

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 21, 2025 • 11:00 AM



Domenico Fetti, *The Parable of the Weeds*, c. 1622

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

Trio Sonata no. 5, BWV 529: I. Allegro • J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

* CALL TO WORSHIP *Elder Martha Van Hise*

from “A Wee Worship Book” • Iona Abbey, Scotland

One: In the beginning:
before time, before people,
before the world began.

All: God was.

One: Here and now:
among us, beside us,
enlisting the people of earth
for the purposes of heaven.

All: God is.

One: In the future:
when our work is done
and all we know has found its fulfillment.

All: God will be.

One: Not denying the world, but delighting in it.
Not condemning the world, but redeeming it,
through Jesus Christ
and by the power of the Holy Spirit,

All: God is. God was. God will be.

One: Let us worship God!

* HYMN 342

Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor

* CALL TO CONFESSION *The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike*

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

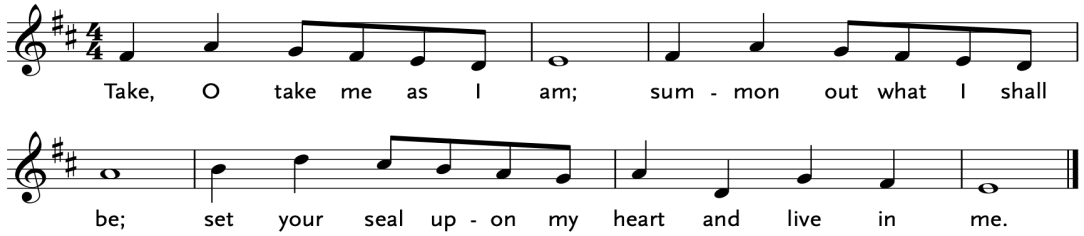
**Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.**

**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.)



Music: John L. Bell, 1995. Text: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1995.
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* **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

* **RESPONSE OF PRAISE**



Music: George Mxadana.
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|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| * PASSING OF THE PEACE | One: | The peace of Christ be with you. |
| | All: | And also with you. |
| LITANY OF PARTING | All: | May God be with you there. |
| | Children: | May God be with you here. |

*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.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev. Dr. Jonah So

ANTHEM

My Eyes for Beauty Pine
Elizabeth Coxhead (b. 1987) and Thomas Coxhead (b. 1993)

My eyes for beauty pine, My soul for Goddës grace,
No other care nor hope is mine, To heaven I turn my face.
One splendour thence is shed from all the stars above:
'Tis named when God's name is said,
'Tis Love, 'tis heavenly Love.
And every gentle heart that burns with true desire,
Is lit from eyes that mirror part of that celestial fire.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

'An enemy did this,' he replied.

The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

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

SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

"Weeds"

* PRAYER FOR THE DAY

(based on Reinhold Niebuhr's 1926 "Serenity Prayer")

**Loving God,
grant me
the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.
Maker of all life,
shape my
judgments with your boundless patience,
hopes with your promised future,
actions with your gracious hand.
In Christ's name we pray,
Amen.**

* HYMN 36

For the Fruit of All Creation

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Rev. Werner Ramirez

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

O Be Joyful in the Lord • *John Rutter (b. 1945)*

Text: Psalm 100

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands:
Serve the Lord with gladness,
And come before his presence with a song.
Be ye sure that the Lord he is God:
It is He that hath made us,
And not we ourselves;
We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving,
And into his courts with praise.
Be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.
For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting:
And his truth endureth from generation to generation.
O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands.
Glory be to the Father;
Glory be to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end, Amen.

* 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 610

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

* BENEDICTION

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

* CHORAL RESPONSE

May God Who Creates You • *Louise Skibsted*

POSTLUDE

Organ Sonata no. 1, op. 65: IV. Allegro Assai Vivace
Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

The ministry of music this morning is offered by the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Choir
Dr. Patrick Kreeger, *Associate Organist* • Rebecca Soelberg, *Soloist*

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Lisa Garn DeMaria

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, Frederick Loomis, 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, Pauline Sample, 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, Warren White, John Weisel, Suzanne Wilks
Sylvia Winrich, Deborah Wurgler

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.

The Word Is Out. 6th Floor Conference Room.

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.

Rita Arlen Room Dedication. Join us as we honor the memory of a beloved member of our congregation.

This Week

Tue Sep 23

Women's Ministry: A Walk in Central Park. 6 pm • Central Park. All women are welcome to join as we enjoy the beauty of the park and each other's company. Register at fapc.org/women for weather-related updates.

Wed Sep 24

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 Sep 25

Career Directions. 10 am • Zoom. Visit fapc.org/community-groups to learn more and to sign up.

Asian American Bible Study. 6:30 pm • 6th Floor Conference Room & Zoom.

Thu Sep 25

Fifth Avenue Reading Circle: The AI Mirror. 7 pm • Zoom. Visit fapc.org/read to register.

Sat Sep 27

Meals on Heels. 8:30 am • Bonnell Hall. Volunteers prepare and deliver weekend meals to homebound seniors. New volunteers are welcome and needed! Contact: John Wyatt (moh@fapc.org).

Sun Sep 28

The Gotto Lecture with Shannon Vallor. 2 pm • Sanctuary & Livestream. The AI Mirror: How to Reclaim Our Humanity in an Age of Machine Thinking. Register at fapc.org/gotto.

Next Sunday • Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

"Answers" • Luke 10:25-37

The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston, preaching.

NEWS & EVENTS

Today, September 21: Rita Arlen Room Dedication

The Fifth Avenue family will gather at 12:15 pm and dedicate one of the church's key spaces to the memory of Rita Arlen, a legendary and beloved member of our congregation.

Tuesday, September 23: Women's Ministry Walk in Central Park

Meet at the Central Park entrance at 6th Avenue and Central Park South at 6 pm, next to the Simon Bolivar statue for a walk and fellowship. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a water bottle. All women are welcome to join as we enjoy the beauty of the park and each other's company. Register at fapc.org/walk so we can keep you up to date regarding weather.

Thursday, September 25: Fifth Avenue Reading Circle | The AI Mirror

All are invited to join us at 7 pm via Zoom as we discuss Dr. Shannon Vallor's new book *The AI Mirror* in preparation for her joining us as this year's Gotto Lecturer. Register at fapc.org/read.

Friday, September 26: Parents Night Out

Join the parents of Fifth Avenue for food, drinks, and conversation on the Weber Terrace at 7 pm. This is a great chance to unwind and catch up with other parents in our congregation. Learn more and register at fapc.org/parents.

Sunday, September 28: The Gotto Lecture featuring Shannon Vallor

Philosopher of technology and AI ethics expert, Shannon Vallor, will deliver the Anita and Antonio Gotto Lecture in our Sanctuary on Sunday, September 28, at 2 pm. Vallor, a leading philosopher of technology and a globally recognized voice in AI ethics, is the Baillie Gifford Professor in the Ethics of Data and Artificial Intelligence at the University of Edinburgh. She directs the Centre for Technomoral Futures at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, where her work explores how emerging technologies transform human character, moral reasoning, and civic life. This lecture is free, but registration is required. Learn more and register at fapc.org/gotto.

Sunday, October 5: Deacons Food Drive Begins

The annual Deacons Food Drive gets underway on Sunday, Oct. 5, and concludes on Sunday, Oct. 12. The Deacons will be on hand following worship each morning to accept your donations of non-perishable foods on behalf of our mission partner the Urban Outreach Center NYC. This year the Urban Outreach pantry is in particular need of plastic jars of peanut butter. Learn more at fapc.org/food.

Friday, October 10 – Sunday, October, 12: Youth Fall Retreat

Take a break from screens, books, and the hustle. Join us for a weekend retreat near Beacon, NY. We will enjoy the fall foliage, fun and games in the barn, cooking together, and lots of laughter playing mafia! We depart on Friday evening and return to the church by noon on Sunday. Sign up today and prepare for a refreshing weekend away! Scholarships are available. Learn more and register at fapc.org/retreat.

Have you remembered the church in your will?

If you have included a bequest for the church in your will or estate plans, please let us know! You are eligible to join our Legacy Circle, a group of members and friends who have remembered the church in their financial arrangements. Please reach out to Sean McAvoy, Director of Communications and Development, at fapc@fapc.org, to let him know of your generous provision.

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*

<u>Class of 2026</u>	<u>Class of 2027</u>	<u>Class of 2028</u>
Rachel Brenner	Chloe Hawker	Evelyn Acosta
Dennis Bushe	Josie Lawrence	Amanda DeMeola
Roseanne Lind	Persis Luke	Kathy Henderson
Nate Mahrer	Patrick Obeng-Frimpong	Phillip Ma
Brian McLendon	Thomas Pak	Thomas Mann
Erica Moffett	David Roberson	Glenda Moreland
Martha Van Hise	Beth Rumore Stanley	McKenna Nelson
Suri Wong (Youth Elder)	Jama Toug	Lynn Wishart

The Board of Deacons

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

<u>Class of 2026</u>	<u>Class of 2027</u>	<u>Class of 2028</u>
Chrissy Badger	Jesse Allen	Lisa Cinelli
Brendan Birth	Andy Craven	Linda Ferm-Fagan
Joshua Code	Myra Ford	Debbie Goetz
Rumel Francois	Mary Sue Highmore	Tingting Markstrum
Jeanne Lehman French	Kyle Hughes	Gary McKoy
Bruce Ramsden	Susie Hunter	Charlotte Nichols
Susan Roberson	Trevor Illingworth	Matt Roush
Betsy Ross	Jamie Ku	Anggryani Sumenge
Amelia Vogler Topping	Elizabeth (Beth) McCullough	David Sytsma
Julia Ward	Kathy Peterson	Suzanne Zywicki
	Nicole Rusk	

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*

<u>Class of 2026</u>	<u>Class of 2027</u>	<u>Class of 2028</u>
Christopher Duffy	Joyce Hansen	Julie Hennighausen
Chris Edwards	Mark Moreland	Tammi Kenton
Meredith Fleck	Marran Ogilvie	Daniel Krueger
Jane Hong	Constance Pond Hubbard	Janet Nettleton Otto
Susan Neunaber	Phil Ryan	Sean Topping
Thomas Wesley	William Stone	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

Meet the worship facilitators!



Austin, Sabrina, and Derek are our Sunday worship facilitators. If you have any questions or concerns during worship or Coffee Hour, please let one of them know!

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



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