

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



May 27, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett

Dear Friends,

At the Session meeting last night we celebrated this year's confirmands as they have completed the confirmation classes they began last fall. The Session broke into small groups on Zoom to have a conversation with them about what it means to be a part of the church and the questions we all have about our faith. Congratulations to the 2020 Confirmation Class and their parents: Gwynnie Cook, Elliot Henderson, Timmy Johnson, Margaret Macdonald, Hugo Murray, Demi Oni, and Jena Silatchom. We are so proud of you and the energy and fresh perspectives you bring to the MAPC community. We look forward to celebrating with you as a congregation when it is safe to do so.

In other Session news:

--The Session voted to establish a "Building Re-opening Task Force" to start planning what it will look like to re-open the building when it is safe to do so. This group will be looking at things like: how and when will it be safe to gather for worship? How do we keep our online services and gatherings for those who cannot attend in person? How do we safely accommodate our various rentals? Twelve-step groups? Outreach ministries? How do we make the church buildings a safe environment for employees and all who enter on a daily basis? What will the Day School need to do? How and when can New York City Children's Chorus meet safely? We will open the church building and begin in-person gatherings and activities according to the various phases

of the city's re-opening and with the safety and inclusivity of our community as the highest priority.

Please note the wording of this task force--"Building re-opening" not "Church re-opening". The church has never closed. We have continued to be the church, discovering new ways of worshipping and being in ministry without having access to the buildings. There is much to consider in the coming months, and we will continue to be "a church without walls" as long as we need to in order to keep each other, and our larger community and city, safe.

The Session also approved motions to:

*Resume the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper. Weekly communion is a part of MAPC's identity and now that the denomination has given guidance for celebrating the Lord's Supper online, with an individual church's Session's approval, we are looking forward to resuming weekly communion.

*Approve the job description for the Transitional (Interim) Pastor. The Session is responsible for conducting this search and hiring the transitional pastor. They will begin reviewing Personal Information Forms of candidates for the position this week. Please note that the Session will need to observe strict confidentiality during this process, as the Pastor Nominating Committee did with the pastoral search.

*To ordain and install officers by Zoom Conference at the beginning of the fellowship hour this coming Sunday, May 31st. Please be sure and join this Zoom conference at noon! The officers being ordained and installed include: Elders-elect: David Carleton, Laura Macdonald, Gordon Shearer, Susan Tonking, and Bill Welsh (returning for a second consecutive term)

Deacons-elect: Jennifer Doyle Lennox, Penny Gemma, and Sarah Kadzakumanja

And returning for a second consecutive term: Pearl Forde, Edward Hudaverdi, Dianne Robbins, Suzan Thomas, Ruth Schroeder, and Nancy Trink

*Continue to pay hourly workers through the end of the summer.

*Approve the annual Outreach grant to Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter.

*Call a Special Congregational Meeting, Sunday, June 14 by Zoom Conference Call at noon, at the beginning of the regular Sunday Fellowship Hour for the purpose of adjusting terms of call for the Rev. Beverly Bartlett, during the time she serves as Acting Head of Staff.

Finally, at the May Session meeting, the Session voted to send a grant of \$12,000 from mission funds for our partners in the Synod of Harare in Zimbabwe. The funds will be used to drill three bore holes for churches and their communities that lack sufficient water. Below you will find an article written by Elder Curtis Field about our partnership and this grant. Stay well, and may Christ's peace be with you,

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 will be available as soon as we have it.

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 Fellowship Hour – Sundays at 12 noon

This Sunday's Fellowship Hour will begin with the ordination and installation of officers. We encourage you to join the Zoom conference call promptly at noon to participate in this special service. Pentecost Sunday is traditionally when MAPC ordains and installs officers, and we are grateful we are able to continue that by taking the service online this year. Watch for the email with

the Zoom link.

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.

NYCCC Spring Concert

The NYC Children's Chorus Spring Concert will look a bit different this year. This year, each chorister in grades one through twelve was invited to submit a video recording of their choir's assigned piece of music using an accompaniment recorded by Andrew Henderson and David Carleton. With scores of recordings submitted, Helen Karloski, Wendy Gilles, and Shannon Murphy (NYCCC staff) sifted through the videos and used iMovie to create the Spring Concert. These are not "virtual choirs", but instead a musical offering that showcases each child's art. The full concert will be released next week, but we are pleased to offer a sneak peek of "[Climb Ev'ry Mountain](#)" from [the Sound of Music!](#)

MAPC Afternoon Tea

Tomorrow, May 28 at 4 pm

Join us tomorrow for another installment of "Afternoon Tea" at MAPC. Brew some tea and share your favorite summertime recipes.

You can find recipes from the last 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.

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

Calling all pre-teens (3rd - 5th graders)! Join Rebecca and April again on Zoom, Tuesday, June 2nd at 3:30 pm to hang-out, play games and engage in a short devotion!

Lectio Divina via Zoom

Join Beverly Bartlett for Lectio Divina by Zoom, June 4th 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

Thursday, June 4th at 7 pm

Join us 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, June 4th at 9 pm,

If you would like to join the Moms' Night Out conversation 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, June 8th at 6:30 pm. Please contact Lissette Perez-Eraza for details: ljp@mapc.com.

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 AND THE HARARE SYNOD OF THE CCAP

By Curtis Field, MAPC

For over a decade, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church (MAPC) has enjoyed a strong and fruitful ministerial partnership with the Harare Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP). CCAP originated in Malawi, but branched out into what is now Zimbabwe, when agricultural workers migrated there in the 1960s.

Our partnership has involved visits of MAPC delegations to Zimbabwe, reciprocal visits by Synod members to MAPC, the sponsorship of pastors-in-residence from Zimbabwe at MAPC, and MAPC's support for a number of projects undertaken by the Harare Synod: a new central church in Harare, a school and other buildings at the Synod's Rock Haven retreat center, and an egg business at the same retreat center. In recent years, delegation visits from Zimbabwe have been frustrated, because of the impossibility of delegation members to be approved for travel visas at the U.S. Embassy in Harare. MAPC members made a visit to Zimbabwe in September 2016, but a planned visit in October 2019 was cancelled due to the deteriorating political situation in Zimbabwe.

The CCAP has been confronted in recent years with challenges such as the departure of Robert Mugabe accompanied by the change in government, the

worsening economic conditions, and recent monsoons. The latest struggle for the Synod has been responding to the 2020 drought in Southeastern Africa, compounded by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. An immediate and long-term need is that many churches and prayer houses have no water at all. Boreholes are needed in order to establish new wells at 26 locations. Recently, the Rev. Kingstar Chapati, General Secretary of the Synod, sent an appeal to mission partners requesting financial assistance. MAPC, through its Outreach Committee and Session, has responded by a resolution to supply a grant for three boreholes.

These funds will help, but more is needed to ensure that the other 23 churches have clean water during this difficult time.

This article appeared in the Zambia Zimbabwe Mozambique USA Mission Network May 2020 Newsletter. If you would like to read the entire newsletter, here is a link to it:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/a56i72rlp4wbhqd/ZZMUSA%20Newsletter%20May202020.pdf?dl=0>

MAPC Afternoon Tea Recipes

Speedy No-Knead Bread

From Tana Dye

Time: About 1 Hour, plus 4 1/2 hours' resting

Yield: 1 big loaf

Ingredients

- 3 cups bread flour
- 1 packet (1/4 ounce) instant yeast
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- Oil as needed

Steps:

1. Combine flour, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Add 1 ½ cups water and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest about 4 hours at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.
2. Lightly oil a work surface and place dough on it. Fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest 30 minutes more.
3. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 45 degrees. Put a 6-to-8 quart heavy cover pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in over as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under dough and put it into pot, seam side up. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes.
4. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

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

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/

