

***The First Presbyterian Church
in the City of New York***

Mission Review

April 2006

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MISSION

The mission of First Presbyterian Church is to challenge and encourage each of its members to follow Jesus Christ's first two commandments: to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind," and to "love your neighbor as yourself." In furtherance of this mission, First Church seeks to provide spiritual and practical guidance in interpreting and implementing Biblical teaching. Worship, education, fellowship, and outreach are designed to support this mission and to foster the spiritual growth and commitment of all church members. The congregation of First Church believes strongly in an open and inclusive church that extends an unqualified welcome in Christ's name to all who seek to join in following Jesus Christ, living in his grace and sharing his love.

STATEMENT OF WELCOME

as it appears in our bulletin each Sunday

As a community of those who seek to carry out their historic mission of:

. . . the publick worship of God in the Presbyterian Form in the City of New York . . .

and in so doing to follow Jesus Christ, live in his grace, and share his love, The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York extends a simple and unqualified welcome, in Christ's name, to all who seek to join us.

We affirm that there can be no exclusiveness within the body of Christ, and therefore invite all children of God into membership, encouraging the full participation of all members in every area of life of this congregation. This participation includes as the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states (G-5.0202):

. . . the right to participate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to present children for baptism, to take part in the meetings of the congregation, and to vote and hold office.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

Before calling a new Associate Pastor, this Committee thought it appropriate and necessary to prepare a mission review that more closely reflects our fast-growing and ever-changing congregation. We were indebted in this task to the work of First Church's last Mission Review Committee, which issued its report in January 2003. This document represents a substantive update and revision of that report. It has been informed by consultations with the Session, Deacons, and Trustees and with the congregation at large in a series of open meetings (See Appendices A, B).

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MISSION REVIEW

“And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6.8)

WHO WE ARE . . .

First Church has over 1000 members and has grown rapidly in recent years. Most new members are under forty years of age. Many are young families with children. Three hundred children under the age of five are part of our community. In terms of age, almost half of our members are aged 26 to 45 and another quarter 46 to 55, the two largest segments of the congregation. While we are predominantly a young congregation, all generations are represented. Most of us are well-educated and come from a variety of religious backgrounds. The majority of us have chosen to make our lives in New York City although we grew up elsewhere, hailing from all over the United States and abroad. Although many of us live in the neighborhood of the church, members come from all over the city and from nearby suburbs. We are black, white, Asian, and Hispanic. We are single, married, and divorced. Gay, lesbian and straight, we all mix comfortably with one another. We seek the same measure of diversity in our spiritual companionship that we find in the makeup of our city. In keeping with our belief in the value of inclusiveness, we have declared our firm opposition to Amendment B (G-6.0106(b)) to the *Book of Order*, the amendment that restricts office holders in the church to single persons living in chastity and to married persons. All are welcome as we explore, question, learn and trust one another. Intellectual integrity and diversity of experience lead us to challenge ourselves and one another and to grow in faith. As our pastor Dr. Jon Walton has written “unless we can bring [a] lively exchange to our understanding of our Scriptures, we deny our intellect and emotional responses, and we limit our faith” (p. 4. *Imperfect Peace: Teaching Sermons on Troubling Texts*. Nashville, 1999).

WHERE WE ARE . . .

We are a city congregation living amid the incongruities of life in New York. We live amidst its immense wealth and its crushing poverty. We have chosen to live in this stimulating and challenging place. The church is located in the heart of Greenwich Village, long a home for artists and intellectuals. New York University, the New School University, Cooper Union and the Benjamin Cardozo Law School are among our neighbors (See Appendix C). Within this busy and disparate environment, First Church is a community that provides a sense of family for its members. Service opportunities both within and outside our walls offer opportunities for interaction that fosters friendship. The beautiful 1846 sanctuary provides the setting for our worship, the center of our life together. Excellent preaching and music create an experience that is rich and formal but never distant or impersonal. The Christian education program serves all age groups. A nursery school and a public school for autistic children operate on the premises. First Church enjoys a distinguished heritage, both in New York City and in the larger

Presbyterian Church (See Appendix D). It has helped shape responses to major religious, political, and social challenges in the church, in New York City, and in the nation for the past three centuries.

WHERE WE WANT TO GO...

We want to maintain the centrality of worship in our Christian experience. We want to integrate new members more actively into the life of the church community and at the same time meet the needs of groups within our community, including young singles, young couples, older persons, and young families. We want to provide more programs and space for our growing number of children and teens. We want to maintain our identity as an urban church by engaging the city the best we can. We need to increase our involvement in the world beyond our walls and to provide the congregation with more opportunities for volunteer service. A greater understanding of the responsibility of stewardship must be instilled in the congregation. We must maintain and modernize the beautiful buildings in order to bequeath them to generations to come (See Appendix E). In sum, we want to grow in faith and become more committed disciples of Jesus Christ.

WORSHIP

Worship at First Church is exciting. We sense a current of anticipation and energy when we enter the sanctuary on Sunday morning. The sermons are relevant, thoughtful, intelligent, based upon scripture, and delivered with passion and enthusiasm. Our music is the joyful noise we make. We fill our space. We are diverse in age, background, and circumstance, but we are united in common worship. We leave the service moved and spiritually nourished for the week ahead.

Perhaps the highest priority of the mission of First Church is to provide for and participate in the public worship and praise of God. We are unanimous in feeling that worship is the strength of the church and we wish to maintain this priority.

We have a single Sunday morning service at 11:00 a.m. It follows the “Service for the Lord’s Day” from the Book of Common Worship. Our pulpit has a long and distinguished history. Jon Walton, our senior pastor since September 2001, follows a notable line of preachers including Jonathan Edwards, Charles Parkhurst, and Harry Emerson Fosdick, as well as more recently John O. Mellin, John B. Macnab, and J. Barrie Shepherd. Dr. Walton’s preaching is dynamic, intellectually stimulating, progressive, and Biblically based (Sermons are available on our website. <http://www.fpcnyc.org>). Associate pastors share preaching responsibilities with Dr. Walton usually at one service a month and may preach at services both on Sunday mornings and at other times. Lay readers, including youth, read the Lessons.

Music is a vitally important part of the service. It supports and prompts us in worship, praise and contemplation. William Enriken, our organist and choirmaster, leads a large,

concert-quality choir in a classical repertoire. Many are professionally trained singers and many are members of First Church. A youth choir and a children's choir directed by Faye Timmer add vibrancy to the Sunday service from time to time.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper once a month. Pastors, elders and deacons usually serve the congregation in the pews. Our custom is for communicants to take the bread together but the cup in their own time, a practice that makes clear both the communal and personal aspects of the experience. Communion is a time for reflection. A processional cross leads the choir on communion Sundays and during Lent. Baptisms, both child and adult, take place during Sunday worship. The pastor carries a newly baptized infant down the center aisle in order to introduce her or him to the congregation. We rejoice in having baptized forty babies in 2005. Before the sermon every Sunday, our burgeoning child and pre-teen population comes down the aisles to the chancel steps to join the ministers for a prayer that never fails to speak to young and old alike. After the prayer, most children leave the sanctuary with their teachers for church school and music time. New members are presented to the congregation five times a year.

Our beautiful Gothic revival sanctuary is open to the community for worship and meditation at midday several times during the week. A vesper service is held the first Wednesday of every month in the restored Alexander Chapel. The Lord's Supper is celebrated every Wednesday during Lent. We recognize September 11th, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Christmas with special services. The annual Thanksgiving Eve service is an interfaith experience planned and led by Greenwich Village synagogues and churches.

COMMUNITY

One of the blessings for members of First Church is the sense of fellowship that we feel. We value our friendships and the opportunity to share our concerns with one another. This does not mean, however, that the church always serves as a center for its members' social life as it might in a smaller town. New York City is a rich environment that offers us every opportunity for pursuing our interests. The variety of our daily work means that few of us see one another during the week, and our children attend many different schools. The complexity of our busy lives increases the value of the time we are together as a congregation. First Church is the spiritual home to which we return, a place of welcome where we are reminded of and learn what it means to be Christian. We are spiritually renewed each week when we are together.

Service opportunities, educational programs and social events bring us together. We teach Sunday school, volunteer for the kitchen crew, staff the homeless shelter, help with church mailings, and usher. We serve on committees of the Session or the Trustees. The adult Christian education program is extensive; it offers Bible study, theological exploration, and the discussion of issues affecting society today. A knitting circle and a literary discussion group meet regularly and the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered) group meets once a month. The women's retreat is an annual event. An

active Family Ministry Committee sponsors events and activities that augment the Church School program. Infant and toddler gatherings bring children and parents together as do Children's Choir activities. Strong lay leadership is a major factor in implementing these programs, but more pastoral staff would make these programs even better.

Church-wide fellowship can be found in the crowded coffee hour after the Sunday service. The Tartan Fair in early December uses the talents of many of us, including those of the artists in our community whose contributions help make this money-raising event a success. More importantly, the Fair gives us the opportunity to work together. Cookouts on the lawn are events of summer Wednesday evenings, followed by a film and discussion. We join in a picnic on the north and south lawns on Homecoming Sunday in September. The annual Advent Family Dinner, and the children's Easter Egg Hunt, are attended by many of our families. Easter is made more festive with a celebratory breakfast.

First Church's food service is exceptional. We definitely eat well. We have a large and well-equipped kitchen where a busy Kitchen Committee prepares meals for committee meetings, luncheons for new and prospective members, refreshments for receptions, and food for many special events. The large crew of kitchen helpers take turns volunteering and work under nearly professional direction, enjoying one another's fellowship as they chop and stir. The quality of the food and the knowledge that it is of our own making increase the pleasure of the meals we receive together.

We live in a transient society, and this city is especially mobile. Although we have many long time members, others, including students, young persons just beginning their careers, and growing young families, move on quickly. This fast changing population presents challenges. For instance, there is the need to develop a sense of responsibility for stewardship in those who are passing through. But along with the challenges of change there are also opportunities to encourage and share our faith with our younger members, for however long they are here, and speed them on, nourished by their experience at Old First.

Our recent growth in numbers is another important opportunity. We want to retain the sense of family that binds us together and at the same time remain ready to welcome visitors into our midst. We must work harder at integrating our many new members into the community as a whole, and we must develop leadership from within this group. We need to examine the needs of all the constituencies in our membership so that each can have a sense of belonging. We must also provide more occasions for us to work and play together so that we may get to know one another better.

SOCIAL OUTREACH

Our faith is not confined to the walls of the church or limited by the hours we spend there. We reach out to the larger community in which we find ourselves. Although some of our service has roots in the church community, much originates with members who, refreshed by worship and fellowship, move out into the surrounding world and commit

their time and talents to a variety of service activities both local and beyond. Our publication, “Ways to Help”, directs individuals to organizations in our community that share our goals.

There are three major categories of sharing in which the church is currently engaged: church-based or church-related activity, the sharing of our buildings, and direct financial assistance.

Church-based and Church-related Service

We share God’s love for all the world through a variety of service opportunities for our members. We are responsible with two other neighborhood churches for staffing and maintaining a homeless shelter in our church parlor where ten men can spend the night during the coldest months of the year. Volunteers set up the area and spend the night in this facility. We also host an annual Health Fair for the community with free flu shots and blood pressure screening. We have a special relationship with the Church of Gethsemane, a Presbyterian church that works with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. Our members support members of this sister church by packing care packages for incarcerated members, participating in a literacy program and collecting food for its food pantry. Groups from First Church visit this Brooklyn church from time to time throughout the year to worship with its congregation. The Children’s Choir sings there annually. For the last two years a group of us has helped build houses in Nicaragua through the Bridges to Community organization. In February, 2006, an interfaith discussion group including Jews and Presbyterians concerned about divestment, sent First Church members along with Jewish conversation partners on a trip to Israel to observe Israeli-Palestinian relations first hand. Several times a year we prepare Sunday night dinner for residents of Bailey House, a group residence for homeless persons diagnosed with AIDS. Our Deacons sponsor baby showers at the New York Foundling Hospital. We have responded to disaster needs in the community including 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. In July 2006, members of First Church are going to the Gulf as part of a Presbytery visitation and work team. Our grade school children participate in community service with their parents through our “First Kids” program.

Members have expressed a desire for even more opportunities to participate in programs initiated by First Church. We are actively seeking new areas for outreach and community service.

Mission Through Sharing our Buildings

Space is a valuable commodity in New York City, and our buildings are a resource that we share. The church doors are open regularly Sunday through Friday and sometimes on Saturdays as well. During the week a variety of groups meet here including 12-step programs (AA, DA, NA and Al-Anon), the Caring Community (a senior center), after school enrichment programs, classes offered by a charitable organization that provides in-service training to social workers, and a public school for autistic children. We also operate a large nursery school that enjoys an excellent reputation in the city. “Art at First”

allows local artists to display their work in the South Wing. These juried exhibitions rotate throughout the year. At any time day or evening one or more groups are probably meeting within our walls (A monthly activity calendar can be seen on our website. <http://www.fpcnyc.org>).

Financial Mission

First Church's direct financial support of mission beyond our walls is funded primarily from the portion of our endowment restricted for benevolence. We are challenging ourselves to do more each year. Grants go to PC (USA) mission causes, to theological seminaries, and to other Presbyterian institutions such as the Church of Gethsemane and the Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center in Holmes, New York. We support the Covenant Network, the organization that works to overturn Amendment B (G-6.0106(b)) at the national level, and Presbyterian Welcome, a presbytery-wide advocacy organization for gay and lesbian Presbyterians. Primary areas of our focus for non-Presbyterian organizations have recently been homelessness and ministry with the aging. Individual members make special gifts through One Great Hour of Sharing, the Peacemaking Offering, and other special appeals as they arise.

FINANCES, BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York is the steward of an historic and beautiful structure. The buildings include the 1846 sanctuary, the 1898 South Wing, the 1917 westward extension of the sanctuary, and the 1955 Mellin-Macnab building, each designed by a distinguished architect of the period. Our grounds cover an entire city block front. The church steps are flanked by two large lawns — rare green spaces on elegant Fifth Avenue — that are the setting for church picnics in the warmer months and provide a place for little ones to spend some energy after services. The lawns are enhanced by beautiful and well-kept plantings that add color in the spring and greenery during the winter months. All of the buildings are connected, although the South Wing is separated from the Mellin-Macnab building by the sanctuary. A large and very fine Austin pipe organ is an essential element of our Sunday worship, special music services, and organ concerts. The Alexander Chapel in the South Wing has been recently restored and fitted with its own pipe organ to accommodate smaller gatherings. We are proud of the fact that our entire campus has New York City Landmark status. But this is an expensive distinction, since we are required to maintain the historic appearance of our structures.

First Church is blessed with a helpful endowment, and we could not support our activities at their current level without it. The 2006 budget is planned for the endowment to fund about 26% of the \$2.4 million in expenses, down from 28% in 2005 and 29% in 2004. These figures exclude the expenses of the nursery school, which establishes its own budget, and the funds from the benevolence endowment. We use income from the endowment at a spending rate that limits the amount taken for current operating expenses to 5.125% of a rolling three-year average of the endowment in 2006. In order to preserve

principal, this draw will be reduced .125% each year until we reach a level of 4.25%. Pledges and other giving provide nearly 54% of the budget, and much of the remainder comes from rental income. Approximately 34% of our spending goes to pastoral, worship and related activities such as music and Christian education, and another 45% to ongoing maintenance, repairs, and staffing of the building. Benevolences managed by the Church and Society Committee are 5.2% of operating expenses. The remainder goes to administrative and committee expenses.

The blessings of a beautiful old church and a modest endowment are not all blessing! Aging is another word for “old,” and it is difficult to find adequate resources with which to provide for the long term needs of the physical structure on which the congregation’s growing numbers make ever greater demands. The endowment, so generously left us by those who have gone before, is also problematic because some members take comfort in a false sense of security. The present membership must do its share to preserve our long and rich heritage, and to help the church meet today’s needs.

Planning for our future life as a congregation is already underway. The requirements of the physical plant have been assessed in relationship to our mission. In 2005 the Special Committee on Facilities and Mission (SCOFAM) presented to the Session and the congregation its Vision Study Document recommending changes in staffing, program, and building improvements (See Appendix E). We know that its recommendations are ambitious, but we have every expectation that its provisions will be realized. At the present time, details for its implementation are being discussed, and funding requirements are being studied. The congregation is aware that it will undertake a campaign for capital improvement in the near future.

CONCLUSION

We value our worship together and we value the sense of community that we feel. When new members are asked what brought them to First Church, they almost invariably were attracted by our strengths in these two regards. We are grateful to those who have gone before whose gifts help make it possible for us to maintain our beautiful physical surroundings. We are a strong and lively church.

The strengths of today, however, cannot be taken for granted. They must be preserved and developed to meet the emerging needs of our growing congregation. We believe our associate pastor will play an instrumental role in helping our congregation meet a number of these important challenges:

We must provide opportunities for all of our members to find fellowship within our growing church. We have not yet identified or begun to address the needs of our younger adult members. We need to create a community of support and fellowship and to engage the talents and time of those who are looking for ways to express their faith through Christian service. Such areas as men’s and

women's programs, couples ministry, small group gatherings, and outreach to the universities that surround us are all areas that can and should be developed.

We want to maintain a supportive ministry for the elderly and homebound among us, emphasizing home visitation and sharing with those who cannot be present in worship the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the ministries of prayer and presence.

While several ongoing ministries of outreach and community involvement already exist, there is room for growth and for assuming new responsibilities in service to the community around the church. Our members have only limited time to give, but they do want to serve, and we should be developing new programs to help them put heart and hands to work.

Our new Associate Pastor will need to possess the ability to lead worship confidently and expressively. He or she must be able to preach inspiringly, pray fervently, teach wisely, counsel compassionately, and administer programs competently.

First Church has been blessed with a long line of wonderful ministers throughout its distinguished history. But for all the pride we take in our past, we look forward to a future that will be every bit as inspiring and faithful as all that has gone before, and we welcome the gifts that our Associate Pastor will bring us together as we walk the path that God shows us.

APPENDIX A

INVITATION TO OPEN FORUMS

January 26, 2006

Dear Members and Friends,

"And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6.8) This opens the section on the key theological issues of the Church Information Form that was used in the previous search for an Associate Pastor. The statement endures and so becomes the starting point from which to move forward to the next stage of our development. The question remains how the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee can implement that intent in a search for an Associate Pastor.

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) is in the process of defining the challenge and opportunity that a new pastor will find here and in setting forth the ways in which she or he can make our church as strong and effective a witness as possible. Although the Committee has much to build on (the 2003 Mission Review Committee's report and the Vision Statement of the Special Committee on Facilities and Mission), it is aware that the church is a changing and evolving body and so asks the present congregation to contribute their views on issues that relate to the search for an Associate Pastor. Two meeting times have been arranged when the congregation can meet with the Committee in order to exchange information and discuss priorities.

A meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 12, 12:30 p.m., after the service, in the Esther Morrow Room in the South Wing. For those for whom an evening meeting would be more convenient, a second session will be held on Wednesday, February 15, at 7:00, in the Esther Morrow Room.

These are the questions that the Committee would like to discuss with members:

In regard to the ministry of the church:

- What are the strengths of First Church and what could be improved?
- What could First Church be doing for outreach?

In regard to the ministry of the Associated Pastor:

- What should be the primary focus of the work of the Associate Pastor?
- How could the ministry of the Associate Pastor help you or your family?

If you cannot attend either of these meetings but have thoughts about the search that you would like to share with the Committee, you can put them in writing; address them to the APNC and send them to the church to the attention of Reade Ryan. Or you can e-mail him at rryan@fpcnyc.org.

Sincerely yours,

Reade H. Ryan Jr., Chair.
 Stuart Buice, Sally Collins, Marjorie Henning, Donna Hurley, Su Yon Pak, Al Picallo, Ryan Sudol, Larry Tallamy

APPENDIX B

APNC MEETINGS WITH CHURCH MEMBERS — SUMMARY

Not ranked in order of importance

What are the strengths of First Presbyterian?

- Worship, preaching and music
- Beautiful facility
- Growing congregation; growing young congregation
- All inclusive and diverse
- Current leadership
- Strong lay leadership and lay participation (including youth in worship)
- Volunteer opportunities; community service
- Progressive
- History
- Events that bring people together, e.g. Tartan Fair
- High level of education
- Endowment
- Presbyterianism at its best
- Nursery school; PS 226
- Creativeness of congregation
- Sense of community; warm and welcoming
- Family oriented
- Vibrant youth programs

What could be improved?

- Integrating new members into the First Presbyterian community
- Need for better communication
- Keeping up with numbers of children and teens
- Participation in stewardship—pledges
- Connecting stewardship with spirituality
- Education new members to Presbyterianism and Christianity
- Separate groups within church—barriers to open fellowship
- Turnover of members
- Cost of maintaining buildings
- Programs for young singles
- Youth and young adult programming
- More connections to community groups/community service

Outreach—what can First Church do?

- Outreach to sick and infirmed
- Responding to national and natural disasters, e.g. Katrina
- Officers training to alert them to resources in dealing with members' needs, e.g. mental health crises, housing issues
- More integrated outreach programs with local, national and international foci
- Outreach within the denomination and the Presbytery
- Partnering with other churches that need assistance

- Use of space for the arts
- Support groups, e.g. cancer survivors
- Extended care outreach—members to identify their talents and expertise
- Intergenerational outreach even within this building

Primary focus of Associate Pastor

- Complement the work of the head pastor
- Pastoral care
- Heart of the church/outreach
- Ministry to families
- Good preacher
- Planning of and presence at social and fellowship events
- Address the demographic change and unique needs
- Staff relations/administration
- Youth ministry and young adult

Desirable attributes of Associate Pastor

- Be able to translate the broad concepts, mission into concrete tasks
- Vigorous and vibrant, energetic
- Warm and compassionate
- Commitment to Associate Pastor position, comfortable in that role
- Comfortable in urban setting
- Clinical pastoral education
- Adaptable
- Strong spiritual leader
- Understand life transitions
- Comfortable with diversity of people
- Innovative and creative
- Can-do person

Ranking of Associate Pastor's responsibilities

<u>Category</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Worship	21
Pastoral Care	19
New members	18
Working relationships	15
Family ministry	10
Specialized ministry to groups	9
Oversight/supervision of Deacons/committees	8
New Outreach	5
Existing Outreach	5
Church communications	4

APPENDIX C

THE FIRST CHURCH NEIGHBORHOOD

Greenwich Village, sometimes called this country's Left Bank, is among the oldest of communities in New York City. It has attracted generations of writers, musicians, artists, and intellectuals to its tree lined streets and quaint intersecting avenues. It is home to art galleries, jazz clubs, Off-Broadway theaters, boutiques, bookstores and numerous parks, including historic Washington Square Park. Our picturesque community draws television and movie film crews, who use the backdrop of our stores, streets, and neighborhoods as locations for their productions. The Hudson River Park on the west side of the Village provides opportunities for cycling, jogging, rollerblading, and walking. Not far away is Chelsea Piers where gyms, tennis courts, and athletic facilities abound. The Village offers ample and picturesque space for outdoor recreation and exercise.

The Caring Community, the program for seniors that meets in our South Wing, is one of six centers in Greenwich Village serving older residents. Saint Vincent's Hospital is two blocks away and the Village Nursing Home is a short walk west on 12th Street. The First Presbyterian Church Nursery School is one of 21 preschool facilities in Greenwich Village. Also located in the Village are major institutions of higher education including New York University, Cooper Union, Benjamin Cardozo Law School, the New School University, and Parsons School of Design. They draw tens of thousands of students, professors and other staff to our neighborhood. We are located in the New York Public School District Two, which has an assortment of well-regarded public schools in addition to a number of fine private schools (source: Manhattan Community District 2).

For school information: <http://www.nycenet.edu/OurSchools/default.htm> and <http://www.nycenet.edu/daa/SchoolReports/>

Information from the 2000 census describes the population characteristics of an area with a radius of approximately .65 miles from First Church (source: <http://map.nazarene.org>). The population is 126,411. Approximately 79.1% are white, 8.8% Asian, 7.5% Hispanic, and 3.6% African-American. Of 74,588 households, 18,192, or 25%, are family households, defined as persons living together related by blood or marriage or as unmarried partners. 31.8% of family households are households with children.

72.6% of those 25 and older are college graduates. 33% have done graduate work or hold graduate degrees. Highly educated, the population is also quite affluent: 61% of households have incomes of over \$50,000; 31.8% are over \$100,000.

APPENDIX D

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FIRST CHURCH*

“These are the things we have stood for: tolerance, an inclusive Church, the right to think religion through in Modern terms, the social applications of the principles of Jesus, the abiding verities and experiences of the gospel. And these are right. . . . We have lifted a standard that no one will put down. We have stated an issue that no man or denomination is strong enough to brush aside.”

*--Farewell Sermon of Harry Emerson Fosdick
March 1, 1925*

We, the members of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, have inherited a legacy of courage, faith and creative thinking that for three centuries has helped shape the convictions of our denomination, the culture and politics of our city and, indeed, the very beginnings of our nation.

The origins of First Church predate its familiar location on Fifth Avenue in Greenwich Village. Known as the “Church in Wall Street” when it was founded in 1716, the church nearly broke apart in its infancy due to conceptual differences between its English and Scottish parishioners. The English objected to the rigid theology and discipline of James Anderson, First Church’s first pastor. Leaving the church, the English held their own services, which for eight months were led by a nineteen-year-old pastor and graduate of Yale named Jonathan Edwards. Yet the English returned to the church in 1723, and therein perhaps lies the seed of compromise which the congregation nurtures to this day—to hold in balance the elements of formality and liberality that allow for the fullest possible expression of faith.

The 18th Century Great Awakening that spread throughout America split many denominations, including the Presbyterian, into the “new side”, which encouraged an emotional religious experience, and the “old side”, which appealed more to reason. Led by Pastor Ebenezer Pemberton, the Wall Street Church took the “new side” approach, and in 1738 became the only church in the city to open its doors to the visiting British revivalist, George Whitefield.

Though the early church community struggled through a period of “Clamour and Confusion,” as remarked by Pemberton, its members did not forsake the needs of their less fortunate brethren. They organized the “Scots Society,” one of the earliest benevolent organizations in the city, and held a “hilarious feast” on St. Andrew’s Day to raise money for the poor. Advancing education in the colonies was also a priority, as First Church members helped charter Princeton University and found the New York Society Library.

* This essay draws extensively on *A City Church: The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York 1716-1976*, Dorothy Canfield Fowler, published by the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, 1981.

When the great political struggle of the American Revolution rocked the young congregation, the church gained its reputation as “The Church of Patriots.” Pastor John Rodgers, who would later serve as a chaplain in the colonial army, led a congregation which favored independence due to its members’ distaste for autocratic church governance and their longstanding grievances against England. On his way to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, John Adams attended services at the Church in Wall Street and met with several “Sons of Liberty” in the congregation. New York Presbyterians paid a heavy price for their independence, as the “Church of the Patriots” was closed for seven years and turned into a barracks for British soldiers. Its parsonage was burned and its affiliate, Brick Church, was used as a hospital.

When peace returned to the city in 1783, Presbyterians gathered at the less-damaged Brick Church to hear Dr. Rodgers preach on “The Divine Goodness Displayed in the American Revolution.” A copy of the sermon was sent to General Washington. Dr. Rodgers continued to provide strong leadership to the church into the 19th century, winning a decades-old battle for incorporation in 1784, and laying the cornerstone of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church as his last public act in 1807.

It was not until 1846 that the Church in Wall Street moved to its present location on Fifth Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets in Greenwich Village. The move was occasioned by a northward trend in residential development and the opportunity to join an area of new growth and intellectual promise that included Union Theological Seminary and New York University. Designed in the Gothic revivalist tradition, the commanding tower of ashlar masonry and arched lancet windows must have contrasted with the neighboring farmhouses to striking effect. Though commentators of the day were mixed in their appreciation, the first President of the American Institute of Architects would later describe First Church as “one of our city’s outstanding pieces of architecture.”

While music has, throughout First Church history, been of serious importance to the congregation, it gained new prominence in the life of the church when William C. Carl joined as organist in 1892. Classically trained in Paris, twice decorated by the French government, and honored with the degree of doctor of music by New York University, during his 40-year tenure Carl instilled a tradition of musical virtuosity that continues to this day.

In meeting the needs of immigrants who poured into New York City during the latter half of the 19th century, the record of First Church is eloquent, clear, and matched by the charitable traditions of those congregations with which it merged in 1918: the Presbyterian Church on University Place and the Madison Square Presbyterian Church. All three churches created strong Sabbath School Missions, youth clubs, and benevolence and outreach programs to minister to the new Americans. In his autobiography, Charles H. Parkhurst, pastor of Madison Square, described the merger as having “established an institution so securely planted as to be proof against the effect of shifting populations and all other adverse influences that might assert themselves for generations to come.”

In the period of reform at the turn of the twentieth century, Parkhurst, considered one of the most brilliant and effective preachers in the city, built his reputation as an agitator by attacking corruption in city government. Calling officials “a lying, perjured, rum-soaked, and libidinous

lot,” he turned his efforts into a political campaign that defeated Tammany Hall in the mayoral campaign of 1894.

As Parkhurst spoke out courageously to reform city bureaucracy in the 1890s, so Harry Emerson Fosdick preached against the fundamentalism that so wrenched the Presbyterian denomination in the 1920s. In his historic sermon of May 21, 1922, preached at First Church, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” Dr. Fosdick alleged that fundamentalists seemed to want “to drive out of the evangelical churches men and women of liberal opinions.” In effect, this is precisely what happened to him, for Dr. Fosdick resigned as Associate Minister on September 7, 1924, rather than be subject to creedal dictates of the General Assembly, which was strongly influenced by William Jennings Bryan, fundamentalism’s leading exponent before his humiliation at the Scopes trial. Throughout the controversy, First Church stood firm, its session supporting Dr. Fosdick at every stage of the struggle.

Regrettably, as was true of the national government, not until the 20th century did First Church address the needs of women to participate equally and to hold positions of leadership. In 1930, two women were elected to the Board of Deacons, the first in the history of the Presbytery of New York City. Also in 1930, the Session called upon the Presbytery of New York City to petition the General Assembly for the ordination of women, which it so voted. Twenty-seven years later, in 1957, First Church elected its first women elders.

When the world encountered one of the greatest threats of the modern age, the catastrophe of Hitler, the preacher in the pulpit was Julius “Val” Moldenhawer. Moldenhawer, a Scandinavian immigrant and Shakespearian scholar, called attention to the Nazi menace well before his contemporaries took notice. The mood of the nation was strongly isolationist, yet Moldenhawer stood alone among the so-called “Avenue” church preachers in arguing that Christian moral responsibility made pacifism and isolationism impossible. In his sermon, “Prayer for Britain,” Moldenhawer grimly remarked “what a frightful thing it would be” were the cross to be “replaced by the kind of authority symbolized by the Swastika, Hammer and Sickle and the Sun Flag.” After the defeat of Japan, Moldenhawer declared, “[w]e do not dare think about another war,” and charged Christians with a renewed responsibility to keep the peace in the atomic age.

John O. Mellin was only 28 years of age in 1947 when he took over for Moldenhawer in the pulpit. He was soon joined by his friend and Union Seminary classmate, John B. Macnab, and the two together filled a unique and successful co-pastorate that lasted 35 years. They guided the church through the turbulent sixties and engaged it in the social issues of the day, including opposition to the Vietnam War. As strong supporters of the civil rights movement, Mellin and Macnab were instrumental in the election of Elder G. Hawkins, the first black moderator of the General Assembly. The trustees of First Church followed the example set by their pastors in reallocating church assets to greater benefit minority owned banks and investments.

In 1955, a new church house (later named the Mellin-Macnab Building) was constructed adjacent to the sanctuary. Edgar Tafel, a principal assistant to Frank Lloyd Wright, was given the challenging task of blending modernist utilitarian sensibilities with the Gothic style of the existing structure. Tafel’s design struck a perfect architectural balance and was distinguished by

the Fifth Avenue Association in the same year that his mentor was similarly recognized for the Guggenheim Museum.

J. Barrie Shepherd was pastor in the 1990's, and on his watch began the expansion of membership that continues today. Dr. Shepherd came to First Church as a well-regarded poet and preacher. During his time at First Church, he was instrumental in establishing the annual Tartan Fair, encouraging the restoration of the landmark South Wing, and developing a collegium of Village religious leaders, including Baha'i, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant clergy.

Rev. Dr. Jon Walton, our current pastor, preached his first sermon at the church on September 9, 2001. Two days later the city and the church experienced an event of historic importance, the attack on the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan. The church lost seven of its family on that day. In the days and weeks following that event, people from all over the world came to the sanctuary to pray and worship at First Church. Many other congregations and friends from around the nation sent financial gifts, and others expressed concern for the church and its members through cards, emails, and letters. The church used the financial gifts to support legal efforts to protect tenant right for those who were adversely affected by the September 11th attack. Each year on the Sunday closest to September 11th the church remembers the day in worship.

Today, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been the frequent topic of recent educational programs, sermon references, and the public witness of members of First Church. We continue to bear the challenging legacy of being the historic "Church of the Patriots," while at the same time holding firm to the values of the Prince of Peace in a time when there is no peace. It remains to be seen how this changing world environment will affect the life of the congregation in the years ahead, but for the time being it is clear that the church has entered the Twenty-first Century with the same attributes of courage, faithfulness, and responsiveness that have characterized its distinguished history.

APPENDIX E

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FACILITIES AND MISSION VISION STATEMENT

PREAMBLE TO THE VISION STATEMENT DECEMBER 2004

First Presbyterian Church is a church of historic significance in the City of New York facing the current challenge of growing numbers of worshippers on Sunday mornings, growth in the church school, a vibrant and positive image within the community, active use of its facilities by outside and inside groups, a respected nursery school which serves the community and attracts young parents to the congregation, a renowned choir singing a classical repertoire of sacred music, and a reputation for great preaching and inspiring worship. Despite these impressive strengths, the church's continued growth is impeded by a number of important factors. Facing these issues will help to fulfill an emerging vision of the church that God is calling us to be.

The Special Committee on Facilities and Mission, December, 2004

A VISION FOR FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MARKS OF THE CHURCH GOD IS CALLING US TO BE

Worship

Worship is at the heart of the life of our congregation. Our worship is marked by excellent preaching, great music, a superb choir, inspiring liturgy and a welcoming spirit to all. We encourage active participation of people of every age in the worshipping life of the church.

In order to support and enhance our worship in the years ahead we will:

- Provide gracious, well-rehearsal areas for the music programs of the church including the adult and children's choirs.
- Provide more even and efficient circulation of heat, fresh air, and air conditioning.
- Maintain the sanctuary organ.
- Increase the use of Alexander Chapel both as a place for quiet reflection and prayer; provide better lighting, and make such adaptations to the space as needed to facilitate more frequent use for vesper services, Midday Prayers, weddings, and memorial services.

Education and Nurture

The Christian journey is a life-long process of education, questioning and growing in faith. From childhood through maturity, our religious, Biblical, and spiritual questions change and deepen. We are committed to providing excellent staff leadership, well trained teachers, attractive classrooms, and up to date facilities to provide for the needs of our growing congregation both now and into the future.

In order to support and enhance our educational programs in the years ahead we will:

- Provide accessible, flexible, attractive and well lit classrooms to accommodate Church School classes of all ages with adequate display space for artwork and class projects as well as ample storage for supplies and equipment.
- Adapt classroom space to accommodate the sometimes conflicting needs of both weekday and weekend Church School programs.
- Dedicate space for safe, and attractive infant care and toddler rooms conveniently located for parents needing child care during worship and other church activities.
- Continue our important nursery school program which serves the church and the community by providing outstanding early childhood education.
- Make provision for a sufficient number of rooms which can be used by groups of varying sizes which can be used for prayer, mutual support, development of fellowship, and non-church community use.

Mission and Outreach

Mission in New York City and in the larger world has always been a part of First Church's core identity. We recommit ourselves to sharing the gospel in tangible ways by maintaining a strong and faithful witness through Christian mission and outreach.

In order to support our mission commitments we will:

- Encourage, support, and facilitate mission at the local, national, and international levels.
- Reflect our strong commitment to mission through the use of church facilities in meeting the needs of the congregation and the greater community, including people of all ages.
- Be a church known as a place where people turn because of our resourceful and responsive approaches to new and emerging mission opportunities.

Organization/Administration

The church is represented to its members and the community by its pastors, staff, and volunteers. Our staffing should increase commensurate with the growth and makeup of the congregation, and will be provided with a well-organized, hospitable, and up to date work environment.

In order to enhance the working environment we will:

- Provide quiet, attractive, office spaces, integrated and updated technology,
- Consolidate offices to enhance efficiency, encourage communication, and build cohesiveness for conducting church business,
- Provide ample areas for supplies and copy equipment,
- Install modern communication systems and computer technology,
- Provide improved, well appointed work space dedicated to volunteer activities
- Provide staff support to maximize the use of the facilities by outside groups.

Building

Previous generations of First Church members have left today's members a legacy of three historic, architecturally unique, and important buildings; the Sanctuary, the South Wing, and the Mellin-Macnab Building. As these buildings age, they require increasing amounts of maintenance and repair. As a home to ministry and mission, it is crucial to see that these buildings be well maintained and configured to support the needs of the congregation and its mission.

In order for our facilities to support our current and future needs we must:

- Incorporate new technologies as well as demonstrate energy savings by providing improvements in heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing, waste disposal, electrical systems, wiring, security, and lighting throughout all three buildings.
- Provide a welcoming, hospitable, and informative lobby and reception area allowing for good traffic flow, safe entry and departure from the buildings, along with easy access to information, registration for events, and security oversight.
- Improve circulation between the Mellin-Macnab Building and the South Wing.
- Evaluate and adapt elevator service in the Mellin-Macnab in light of current usage.

- Provide adequate, safe, and well located storage to accommodate the wide variety of programs in the church's buildings.
- Maintain the gardens and plan for increased use of the outdoor space.