

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

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service for the Lord's Day

September 13, 2020 | 11:00 a.m.

The Session and members of First Church extend a sincere welcome to all persons regardless of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and service as an officer of the church.

GATHERING

The peace candle represents our prayers for peace in a broken world. The congregation is asked to offer prayers of intercession for one another and for those who lead in these times of remote worship.

PRELUDE

"Fidelis"
"Rhosymedre"

Percy Whitlock
Ralph Vaughan Williams

WELCOME

INTROIT

"He Touches the Broken Heart"

Alan Hovhaness
arr. David Heller

Alleluia.

He touches the broken heart, from secret sorrow springs a tree of light;
the roots deep darkness, the branches of flaming fire;
the leaves a thousand blazing torches.

Alleluia.

–Alan Hovhaness

Hannah Nacheman, *mezzo-soprano*

CALL TO WORSHIP

**We give thanks and praise to God,
with every knee bowed
and every tongue giving praise,
for in God is extravagant mercy
and salvation from all that would destroy us.**

**Therefore, with our hearts lifted high,
we offer thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
now and forever.
Let us worship God!**

HYMN 263

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!"

CORONATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of our salvation,
we falter before the demands of your Word
and turn away from your call to life.
Pour out your mercy on us
as you showed mercy to your people of old,
that we may turn from our sinfulness
and walk the path of self-emptying love
make known in Jesus Christ. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

DOXOLOGY

Inclusive

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore.
Amen.**

OLD HUNDREDTH

Traditional

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

CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND 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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

HEARING THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 133

A Song of Ascents.
How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life for evermore.

SECOND LESSON

Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,
'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.'
So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

SERMON

“Don't get used to it. Don't take it for granted.”

Dr. Stovell

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 769

“For Everyone Born”

FOR EVERYONE BORN

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from a *Brief Statement of Faith* - PC(USA)

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,
and binds us together with all believers
in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

**The same Spirit
who inspired the prophets and apostles
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.**

**In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

OFFERTORY

“Lord of the Small”

Dan Forrest

Praise to the Lord of the small broken things, who sees the poor sparrow that cannot take wing. Who loves the lame child and the wretch in the street. Who comforts their sorrows and washes their feet.

Praise to the Lord of the faint and afraid, who girds them with courage and lends them His aid. He pours out his spirit on vessels so weak, that the timid can serve and the silent can speak.

Praise to the Lord of the frail and the ill, who heals their afflictions or carries them till they leave this tired frame and to paradise fly. To never be sick and never to die.

Praise him, O praise Him all ye who live, who've been given so much and can so little give. Our frail lisping praise God will never despise-He sees His dear children through mercy-filled eyes.

-Johanna Anderson

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

WORDS OF THE INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

HYMN 307

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

CWM RHONDDA

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Fanfare”

Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens

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

MUSIC NOTES This morning's prelude features two reflective works from a British student-teacher pair. Percy Whitlock (1903-1946) studied composition with Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) at the Royal College of Music. Though Vaughan Williams is the household name for his work as a symphonist and significant contributions to choral and vocal music, Whitlock was well-known in his day as a popular and agile recitalist in church and civic venues. • A child of Armenian and Scottish parents, American composer Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000) was a prolific composer, deeply interested in spirituality and religion, whose works fused musical influences of many cultures. The tender, “He Touches the Broken Heart,” is from a larger work for voice, strings, and trumpet. • Award-winning American composer Dan Forrest (b. 1978) has a deep Christian faith, and a gift for melody, which shine forth in the solo version of his choral anthem, “Lord of the Small.” • Belgian organist Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens' (1823-1881) musical lineage can be traced to Johann Sebastian Bach. Possessing a prodigious technique, Lemmens was appointed professor of the Brussels Conservatory at age 26, where one of his students was Alexandre Guilmant, whose name and support would later help found the Guilmant Organ School at First Church. The “Fanfare,” with its propulsive movement of rapidly-played notes, is a toccata, and embodies the definition of the term: *to touch*. -Michael Shake

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