapy, Bill Wanek John Weisel, Warren White, Suzanne Wilks, Sylvia Winrich, Deborah Wurgler

Faithful Departed:

November 6, 2025: Dr. Lenore Gall, beloved member of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, beloved friend of Rachael Cromwell and Annette Burtin.

November 12, 2025: Pauline Sample, beloved aunt of Deborah Kim, beloved mother of Bill Sample and Donna Sample Griffith.

If you would like to add a name to the church prayer list or the list of faithful departed, please contact Natalie Wardius (congregationalcare@fapc.org, 212.247.0490).

CALENDAR

Today

- 9:30 am** **Chapel Church.** Jones Auditorium.
Little Lambs Nursery & Sunday School. LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center.
- 10:15 am** **Children's Choir.** LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center.
- 11 am** **Worship.** Sanctuary & Livestream.
Little Lambs Nursery, Sunday School & Youth. LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center.
- 12:15 pm** **Coffee Hour.** Bonnell Hall. Join us after worship for a cup of coffee and an opportunity to chat with clergy and friends.
Sermon Springboard. Zoom. Join Rev. Natalie and members of the online campus for sermon discussion and fellowship.
Tour of the Church. After worship, look for a docent in the back of the Sanctuary with a "Tour Starts Here" sign.
- 1 pm** **Organ Recital—Dr. Patrick Kreeger.** This recital is open to all and free of charge.
-

This Week

- Mon Nov 17** **SAGES.** 12 pm • Zoom. Join elder members for fellowship and study. Contact community@fapc.org to join.
- Tue Nov 18** **Warmly Wrapped—Winter Coat Distribution Day.** 10 am • Jones Auditorium & Bonnell Hall.
Weekly Word Bible Study. 12 pm • Zoom. For more information, please email community@fapc.org. To register, visit fapc.org/community.
Women's Ministry Paint and Sip Party. 6:30 pm • Rita Arlen Room. All women are invited to join us for a fun evening of painting!
- Wed Nov 19** **Community Choir.** 6 pm • Jones Auditorium. All voices are welcome!
FAYA Midweek. 6:30 pm • The Living Room. To learn more, contact youngadults@fapc.org.
- Thu Nov 20** **Career Directions.** 10 am • Zoom. Visit fapc.org/community to learn more and to sign up.
Asian American Bible Study. 6:30 pm • 6th Floor Conference Room & Zoom.
Fifth Avenue Reading Circle: A Prayer for Owen Meany. 7 pm • Zoom.
- Fri Nov 21** **Youth Group: Last Friday Hangouts.** 7 pm • LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center. Register at fapc.org/youth.
Parents Night Out. 7 pm • The Living Room (7th floor).

Next Sunday • Pledge Sunday

"Buy the Farm" • Matthew 13:44 • *The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston, preaching.*

NEWS & EVENTS

This Month: Deacons Christmas Angel Tree Project

Help us kick off another season of gift-giving by purchasing presents for children living in city shelters or other challenging circumstances. Go to fapc.org/angel for details and a link to the gift registry. Please purchase your gift(s) by Sunday, November 30.

Today: Organ Recital by Dr. Patrick Kreeger

Today's organ recital will showcase the talents of Dr. Patrick Kreeger, the Associate Organist of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. Dr. Kreeger is an award-winning musician who studied at both Yale University and Juilliard. This 1 pm recital is open to all and free of charge.

Saturday, November 22: FAYA Friendsgiving

In your 20s or 30s? Join the Fifth Avenue Young Adults for a Thanksgiving Potluck. Together, we'll eat, play some games, share a lot of laughs, and reflect on the good things that have come into our lives this year. To learn more and sign up, please visit fapc.org/faya.

Sunday, November 23: Faith & AI: Where Do We Go From Here?

Join Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike and Jaime Staehle for a closing conversation on our Faith & AI series. We'll reflect on the questions raised throughout the series—from how AI reflects cultural hopes and fears to what theology says about power, justice, and human dignity in a technological age. Register at fapc.org/adulted and join us at 7 pm.

Sunday, November 30: Family Ministries Advent Festival

All families with children are invited to join us in the LaDane Williamson Christian Education Center for a joyful Advent celebration filled with wreath-making, tree decorating, brunch, and carols! This year, Luludi Living Art will guide a special Advent wreath project, along with fun crafts for all ages. Visit fapc.org/festival to register and contribute \$10 for brunch.

Sunday, November 30: Advent Groups

Coming to a neighborhood near you! Beginning the week of November 30, Advent study groups will meet at various times and dates around the city, in the church, and online. Together we will use a common curriculum built from our Advent sermon series. Sign ups are now open and space in each group is limited. Visit fapc.org/advent to register.

Friday, December 5, and Saturday, December 6: Handel's *Messiah*

Join the Fifth Avenue Chamber Choir and Orchestra for one of New York's most beloved holiday traditions: Handel's *Messiah*. This timeless masterpiece traces a dramatic arc from prophecy to redemption. Performed by New York's finest soloists and musicians, *Messiah* offers a moment of reflection, joy, and renewal at the start of the Christmas season. Learn more and get your tickets for livestream or in person at fapc.org/tickets.

Thursday, November 27: Meals on Heels Thanksgiving

The Meals on Heels ministry will prepare a special holiday meal on Thanksgiving morning. If you are available to help make a traditional Thanksgiving feast for our homebound neighbors, join us in Bonnell Hall at 8 am. If you can help with neighborhood deliveries, we'll need you at 11 am. We will be doing our usual Saturday morning cooking and delivery on Nov. 29 as well, and we can use your help! Contact John Wyatt at moh@fapc.org.

OFFICERS BY CLASS

The Session

The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston, *Moderator* • The Rev. Dr. Jonah So, *Executive Pastor*
The Rev. Werner Ramirez, *Associate Pastor* • The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike, *Associate Pastor*
The Rev. Chris Palmer, *Associate Pastor* • Dennis Bushe, *Clerk of Session*
Persis Luke, *Assistant Clerk of Session*

Class of 2026

Rachel Brenner
Dennis Bushe
Roseanne Lind
Nate Mahrer
Brian McLendon
Erica Moffett
Martha Van Hise
Suri Wong (Youth Elder)

Class of 2027

Chloe Hawker
Josie Lawrence
Persis Luke
Patrick Obeng-Frimpong
Thomas Pak
David Roberson
Beth Rumore Stanley
Jama Tounge

Class of 2028

Evelyn Acosta
Amanda DeMeola
Kathy Henderson
Phillip Ma
Thomas Mann
Glenda Moreland
McKenna Nelson
Lynn Wishart

The Board of Deacons

Brendan Birth, *Moderator* • Jeanne Lehman French, *Vice Moderator* • Kyle Hughes, *Secretary*
Susan Roberson, *Treasurer*

Class of 2026

Chrissy Badger
Brendan Birth
Joshua Code
Rumel Francois
Jeanne Lehman French
Bruce Ramsden
Susan Roberson
Betsy Ross
Amelia Vogler Topping
Julia Ward

Class of 2027

Jesse Allen
Jessica Carmona
Andy Craven
Myra Ford
Kyle Hughes
Susie Hunter
Trevor Illingworth
Jamie Ku
Elizabeth (Beth) McCullough
Kathy Peterson
Nicole Rusk

Class of 2028

Lisa Cinelli
Linda Ferm-Fagan
Debbie Goetz
Tingting Markstrum
Gary McKoy
Charlotte Nichols
Matt Roush
Anggryani Sumenge
David Sytsma
Suzanne Zywicki

The Board of Trustees

Jane Hong, *President* • Joyce Hansen, *Vice President* • Chris Edwards, *Secretary*
Marran Ogilvie, *Assistant Secretary* • Christopher Duffy, *Treasurer* • Constance Pond, *Assistant Treasurer*

Class of 2026

Christopher Duffy
Chris Edwards
Meredith Fleck
Jane Hong
Susan Neunaber
Thomas Wesley

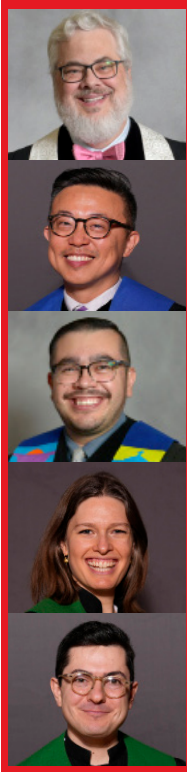
Class of 2027

Joyce Hansen
Mark Moreland
Marran Ogilvie
Constance Pond Hubbard
Phil Ryan
William Stone

Class of 2028

Julie Hennighausen
Tammi Kenton
Daniel Krueger
Janet Nettleton Otto
Sean Topping
Chrissy Wojcik

CLERGY & STAFF



The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston *Senior Pastor*

The Rev. Dr. Jonah So *Executive Pastor*

The Rev. Werner Ramirez *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care & Family Ministries*

The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike *Associate Pastor for Ministry to the Online Campus*

The Rev. Chris Palmer *Transitional Associate Pastor for Young Adults & Membership*

Austin Applebach, *Director of Engagement*

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

Stephanie Kelley, *Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor & Co-Director of Special Projects*

Donna Ketchledge, *Program Coordinator & Assistant to the Executive Pastor*

Dr. Patrick Kreeger, *Associate Organist*

Derek Maddalena, *Director of Facilities*

Sean McAvoy, *Director of Communications & Development*

Dr. Can Olgun, *Director of Chapel Church Music*

Isabel Packevicz, *Parish Visitor and Young Adult & Youth Associate*

Richard J. Schexnider, *Director of Finance*

Jaime Staehle, *Director of Christian Education*

Dr. Eugenia Oi Yan Yau, *Director of Music for Family Ministries*

CONTACT US



Announce a birth or adoption

Jaime Staehle
familyministries@fapc.org



Join the online campus

Natalie Owens-Pike
hybridchurch@fapc.org



Join the church

Austin Applebach
membership@fapc.org



Make a donation

fapc.org/give



Make a bequest

Richard Schexnider
finance@fapc.org



Plan your wedding

Donna Ketchledge
weddings@fapc.org



Prepare for baptism

Jaime Staehle
familyministries@fapc.org

Add a name to the prayer list • Natalie Wardius, congregationalcare@fapc.org

Fund the altar flowers • Natalie Wardius, congregationalcare@fapc.org

Hire our caterer • Rodrigo Rosas, rodrigo@roxoevents.com

Notify us of a death or illness • Natalie Wardius, congregationalcare@fapc.org

Request a bulletin announcement • Sean McAvoy, fapc@fapc.org

Update contact information in our database • update@fapc.org

We livestream our worship services and provide online playback on demand. We also shoot videos and photos from time to time in the church house (interior and exterior). By your presence, you grant Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church unrestricted rights to use and publish, transmit or telecast your image or likeness in communications related to the church. Please contact Sean McAvoy (fapc@fapc.org) if you have questions or concerns. If you prefer to sit outside of camera range during the service, please speak with an usher.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

SOWING Abundance

53%
\$2,000,084

The 2026 Pledge Campaign

This congregation has pledged over \$2 million for Sowing Abundance, our 2026 pledge campaign. We are over 53% towards our goal. Thank you!

Your pledge supports Fifth Avenue's abundant worship services, music ministries, robust hybrid church family, outreach to the vulnerable, and so much more.

To help our church meet its \$3.7 million goal, please make your pledge today at fapc.org/pledge.

Support the Church

Scan this code using the camera on your smartphone and follow the instructions to make a secure donation to our ministries.

fapc.org/give



Building Hours

Monday,
Wednesday – Friday
9 am – 6 pm

Tuesday
9 am – 9 pm

Saturday
8 am – 1 pm

Sunday
8 am – 2:30 pm



FAPCNYC



FAPC_NYC



FAPCinNYC



FAPC.ORG/LIVE

7 West 55th Street • New York, NY 10019