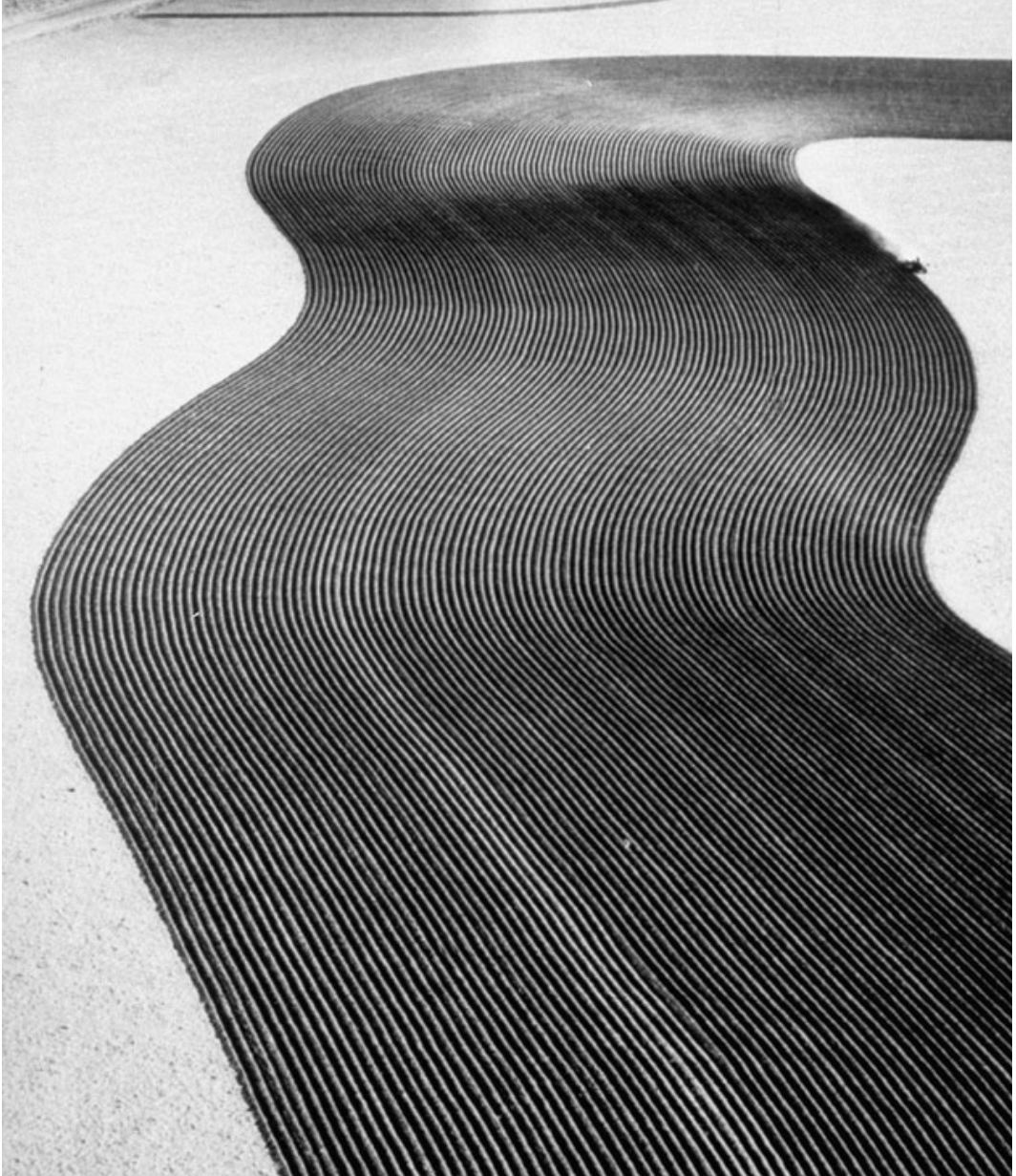


# Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

ASH WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 5, 2025

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Scene from the American Dust Bowl (1954)

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**This Is God's House. All Are Welcome.**

## 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

*O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß*  
("O Mankind, Mourn Your Great Sins"), BWV 622  
*J.S. Bach (1685–1750)*

### \* INVITATION TO AN OBSERVANCE OF LENT

*The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston*  
*(12 pm)*

*The Rev. Werner Ramirez (6:30 pm)*

One: Gracious God,  
you breathed into your creature of dust  
the breath of life;  
you create us in your image  
to live in communion with you  
and with one another.  
Call forth our prayers and devotion,  
bless us by your Holy Spirit  
that we may turn with confidence in your mercy  
and follow Jesus Christ our Lord,  
in whose name we pray.

**All: Amen.**

### \* HYMN 166

**Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days**

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

*Psalm 103:8-18*

#### **The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike**

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;  
as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field;  
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,  
and his righteousness to children's children  
to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

One: This is the Word of God; for the People of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM

Psalm 51:1-18

(Cantor sings the verses; the congregation sings the refrain.)



The sac - ri-fice you ac-cept, O God, is a hum - ble spir-it.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
In your great compassion blot out my offenses.

Wash me through and through from my wickedness,  
And cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my offenses,  
And my sin is ever before me.

Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;  
So you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.

**Refrain**

Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,  
A sinner from my mother's womb.

Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,  
And would have me know wisdom deep within.

Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be purer than snow. **Refrain**

Let me hear joy and gladness;  
That the body you have broken may rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins,  
And blot out all my wickedness.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me. **Refrain**

Cast me not away from your presence,  
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
And sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Let me teach your ways to offenders,  
And sinners shall be restored to you.

Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,  
And my tongue shall sing of your righteousness. **Refrain**

O Lord, open my lips,  
And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
A troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise. **Refrain**

SOLO

Five Mystical Songs: 3. Love Bade Me Welcome  
*Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,  
If I lack'd anything.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:  
Love said, You shall be he.

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,  
I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,  
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame  
Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?  
My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:  
So I did sit and eat.

HOMILY

*The Rev. Chris Palmer*

**“Say Amen to Ashes”**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*You are invited to come forward as the Spirit moves you. Please tell the clergy person your name. The pastors will respond by making the sign of the cross on your forehead with ashes and invite you to observe a holy Lent by saying: “Remember your baptism and be faithful.” Throughout the time when people are receiving ashes, you are invited to sing the Taizé chant, “Jesus, Remember Me.”*

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The first system of musical notation is for the Taizé chant. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The second system of musical notation is identical to the first, showing the continuation of the Taizé chant. It also consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are repeated below the treble staff.

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LITANY OF INTERCESSION

*The Rev. Dr. Jonah So (12 pm)*  
*The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike*  
*(6:30 pm)*

- One: Jesus, remember us,  
when you come into your kingdom.
- All: Holy One, show us what you  
can do with the dust.**
- One: For those who have received the gift of faith,
- All: Increase it.**
- One: For those living with illness in body, mind, or spirit
- All: Relieve them.**
- One: For all those praying for a miracle,
- All: Grant them.**
- One: For those doing the hard work of grief,
- All: Give them strength.**
- One: For the ministries of your one, holy, catholic Church,
- All: Renew them.**
- One: For those who daily live with the threat of violence,
- All: Deliver them.**
- One: For all those who rule over our land,
- All: Guide them.**
- One: O God of All, grant us peace.
- All: O Son of Man, grant us peace.**
- One: Jesus, remember us, when you come into your kingdom.
- All: Holy One, show us what you can do with the dust.**

\* DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

*Silence is kept.*

*The imposition of ashes is made available for all who wish to participate in this act of prayer,  
the sign of repentance at the start of the Lenten season. The rite is not given or intended as a show  
of piety, but rather as a form of corporate prayer in bodily form and act.*

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The ministry of music is offered by Dr. Patrick Kreeger, *Associate Organist*  
Shafiq Hicks, *Soloist*

## LENT & HOLY WEEK SERVICES

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Join us for our Lenten sermon series, *Say Amen! God's Via Positiva*. Sunday worship is at 9:30 am in Jones Auditorium and 11 am in the Sanctuary and on livestream at [fapc.org/live](http://fapc.org/live).

### **SAY AMEN TO TRUST**

March 9 | First Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

### **SAY AMEN TO CELEBRATION**

March 16 | Second Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

### **SAY AMEN TO TRANSFORMATION**

March 23 | Third Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

### **SAY AMEN TO THE STRANGER**

March 30 | Fourth Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Natalie Owens-Pike

### **SAY AMEN TO MERCY**

April 6 | Fifth Sunday in Lent  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

### **SAY AMEN TO SUFFERING?**

April 13 | Palm Sunday  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

### **SAY AMEN TO THE INVITATION**

April 17 | Maundy Thursday  
The Rev. Chris Palmer  
6:30 pm, Sanctuary & Livestream

### **THE PASSION**

April 18 | Good Friday  
12–3 pm, Sanctuary & Livestream  
A contemplative service of Scripture, reflection, and sacred music.

### **SAY AMEN TO LIFE**

April 20 | Easter  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston  
9:30 & 11:15 am  
We invite you to bring fresh flowers to adorn the cross outside on Fifth Avenue.

## COMING UP

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### **SEVENTH ANNUAL ANITA & ANTONIO GOTTO LECTURE**

**Thursday, March 6 • 7 pm, Sanctuary**

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, poet, and author Eliza T. Griswold will deliver the Anita and Antonio Gotto Lecture. Griswold is celebrated for her compassionate storytelling and deep exploration of social and cultural issues. Her work, often featured in *The New Yorker*, sheds light on marginalized communities and the resilience of the human spirit. Griswold's latest book, *Circle of Hope*, offers a powerful narrative about a congregation working towards change and justice amid adversity. This event is free, but registration is required. Visit [fapc.org/gotto](http://fapc.org/gotto) to register.

### **THE BRAHMS REQUIEM**

**Friday, April 11, 2025 • 7 pm, Sanctuary**

*The Fifth Avenue Chamber Choir, directed by Ryan Jackson with the Shelest Piano Duo*

Experience the majestic scope of Brahms's *German Requiem* with the intimacy of chamber music. In the composer's own reduction of the orchestral accompaniment for piano duet, the work's hand-picked biblical texts come to life, and its stunning choral textures take center stage. Critically acclaimed concert pianists Anna and Dmitri Shelest join the twenty-four professional voices of the Fifth Avenue Chamber Choir to create the rich, Romantic sound of this year's Lenten concert. Purchase tickets at [fapc.org/tickets](http://fapc.org/tickets).

### **GOOD SOIL: THE EDUCATION OF AN ACCIDENTAL FARMHAND**

**Thursday, March 27 • 7 pm, Sanctuary**

*The Rev. Jeff Chu & Austin Channing Brown*

Join us for an evening with Jeff Chu in conversation with Austin Channing Brown as they discuss his new book, *Good Soil*. After leaving journalism for Princeton Seminary's "Farminary," Jeff learned how the rhythms of the land—growth, decay, and renewal—mirror our spiritual and personal journeys. Through rich storytelling, he introduces the unexpected teachers he met, from worms to egrets to overlooked vegetables, and reflects on belonging, community, and the sacredness of our bond with the earth. Perfect for nature lovers, foodies, and seekers alike, *Good Soil* invites us to slow down, listen, and discover what the land can teach us about life and love. Books will be available for purchase. Jeff Chu is a journalist, author, and preacher whose work explores faith, identity, and belonging. He is the co-curator of *Evolving Faith* and the author of *Does Jesus Really Love Me?* and *Good Soil*, which reflects on his time at Princeton Seminary's "Farminary" and the spiritual lessons found in the land. Austin Channing Brown is a speaker, writer, and media producer providing inspired leadership on racial justice in America. She is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* and the executive producer of the web series *The Next Question*. Register at [fapc.org/goodsoil](http://fapc.org/goodsoil).

# Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church



## 2025 Lenten Devotional

The Devotional features Scripture, poems, personal reflections, stories of faith, and words of prayer for each day of the Lenten season.

To receive the daily devotionals in your email, visit [fapc.org/lent](https://fapc.org/lent).

## 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](https://fapc.org/give)



## Building Hours

Mon • Thu • Fri

9 am – 5 pm

Tuesday • Wednesday

9 am – 8 pm

Saturday

8 am – 1 pm

Sunday

8 am – 2:30 pm



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