

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

# PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



**June 4, 2020**

## **A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett**

Dear Friends,

To quote Bob Dylan, "the times they are a changin'". And change they should. Change they must. We cannot continue to live in a world so deeply divided and where racism is so deeply embedded in our society. I fervently hope that the massive uprisings, not just in our country but around the world, in response to George Floyd's killing at the hands of the police are a harbinger of real change. But they won't be, if we don't participate in bringing that change about. What can we do? Educate ourselves, listen to black people and other people of color, read and learn about how racism has been built into the structure of our society since our country's founding, contribute to organizations that are working for a more equitable world, vote and work to ensure that voting is easy and accessible for all people. One small, but important, way to start is to have conversations with each other, study the issues, read material--articles and books, both fiction and non-fiction--written by people of color.

The last few days the words of the prophets have been rolling around in my head: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24). "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8). And God's call to the prophet Isaiah, "Shout out! Do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet!" (Isaiah 58:1). This is a time to listen to the prophets, and a time to be prophetic. The church must both speak out and act.

Jesus' commandment to love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength and our neighbor as ourself isn't just about how we *feel* about God and our neighbor, it's about how we live and act. Luke tells us that at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, when he taught in the synagogue in Nazareth, he read from the prophet Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lords' favor." Then he said, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:16-21). Later on in Luke, in a discussion with the Pharisees, Jesus said, "the kingdom of God is among you." That could also be translated "within you." As followers of Christ, God's reign is among us and within us. It is not yet a reality in our world, but we are called to live by it and live into it. Jesus handed his ministry over to us, his followers. We are the ones called to carry it out on earth. May God give us the grace, humility, courage, wisdom and will to faithfully be Christ's body in this place and time.

Stay well.

May Christ's peace be with you and the Spirit lead you,

Beverly A. Bartlett

Associate Pastor and Acting Head of Staff

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## Three Ways to Give to MAPC During this Time

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We are grateful to all of you for your financial support of the church during this time. As you know the church continues to be the church, with staff to pay, buildings to maintain, and ministries to carry out even though our buildings are closed. We understand that with job losses and furloughs, many people are not able to contribute financially. For those of you who are able to continue your financial pledges and offerings, there are now three ways you can give:

### **By mail:**

MAPC, Attn: Business Office, 921 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10021

### **Through the church's website:**

[www.mapc.com](http://www.mapc.com)

Click on the "giving" link near the top of the homepage.

### **And electronically through the church's Zelle account:**

Access the "send money with Zelle" option on your bank's App, and select [pay@mapc.com](mailto:pay@mapc.com) as the recipient. There is a memo line to detail what the payment is for.

Thank you for your faithful giving!

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# Ways to Stay Connected

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## **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!

## **NEW! Facing Racism Sunday Morning Class, 10 am via Zoom Conference**

In the wake of the police killing of George Floyd, with the massive demonstrations across our country and in many other nations calling for justice and systemic change, we will be engaging in a six-week study published by the Presbyterian Church (USA) on Facing Racism. Please join in this Sunday morning conversation. Below you will find links to download both the Facing Racism policy and the study guide. In addition, please listen to the May 29th statement by The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PCUSA, and read the statement by The Rev. Dr. Dianne Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Both of these links are below as well. We hope to see you on Sunday morning as we engage in this critically important conversation and study together.

[https://facing-racism.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/facing\\_racism/resources/facing-racism-policy.pdf](https://facing-racism.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/facing_racism/resources/facing-racism-policy.pdf)

[https://facing-racism.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/facing\\_racism/facing-racism-study-guide.pdf](https://facing-racism.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/facing_racism/facing-racism-study-guide.pdf)

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/5/29/stated-clerk-remembers-recent-victims-racial-violence/>

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/it-is-a-righteous-and-holy-anger-that-sees-injustice-and-knows-that-it-is-wrong/>

## **Virtual Fellowship Hour – Sundays at 12 noon**

Please join us for Virtual Fellowship Hour on Sundays at noon. The pastoral staff will be there, and we look forward to visiting with you. After a few minutes to greet everyone, we will break out into smaller Zoom "Rooms" so we can engage in more conversation, then come back together before signing off.

## **Gathering Together - Wednesdays**

*We need to hear from you!!* The Wednesday evening gatherings have fewer

and fewer people joining, and while we look forward to seeing you during these times, it may be that people are engaged in other ways (we are offering many ways to gather!), and this particular gathering has served its purpose.

We have more people joining the congregational fellowship on Sundays at noon, and perhaps that is the better time. If we hear from several of you that you want to continue the Wednesday Zooms, and are generally able to attend them, we will continue! Otherwise, we will look forward to seeing you online at some of our other gatherings and classes. Please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo if you would like the Wednesday gatherings to continue, [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com).

### **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-Erazo at [lgp@mapc.com](mailto: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 and Auditions**

The NYC Children's Chorus Spring Concert is 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. Using excerpts from each child's video, the NYCCC staff used iMovie to create the Spring Concert. The full concert is available for viewing here:

<https://vimeo.com/425773837>

**If you know a child that loves to sing**, please send their parent the link to our website, [nycchildrenschorus.org](http://nycchildrenschorus.org), to sign up for a Zoom audition with Mary Huff!

### **Lectio Divina via Zoom**

**Today** - 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.

### **Young Adult Happy Hour**

**Tonight - 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**

**Tonight - 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](mailto: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-Erazo for details: [lgp@mapc.com](mailto: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, June 9 at 3:30 pm to hang-out, play games and engage in a short devotion!

### **MAPC Afternoon Tea**

**June 11 at 4 pm**

Join us 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**

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:bab@mapc.com). The next Bible Study meeting is June 15.

### **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](mailto: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**

### **Scottish Tea Scones**

From Beth Goehring

Ingredients:

- 2 cups unsifted flour
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup currants
- 2 eggs slightly beaten
- ¼ cup milk

Steps:

1. Sift together the flour, sugar, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt.
2. Cut in the shortening to fine crumbs.
3. Add the currants, eggs, and milk and mix with fork. Divide the batter in half and turn each half onto floured board.
4. Roll out to ½-inch thick round.
5. Cut each of the rounds into 8 triangular parts and place on greased and floured pan.
6. Bake at 400° for 15 minutes or until golden.

“This is the best recipe for scones my family has ever come across. They are both tender and tasty and are very quick and easy to make.”—Nancy Graham

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

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## MAPC on Social Media

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### 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/](https://facebook.com/MadisonAvenuePresbyterian/)

