

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



May 20, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am looking out my window at the church's steeple on a beautiful spring day, listening to the sounds of traffic--not normal Madison Ave. traffic, which is usually bumper to bumper in the afternoon with horns blaring and lanes blocked by delivery trucks--but there is still traffic going by. It is not as desolate down there as it was a month or so ago, and the ambulance sirens have gone from constant to a more normal "occasional". As one church member said, you have to look for traffic again before you cross the avenues. I'm not sure where folks are going in these cars, since New York City has not begun to officially open up yet, but it is nice to hear more activity.

It will be a while before that activity makes it into the church building and we are once again able to open our doors. But in the meantime we are staying busy as a church community online. In my conversations with other church leaders, and in reading various articles and forums, there is a general consensus that this pandemic will, in some ways, bring permanent changes to the ways in which we are the church. Now that the church has had to embrace "going digital", we won't be fully letting it go, but will need to continue to offer an online presence even when we can meet in person again. As much as we miss worshipping together and enjoying fellowship in person, people who cannot normally be here have been able to participate in the life of the church more fully through our online offerings: people who no longer have the

mobility that allows them to leave home, people who have moved away, people who wake up not feeling well enough to attend church--or have a sick child at home. Those whose work or family schedule may not allow for the time it takes to get back and forth to church for a meeting or gathering, can sometimes take enough time to join an online gathering, and those who have children at home and no sitter can still "zoom" in.

I have read several accounts of people who have "returned" to church because they can watch a recorded service or participate in an online gathering. In the past, we moved away from offering "tele-church and radio church" because it gave people a reason not to be here in person. But now there is a shift. Why not offer worship and fellowship to people who are better able and/or willing to participate online? What is really important: filling the pews on Sunday morning, or offering people a chance to worship as best they can? Do I want a full sanctuary? Of course! When it is safe to do so, being together in the sanctuary will be a joyful, celebratory occasion. But I also want people who can't join us in person to be able to worship, and have a sense of church community. As we move through this pandemic, and eventually come to the other side of it, we will need to be both an in-person and online community. There are blessings to both.

While this is a challenging time for the church, it is also a time of opportunity and growth--growing in new directions and in our understanding of what it means to be a community of faith.

Stay well, and may Christ's peace be with you,
Beverly A. Bartlett
Associate Pastor and Acting Head of Staff

How to Give to MAPC During this Time

Good news! Through your continued giving, we are back on track with pledge receipts. The loss of rental income during these months means that your offerings are more valuable than ever, and we are deeply grateful. If your financial circumstances have changed due to the pandemic, we understand that you may not be able to keep your pledge commitment. For those of you who are able to continue your financial gifts, you may send your pledges and offerings either by mail to:

- **MAPC, Attn: Business Office, 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.

We are working on a way of making direct electronic payments and that information should be available soon.

We remain committed to paying our hourly staff for as long as we can, the professional and pastoral staff are working from home, and we have buildings to maintain even though we cannot gather in them at the moment.

Thank you for your faithful giving!

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 and special guests 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 7:15 pm 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!

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

Lectio Divina via Zoom

Join Beverly Bartlett for Lectio Divina by Zoom on Thursday, May 21 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, perhaps a pen and some paper or a journal, and join the Zoom meeting. Rev. Bartlett will facilitate this spiritual practice. The Zoom invitation will be sent by email next week.

Young Adult Happy Hour

May 21 at 7 pm

Join us on Thursday, May 21st for a virtual Young Adult Happy Hour!

Rev. Rebecca Heilman and April Martin will bring light-hearted and fun games and we will hang out together.

Moms' Night Out

Thursday, May 21st at 9 pm, if you would like to join and did not 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 25 at 6:30 pm. Please contact Lissette Perez-Eraza for details: lgp@mapc.com.

Pre-Teen Zoom Game Gatherings (3rd Through 5th Graders)

Calling all pre-teens (3rd - 5th graders)! Join Rebecca and April again on Zoom, Tuesday, May 26 at 3:30 pm to hang-out and play games!

MAPC High Tea

Thursday, May 28 at 4 pm

Join us next week for another installment of "High Tea" at MAPC.

Brew some tea and share your recipes for sweet or savory delights.

You can find recipes from the last high tea at the bottom of this Pastoral Staff Letter.

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 June 1.

Youth

The Youth meet on Wednesdays at 5 pm on zoom to play games and check-in with each other. Email April Martin at aem@mapc.com with questions or to be added to the email list.

MAPC High Tea Recipes

Italian Country Chicken

From Beth Goehring

6 to 8 servings

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, cut into eighths
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound boneless chicken breast halves, skinned and cut into strips
- 1 1/2 6-ounce jars marinated artichoke hearts, undrained
- 1 7-ounce jar roasted red bell peppers, undrained

- 1/2 cup pitted black olives
- Salt and pepper
- 3/4 pound tricolor fusilli, freshly-cooked
- Grated Parmesan

Steps:

Heat oil in heavy, large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook until translucent, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add chicken and stir until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Mix in artichoke hearts with liquid, peppers with liquid and olives and heat through. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over pasta and toss well. Serve, passing Parmesan separately.

From Beth: "Here's a real go-to at our house. Got this from a woman's magazine when we were first married--seemed so fancy then with the artichoke hearts and the tri-color pasta! It's easy to assemble, colorful to look at, and delicious to eat."

[Check out more quarantine recipes here by other members of MAPC!](#)

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/

