

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

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## REFORMATION SUNDAY

*Service for the Lord's Day*

October 25, 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

“Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem wort”

Georg Böhm  
and Dietrich Buxtehude

### WELCOME

### INTROIT

“Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart”

*Orgeltabulaturbuch*

Lord, thee I love with all my heart; I pray thee, ne'er from me depart; with tender mercy cheer me. Earth has no pleasure I would share, yea, heaven itself were void and bare if thou, Lord, were not near me. And should my heart for sorrow break, my trust in thee can nothing shake. Thou art the portion I have sought; thy precious blood my soul has bought. Lord Jesus Christ, my God and Lord, my God and Lord, forsake me not! I trust thy word. —Martin Schalling; Catherine Winkworth, alt.

Samantha Noonan, Hannah Nacheman, Arri Lawton Simon, and Andrew Martens

### CALL TO WORSHIP

**We do not gather in vain,  
for God is working in our hearts.  
The love of Jesus Christ calls us together.  
Our worship strengthens and empowers us  
to share the gospel.  
The love of Jesus Christ shines in our lives.  
Proclaim the good news with boldness.  
The love of Jesus Christ is at work in the world!  
Let us worship God!**

### HYMN 611

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

HYMN TO JOY

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of Grace, you call us to be different from the world,  
but the world around us is seductive.**

**Give us your strength.**

**God of Vision, you hold before us an alternate way of life,  
different priorities, different loyalties, different values.**

**But we know we are drawn in to following other priorities,  
accepting other values, showing loyalty to other gods.**

**God who blesses the meek, the peacemakers, the merciful,  
forgive us when we lose sight of these qualities,  
when we misunderstand their role in the world.**

**Restore us to faithfulness we pray,**

**In Jesus' name. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

### DOXOLOGY

*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.**

### OLD HUNDREDTH

*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.**

## SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND 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

### SCRIPTURE READING

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

SERMON

“Who Do You Work For?”

Dr. Greg Stovell

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 738

“O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

MARYTON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *The Belhar Confession* – PC(USA)

**We believe that God has revealed God’s self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people; that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged that God calls the church to follow God in this; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry; that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind; that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly; that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering; that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right; that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY

“If Ye Love Me”

Thomas Tallis

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the spirit of truth.

–John 14:15-17

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## SENDING

HYMN 275

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

EIN’ FESTE BURG

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Fugue in G Major, BWV 541ii”

Johann Sebastian Bach

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

MUSIC NOTES A hymn, simply put, is a song in praise of God. Within the body of hymnody is the *chorale*. The roots of the chorale are found in the wake of the 1517 Reformation in Germany. Martin Luther felt strongly that one of the roles of music was to bear the word of God. The chorale did this literally by pairing tunes familiar to the laity – from the church, the street, and the countryside – with sacred texts in the vernacular. As chorales became increasingly well known to congregations, rather than simply play the chorale through as a way to introduce it before singing, organists created new pieces as introduction based on the chorale – the *chorale prelude*. The chorale preludes on Luther’s 1542 chorale, “Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem wort,” (Preserve us, Lord, with your word) provide two examples of the genre. The prelude by Georg Böhm (1661-1733) is austere; the chorale melody heard clearly in the pedal, played by the organist’s feet, while hinted at via imitation in the accompaniment. In contrast is the prelude by Dietrich Buxtehude (1639-1707) where the chorale melody is masked in an elaborate solo played on one of the organ’s most colorful sounds, the *cornet*. • A late 16<sup>th</sup> century chorale, “Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart,” is a chorale of great conviction and beauty. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) used the final stanza of this chorale to conclude his “St. John Passion” of 1724 • As in Europe, religious reformation swirled through England during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Thomas Tallis (c. 1505-1585) was a favored composer of queens and kings, and composed music for the Catholic Church, and later the Church of England. His anthem, “If Ye Love Me,” published in 1565, sets William Tyndale’s English translation of familiar verses from the Gospel of John. • Bach’s “Fugue in G Major” was likely composed during the years he was court organist in Weimar (1708-1717) and revised during his final decade of life. With an incisive theme based on repeated notes, the fugue drives from start to finish, interrupted only by a dramatic cadence and pause prior to the end.

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