

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK



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

WELCOME TO THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH

Interdenominational · Interracial · International · Open · Welcoming · Affirming

WORSHIP is at the center of the life of The Riverside Church.

As you prepare your heart and mind for worship, consider this quote:

“The trickster’s function is to break taboos, create mischief, stir things up. In the end, the trickster gives people what they really want, some sort of freedom.”

— Tom Robbins

A question for reflection:

As a child of God, what dream do you have for your time here on earth?

Connect With Us

Visit our Welcome Page to learn more



Give By Your Phone

Text TRCNYCGIVE to 833.833.4035



ASL Interpreters

Avery Gordon and M. Lisa Lockley

Cover art by Jamil De Honney.

Inspired by Genesis 27:1–4, 15–23; 28:10–17.

Assisted listening devices are available to anyone who needs them. Speak to an usher to secure one for service. They can be returned to any usher at the end of service.

*Riverside worship services are filmed, recorded, and broadcast online.
If you do not want to appear in any videos or photos, we invite you to sit in the balcony.*



GATHERING

We gather as a community to prepare our hearts to worship God.

CARILLON

Carillon Prelude on "O Brieder, Habt Noch Mut" Pennsylvania Dutch Spiritual, arr. Ronald Barnes
Wade in the Water African American Spiritual, arr. Charles Zettek, Jr.

Carla Staffaroni, *carillonneur*

ORGAN

Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 65 Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
Allegro moderato e serio
Adagio
Andante recitativo
Allegro assai vivace

Dr. Nathaniel Gumbs, organist

LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Rev. Tim Dalton

INTROIT

The Word Was God Rosephanye Powell

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
The same was in the beginning with God.
All things were made by Him. Nothing was made that He has not made.*

CALL TO WORSHIP *standing as able*

Alexandra Pascarelli

One: The Lord is our light and our salvation, our stronghold in the night.

***All:* We will not fear, for God surrounds us with steadfast love and might.**

One: Though enemies may rise and shadows stretch across our way,

***All:* Our hearts find courage in God, our refuge and our stay.**

One: Come, let us dwell within this holy place of peace and grace,

***All:* And lift our voices high in praise, rejoicing in God's space. Let us worship!**

INVOCATION *remain standing*

PROCESSIONAL HYMN 429 *remain standing, sung by all*

Lord, You Give the Great Commission

ABBOTT'S LEIGH

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Charlene A. Wingate

In a moment of silence, offer your own prayers of confession.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

GLORIA PATRI

1. Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the
Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the be -
gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be,
world with - out end. A - men, A - men.

LISTENING

We listen for the word of God through song, Scripture, and preaching.

GOSPEL SCRIPTURE READING

Ros Pereira

John 1:50-51 (*Pew Bible* p. 93)

One: This is the Gospel of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

HEBREW BIBLE SCRIPTURE READING

Eva Cordero, Jeremiah Drake

Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17 (*Pew Bible* p. 23)

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Rev. Mira Sawlani-Joyner

ANTHEM

Jacob's Ladder

arr. David Morrow

*We are climbing Jacob's ladder, soldier of the cross.
Ev'ry round goes higher, higher, soldier of the cross.*

*Sister, do you love my Jesus? Brother, do you love my Jesus?
Christian, do you love my Jesus? Soldier of the cross.*

*If you love Him, why not serve Him? Soldier of the cross.
We are climbing higher, higher, soldier of the cross.*

SERMON

A Good Laugh and A Glimmer of Hope

Rev. Adriene Thorne

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

RESPONDING

*We respond to the hearing of God's word through prayer, passing the peace, offering,
and monthly communion.*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Mira Sawlani-Joyner

We have heard the word of God read and proclaimed. Now let us pray together.

One: The Lord be with you.

***All:* And with your spirit.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

***All:* We lift them up unto the Lord.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

***All:* Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Save us from the time of trial, deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever.**

CHORAL AMEN

PASSING OF THE PEACE *standing as able*

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO GIVE AND SERVE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

O Thou the Central Orb

Charles Wood

*O Thou the central orb of righteous love,
Pure beam of the most high,
Eternal light of this our wintry world,
Thy radiance bright awakes new joy in faith,
Hope soars above, above.*

*Come, quickly come, and let thy glory shine,
Gilding our darksome heaven with rays divine.
Thy saints with holy lustre round Thee move,
As stars about thy throne, set in the height
of God's ordaining counsel,
As thy sight gives measur'd grace to each,
Thy power to prove.*

*Let Thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin,
Our nature all shall feel eternal day,
In fellowship with Thee,
Transforming day to souls erewhile unclean,
now pure within, now pure within. Amen.*

AT THE PRESENTATION: THE DOXOLOGY *standing as able, sung by all*
The congregation rises row by row as ushers pass to symbolize the offering of our whole selves to God.

All: **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**
 Praise God, all creatures here below;
 Praise God above, you heavenly host;
 Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION *remain standing* Rev. Derrick T. Jordan

*Today we celebrate the work of our Membership, Care & Parish Life Commission which is dedicated
to supporting the care of our church community as we explore our lives as Christians together.*

SENDING

We are sent out into the world to love God and our neighbors.

RECESSIONAL HYMN 423 *remain standing, sung by all*
Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun

DUKE STREET

BENEDICTION *remain standing*

Rev. Adriene Thorne

POSTLUDE

MEET OUR SEMINARY INTERN



Crystal Hammon is in her three final laps (otherwise known as semesters) at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis with an emphasis on the study of digital ministries. A former freelance writer, Crystal's work has been published in Ms. Magazine, AAA Crossroads, Wine Enthusiast and Midwest Living as well as corporate publications and websites. Crystal loves being a student, going to the opera, and spending time with her parents, now in their late 80s. Her only claim to fame is her Key Lime Pie, which earned the prestigious 2025 All-Church Pie Contest at First Christian Church in Bloomington, Indiana.

TODAY AT RIVERSIDE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Breakfast <i>(available for purchase)</i>	South Hall	8:30 AM
Fresh Start	Online	8:30 AM
Adult Confirmation Class	320 MLK	9:00 AM
Open Bible Study	316 MLK & Online	9:30 AM
ParentConnect	321 MLK	10:00 AM
Cherub Choir	721 MLK	10:00 AM
Rising Voices & Youth Choir	311 MLK	10:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	Nave & Online	11:00 AM
Coffee Hour	South Hall Lobby	After Service
Virtual Coffee Hour	Online	After Service
Lunch <i>(available for purchase)</i>	South Hall	After Service
Festival of Lay Ministries	South Hall	After Service
Men's Class Meeting	MPR	1:30 PM
Carillon Recital		1:30 PM

THIS WEEK AT RIVERSIDE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Morning Prayer	Online	8:00 AM
Art of Movement	411 MLK	10:00 AM
Multifaith Monday Vigil	Columbus Circle	5:30 PM
Church Council Meeting	Online	6:30 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Morning Prayer	Online	8:00 AM
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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Morning Prayer	Online	8:00 AM
Dinner Church: Stories from the Freedom Ride	9T	5:00 PM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Morning Prayer	Online	8:00 AM
Art of Movement	411 MLK	10:00 AM
Tower League Luncheon	Assembly Hall	12:00 PM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Morning Prayer	Online	8:00 AM
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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Theatre of the Oppressed	MPR	1:00 PM
One Book. One Riverside.	9T	4:00 PM
Everybody's Night	9T	6:00 PM

COMING SOON

Midweek Bible Study: Bible in a Minute	Wednesday, October 1	12:30 PM
Short Circles: A Theology of Bluey	Thursday, October 2	7:00 PM
Word @ Night	Friday, October 3	6:30 PM
Blessing of the Animals	Sunday, October 5	9:00 AM
Space for Grace	Wednesday, October 8	7:00 PM



Visit trcnyc.org/LOC or scan the QR code to find out more about all the programs and events happening in the life of our community.

ABOUT RIVERSIDE

The Riverside Church is an interdenominational, interracial, international, open, welcoming, and affirming church and congregation. The church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ. Riverside cooperates with the Council of Churches in the City of New York and with the New York State, National, and World Council of Churches. Whoever you are: You are safe here. You are loved here. You are invited into full participation in our life together.

Rev. Adriene Thorne, Senior Minister
Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr., Senior Minister Emeritus



ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES & ASL INTERPRETATION

Assisted listening devices are available for those who need them, and ASL interpretation is provided on select Sundays. Please see an usher to request a device or to find the best seating for viewing the interpreters.

SUNDAY MORNING PARKING

Visit the Security Desk on the Claremont Level to pick up a \$5 parking coupon. Bring this bulletin and your parking ticket to the attendant on the upper level to receive this discounted rate, pay, and pick up your car. This discounted rate applies to Sundays only.

GRACE SPACE NURSERY

Babies and toddlers are not too young to start learning about God's love for them. The grace space nursery is open every Sunday from 10:30 AM-12:30 PM and is staffed by trained nursery workers. For location, please see an usher or security guard.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON CARILLON RECITALS

Recitals take place most weeks at 1:30 PM and can be best heard outdoors listening from Sakura Park, north of The Riverside Church at 122nd Street. Visit trcnyc.org/carillonrecitals for the complete schedule and programs.

MEMBERSHIP AT RIVERSIDE

Membership is about responding to God's call on your life to step up and belong to this community as you pursue the passion God has set in your heart. By joining The Riverside Church you are taking the next step to partner with us as we seek to cultivate a community of justice, peace, and love that transforms the world. Visit trcnyc.org/membership to find out more.

VOLUNTEER AT RIVERSIDE

Riverside offers a variety of volunteer opportunities, from ushering to providing support in our social services programs, and so much more! Discover the joy of giving back, and make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve. Visit trcnyc.org/volunteer for more information.

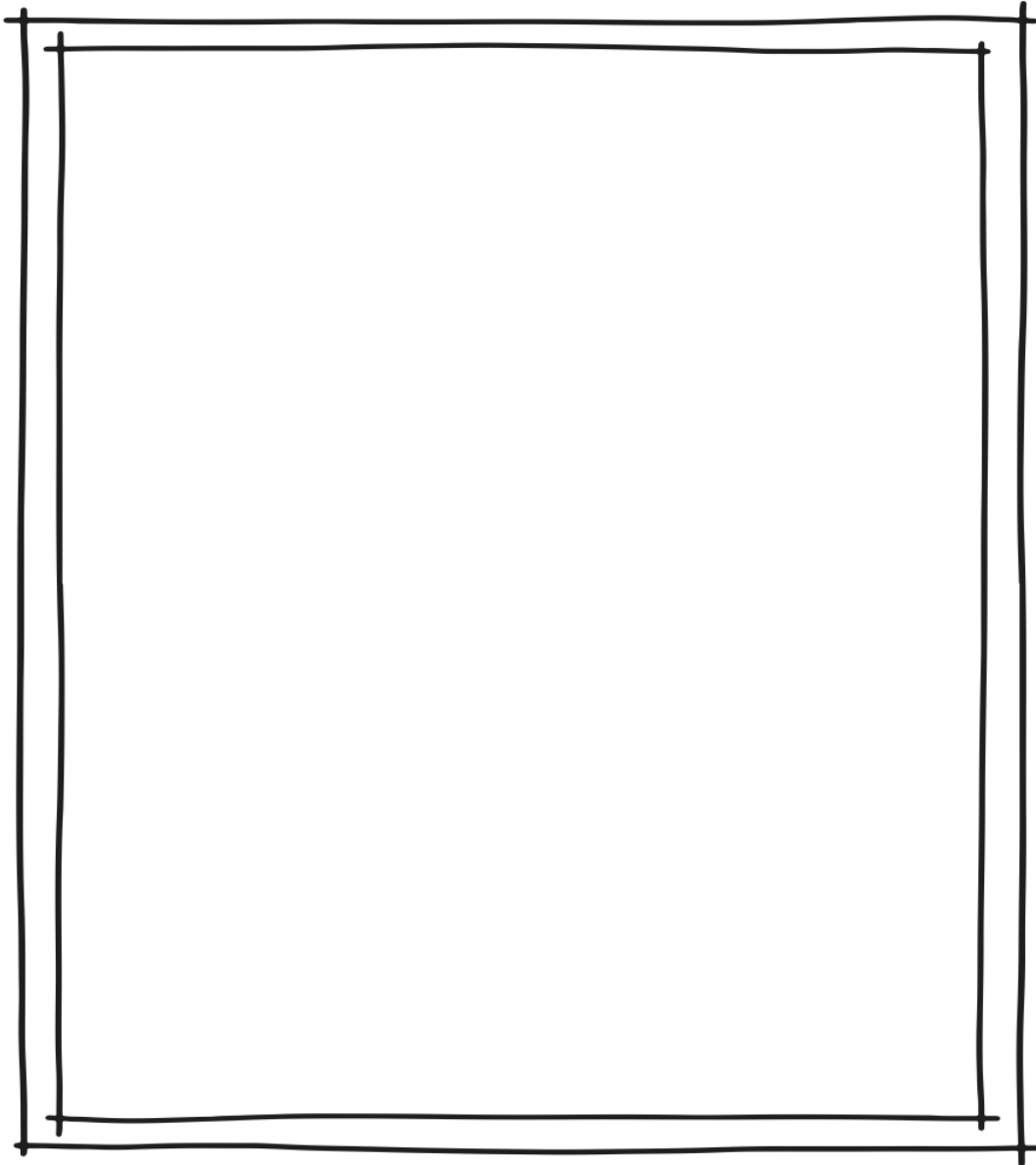
RIVERSIDE EMAIL LIST

Get the latest news and events at The Riverside Church from our weekly emails. Sign up at trcnyc.org/email. Be sure to add communications@trcnyc.org to your "Safe Sender list."

DOWNLOAD THE RIVERSIDE APP

Take Riverside with you wherever you go. Text TRCNyc to 833.833.4035 or visit trcnyc.org/app to stay connected to all the videos, podcasts, and events from The Riverside Church.

DRAW IT.



In Genesis 28, Jacob has an incredible dream in which he meets God. When he wakes up, he wants to create something to remember this, and to mark God's presence. Jacob builds a tower out of stones, and pours a special oil on top of it. **If you were Jacob, what would you create or build as a reminder of God's presence with you?**



PASTORAL TEAM & MINISTERIAL STAFF



Rev. Adriene Thorne
Senior Minister



Rev. Tim Dalton
*Minister for
Congregational Care
and Older Adults*



Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler
*Minister for
Intergenerational Christian
Education and Formation*



Rev. Derrick T. Jordan
Ministerial Staff



Rev. Jim Keat
*Minister of Digital
Worship and Education*



Rev. Mira Sawlani-Joyner
*Minister of Justice,
Advocacy, and Change*



Rev. Charlene A. Wingate
Ministerial Staff



Rev. Jabe Ziino
*Associate Director of
Education and Faith
Formation (Youth and
Young Adults)*

If you or someone you know is experiencing a pastoral emergency, please call 212.870.6710 and ask for the clergy on call.

PROGRAM AND SUPPORT STAFF

Paul Byssainthe, Jr.
Associate Organist

Natalie Fein
Chief Operating Officer

Dr. Nathaniel Gumbs
Director of Music

Talia Johnson
Manager of Member Services

Alexandra A. Pimentel
Director of Social Services & Outreach

Natalie Graves Tucker
Director of Communications and Development

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