

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



April 22, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett

Dear Friends,

We pray that you and your families are safe and well. We enjoy seeing your faces and/or hearing your voices when you dial into the Zoom Gatherings, or participate in your committee meetings, or another online gathering, or simply speak by phone. As this time of staying home and physical distancing continues, we will be exploring more ways to be in touch and stay connected.

I want to let you know that Jenny, and her dogs Annie and Rose, have safely arrived at their new home in South Carolina. We pray for God's continued blessings on Jenny and her new ministry.

I am deeply grateful for all of you and the support you have offered in these past few weeks. The strength of our community, our commitment to ministry, our openness to the Spirit, and God's faithfulness will guide us through the coming months, as we support one another both through this pandemic and this time of pastoral transition. Remember—it is not just, or even primarily, the pastors of a church that define and carry out a church's ministry—it is the members. We weren't expecting this transition at this time, but I trust in God's vision for this church, and I trust in this congregation's commitment to serving God and one another in this place. As hard as our circumstances may be, I believe that we can mourn our losses AND grow from these times, discovering new ways of being the church and strengthening both our community and our outreach to our neighbors.

As of last night, the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of New York City approved the Session's request that I be named Head of Staff for the next five months, which can be extended if need be, and they have appointed me Moderator of Session for this time. The Session will be working on next steps with the help of our liaison from the Presbytery, the Rev. Laura Jervis.

We do have some sad news to share with you. To date, we are aware of two deaths in the congregation due to the novel coronavirus: Clara Weber and Gordon Robbins. Both Clara and Gordon were living in long-term care facilities, which, as you know, have been hit particularly hard by this virus. We also learned of the death of former member Stella Clark Stewart. Many of our long-term members will remember Stella and her twin sister Grace Clark who were very active members for many years.

Though we have lost two of our older members to this virus, and others have been ill and are recovering, I am grateful that our congregation has not suffered more loss. The same cannot be said of other churches in our Presbytery. The Presbytery has lost many elders and one pastor.

Please continue to pray for:

one another, our church staff, those who are sick and those who have lost loved ones, those who have lost employment, our partners in the Synod of Harare in Zimbabwe who are struggling now more than ever, and our members and others who are health care workers or providing other essential services.

We plan to send out this Pastoral Staff Letter at the beginning of every week, so you will have an update on MAPC news and offerings.

Stay well.

May Christ's peace be with you,
Beverly A. Bartlett
Associate Pastor and Head of Staff

How to Give to MAPC at this Time

Many of you are sending your pledges and offerings in the mail by check or online through our website. Thank you for your faithfulness in your stewardship. We know that for many people their financial circumstances have changed significantly due to the pandemic. If you are not able to keep your pledge commitment at this time, we understand. If you are able to continue your gifts to the church, please do send your pledges and offerings either by mail to:

- **MAPC, Attn: Roger Pierce, 921 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10021**

Or:

- **Through the church's website: www.mapc.com. Click on the "giving" link near the top of the homepage.**

The church's financial obligations have not changed significantly during this time. We are committed to paying our hourly staff for as long as possible, the professional and pastoral staff are working from home, and we still have buildings to maintain even though we cannot gather in them. We have lost considerable income because we cannot rent our space as we have been. We are also committed to continuing the Thursday Night Open Table program as long as we possibly can, by handing out bag dinners on the sidewalk.

If you can continue to give, please do so! Thank you.

Ways to Stay Connected

Sunday Worship

Join us for pre-recorded services of worship on Sunday mornings complete with sermon, scripture, prayers, children's lesson and music, which are accessible on our [website](#) and on [Vimeo](#).

Virtual Coffee Hour – Sundays at 12 noon – NEW this week!

Join the Pastoral Staff for a post-service Coffee Hour after Sunday morning worship via Zoom.

Gathering Together - Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Each Monday, Wednesday, Friday, we are Gathering Together as a congregation at 7:15pm to be in community with one another. Be on the lookout for the Zoom information and join us!

Daily Prayer – Monday through Friday

The pastoral staff provides a short video daily devotion available on Vimeo, Facebook, and by email. Quiet your phone, light a candle, and center your mind as you listen to scripture and join us in prayer.

(Email Lissette Perez-Eraza at lgp@mapc.com if you are not currently receiving the Zoom information for Gathering Together, or emails for Sunday Worship and Daily Prayer.)

Story Time with Sadie

Vimeo video every Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Tune in for a Bible story and an at-home activity with Rev. Rebecca Heilman, her dog Sadie, and special guests. Join us as we read, bake, craft, and play!

Adult Bible Study

1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 7 pm. We are currently studying the Gospel of Mark. Please let Rev. Bartlett know if you would like to join this Bible study at bab@mapc.com.

MAPC Book Club

Our next book is Charles Dickens' classic novel, *Hard Times*.

We are reading Classic novels which are easily accessible on

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/786/786-h/786-h.htm>.

Email Lissette Perez-Erazo at lgp@mapc.com if you are interested and we will invite you via zoom.

MAPC High Tea

Thursday, April 30 at 4 pm

Join us for a “High Tea” at MAPC. Brew some tea and share your favorite tea sets or mugs and some recipes for sweet or savory delights.

Moms’ Night Out

Thursday, April 23 at 9 pm, if you would like to join and did not get the Zoom invitation, please contact Rev. Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

New York City Children’s Chorus

The NYCCC has gone online! Would you like a chance to be a chorister and sing along? Please find this [video](#) of one of our NYCCC voice teachers and MAPC professional singer Katherine Wessinger, singing *Wayfarin’ Stranger* or this [video](#) on “Stretching for Singing.” Enjoy!

Women’s Bible Study

The Women’s Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, will meet by teleconference this coming Monday evening, April 27th. Exact time TBD. Please contact Nancy De Bono for details: ngdebono@gmail.com.

Young Adult Happy Hour

April 23 at 7 pm

Join us on Thursday, April 23 for a virtual Young Adult Happy Hour! April Martin has set it up so we can play the game, Quplash, while hanging out together.

Youth

Various Youth Gatherings on Zoom including how various books relate to real life and the bible, online games, scavenger hunts and movie nights. Email April Martin at aem@mapc.com with questions.

MAPC on Social Media

Facebook

Follow MAPC on Facebook for news, reminders, events, and pictures from everyday life at the church. It’s a good way to engage in fellowship and to know what’s going on each week.

facebook.com/MadisonAvenuePresbyterian/



