

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



April 29, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett

Dear Friends,

Beginning this week we are changing our Gathering Together Zoom meeting schedule. We will have a Gathering Together at 7:15 on Wednesday evenings, and Fellowship Hour on Sundays at noon. In addition, there are other fellowship gatherings we encourage you to participate in, for example, High Tea at 4 pm this coming Thursday, April 30th, and the monthly Book Group, which meets next on May 12th. There are also more targeted groups like Moms' Night Out, a Young Adult Cinco de Mayo Gathering, Women's Bible Teleconference Call, and the Monday Evening Bible Study. You will find details about these below.

The Session met last night, April 28, and approved celebrating the Lord's Supper monthly during our online worship services and on other occasions as determined by the pastoral staff. We will be celebrating communion this coming Sunday, so please have some bread and juice or wine (or even water) as you worship at home.

Other Session business included:

--Approved the dispersal of annual grants to our local partners who are doing a tremendous amount during this crisis.

--Approved a grant to the Synod of Harare to help congregations drill bore holes. Lack of water is a critical concern.

--Approved a motion to work with the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of New York City to move forward in selecting an interim/transitional pastor. COM will recommend well-qualified candidates for Session to review and interview. Calling a transitional pastor is the responsibility of the Session. The process differs from calling an installed pastor which involves a Pastor Nominating Committee elected by the congregation and a vote to the congregation to extend a call. By working closely with COM, Session hopes to move quickly so that we can have a transitional pastor in place sometime in September.

We plan to send the Pastoral Staff Letter weekly on Wednesdays, and that will have the times for upcoming online gatherings and events.

You are in our prayers as we continue to navigate life in this pandemic time. We ask you for your prayers for each other, the church staff and officers, those who are sick or struggling financially, our sisters and brothers in the Synod of Harare in Zimbabwe and all who are providing essential services. We also ask that you pray for our congregation in this time of transition--that we will be open to the guidance of the Spirit in our discernment and strong in our sense of community and commitment to ministry and mission.

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.

Since this coming Sunday is the first Sunday of the month, we encourage you to give what you can toward the monthly food offering. We are committed to continue to serve a meal for our Open Table guests on Thursday evenings, providing sack dinners, and your gifts will help support this ministry. You can either send a check to the church at the address above, or when you click "Give Online" on the website, you can choose "Food Offering" in the drop-down box.

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

Welcome to the World!



In the midst of times that often bring sad news, we are grateful to share joyful news!

Audrey Van Brunt Lieb was born to member Judith Geis and Sean Lieb on Mach 13, 2020, arriving just in time to shelter at home with Mom and Dad for a while. With Jude and Sean's permission, we are sharing this beautiful photo of Audrey.

We look forward to welcoming Audrey into the church by baptism when it is safe for us to gather to do so.

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](#).

Children's Worship

Come and read a children's book with Rebecca Heilman and April Martin as we connect it to the day's scripture!

Virtual Coffee Hour – Sundays at 12 noon

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

Gathering Together - Wednesdays

Each Wednesday 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 - now twice a week!

Starting next week, join Rebecca Heilman and other special guests on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a Bible story, music and an at-home activity.

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.

Monday Evening 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. The next Bible Study meeting is May 4.

Lexio-Divina via Zoom

Join Beverly Bartlett for Lectio Divina by Zoom on Thursday, May 7 at 4 pm.

Lectio Divina (Holy or Sacred Reading) is a form of contemplative prayer. It is a "formational" rather than "informational" approach to scripture or other sacred writing. You do not need to do anything in preparation, just find a quiet spot, have your Bible nearby and join the Zoom meeting. Rev. Bartlett will facilitate this spiritual practice. The Zoom invitation will be sent by email next week.

Parents of Youth Happy Hour

May 5 at 7:30 pm

Join us on Tuesday, May 5 for a "Cinco de Mayo" themed virtual Happy Hour! We will play online games and catch up.

Young Adult Happy Hour

May 7 at 7 pm

Join us on Thursday, May 7 for a little-late "Cinco de Mayo" themed virtual Young Adult Happy Hour! April Martin has set it up so we can play the games while hanging out together.

Moms' Night Out

Thursday, May 7 at 9 pm, if you would like to join and do receive the Zoom invitation, please contact Rev. Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, will meet by teleconference on Monday evening, May 11th and 6:30 pm. Please contact Nancy De Bono for details: ngdebono@gmail.com.

MAPC Book Club

Our next book is Charles Dickens' classic novel, *Hard Times*, which is accessible via this [link](#). We are reading Classic novels which are easily accessible on https://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page. Join us on Tuesday, May 12 at 7 pm on Zoom for a discussion of this amazing work of literature and a time together in community.

Youth

We are hosting Youth Gatherings on Zoom two times a week. Current projects include relating books we enjoy 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/

