We are delighted to announce the official formation of **Friends of Judson**, a new secular community-based nonprofit organization.

Through its three interlocking pillars of worship, arts, and justice, Judson Memorial Church has created a space that is essential to New York life. By engaging community members and friends throughout the metropolitan area, our mission is to support and supplement the social justice and artistic programming at Judson Memorial Church, as well as the preservation and full accessibility of our historic building.

Beginning with Howard Moody’s leadership, our long-standing support of emerging art and artists — particularly boundary-pushing art that cannot find a home elsewhere — is central to Judson’s identity. From dance and theater to music, poetry and the visual arts, our community has always welcomed creative expression that challenges us, nourishes us, sparks joy, brings us together and helps us empathize with others. Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, and Lucinda Childs founded Judson Dance Theater in the 1960’s and in the process invented postmodern dance. Claes Oldenburg, Jim Dine, Red Grooms and other artists got their start at the Judson Gallery. And with Al Carmines, Judson became one of the founders of Off Off Broadway Theater. Judson Arts Wednesdays (JAW), under Micah Bucey’s curation, continues this tradition today with a free, uncensored, weekly performance space for a wide variety of performing artists.

The fight for justice at Judson is also long-standing and unceasing. Thanks to Donna Schaper’s tireless efforts, we incubated and now house The New Sanctuary Coalition, a multi-faith, immigrant-led organization that fights back against the criminalization of immigrants and stands side-by-side with them as they navigate the system. We were, and are, on the forefront battling LGBTQ discrimination and cared for the victims of the AIDS crisis at a time when the President would not acknowledge its existence. When Occupy Wall Street was evicted from Zuccotti Park, we housed them and helped keep the movement alive. During the current pandemic, our staff and congregation members have provided daily support to the Black Lives Matter movement by opening our doors to offer food, water, bathrooms, and shelter to protesters. Today we distribute life sustaining food to the community, through Judson’s Food Bank.

Meanwhile, our historic building stands strong. The 16 LaFarge stained glass windows, one of the largest collections in the U.S., remind us that fellowship at Judson has always been nourished by beauty. The intricate fountain on the northeast corner which ran with ice cold water for the community for years, a considerable expense at a time when doing so required fresh ice blocks, is a powerful metaphor for the ways in which Judson provides the essentials of life to the neighborhood. The ways in which Judson’s exterior and interior reflect Stanford White’s Washington Square Arch show that Judson was, is, and always will be inextricable from the Greenwich Village neighborhood. For the past six years we have been raising money and investing in our building, to make it more comfortable, welcoming, functional, and accessible. Our community has been generous, and the result has been a set of critical additions and restorations, from our front door to the frames of our stained glass, from a new security system to a bright new red tile roof that serves as a beacon. But we have so much more work to do.

Judson’s efforts, along with the many other ways in which we engage with the broader community to inspire, advocate, and transform, are fueled by love, passion, hard work, and money. We have an abundance of the first three, and are in much need of the fourth.

We look forward to working with all of you to ensure that this work continues.

With best wishes,

The Friends of Judson Board
Ted Dawson, Lisa Holton, and Mary Meyer

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**Friends of Judson**
c/o Judson Memorial Church
55 Washington Square South, New York, New York 10012

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