

# PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



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**June 11, 2020**

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

Dear Friends,

Here are a few things that give me hope right now:

- Police departments are enacting reforms in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the resulting two-plus weeks of protests and demonstrations.
- The book *White Fragility* (Robin DiAngelo) is sold out on both Amazon and IndieBooks.
- There was a Black Lives Matter march and demonstration in the north Georgia mountain town of Clayton, just a couple miles away from where my family's farm is.
- We had about 25 people in our Zoom "Facing Racism" class last Sunday.
- The people of NYC did the hard work to come way down the other side of the COVID-19 mountain.
- Most New Yorkers seem willing to wear masks to protect each other, while protesting. They aren't comfortable, especially as the weather warms up, but if the two or three-year old I saw wearing his mask while riding his scooter can do it, then so can I, so can we.
- Both James Lenox House and Carnegie East House remain COVID-19 free, thanks in large part to the efforts of their director, Joe Girven, to keep them

safe.

--Our member Elizabeth Gagnon and husband Rahul Phalnikar welcomed baby Eleanor on May 21. And I don't think we shared the news yet that baby Calum was born to Aleksandra Szczepanowska and Elder Gordon Shearer on May 16. Everyone is healthy. Congratulations--we are so happy for you all, and it is a joy to have news of new life during these times.

We have a lot of work yet to do to address the sin and the systemic nature of racism. And COVID-19 is going to be with us for a while, so we've got a lot ahead of us on that front as well. But there are signs of hope, and hope keeps us going. The trick is not to become complacent. Once the protests and demonstrations ebb, the work of self-reflection, education and righting the wrongs of racism must continue. And we can't become complacent with the virus either. If we don't re-open carefully, and keep practicing physical distancing, wearing masks, and scrubbing our hands we will be right back where we were in early April.

The biggest source of hope I have is all of you--the ways we have found to be a church together when we can't use the building, your willingness to try new things and engage in hard conversations, and the commitment of our staff--those on site, those staggering their work days in the office, those coming in to maintain the buildings, and those working from home.

Peace to you all,  
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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## Update on the Building Re-Opening

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The Building Re-Opening Task Force had its first meeting last night to begin planning. The Presbytery of New York City had a Zoom call this morning (Thursday) to go over their recommendations and resources that are available as churches figure out timelines and protocols. As one woman on the Presbytery's resource team said, "It is a lot easier to shut a building down than to re-open it." There is much to consider, and in our case, many different programs and activities are involved. For now, as the city is in phase one, the buildings are still closed to all but essential staff, construction workers and residents, and we anticipate that will be the case for the church for the remainder of the summer. Keeping people as safe as possible is our primary goal. And as we begin to have more people and programs in the building in the future, making sure our ministries are inclusive of those who cannot safely gather in-person is also a primary goal.

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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](#).

### Congregational Meeting

The Session of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church has called a Special Congregational Meeting for this coming Sunday, June 14th, to vote on a motion to adjust Rev. Beverly Bartlett's terms of call. The meeting will be held at noon via Zoom. An email with the link and call-in number will be sent to church members. Please log in promptly at noon for the meeting, which will be moderated by the Rev. Laura Jervis, after which we will continue with our regular fellowship hour.

We must have a quorum for this meeting, so please join the Zoom meeting at noon!

### 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!

## **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 have resumed the *Facing Racism* Sunday morning class that was interrupted when we had to stop meeting in person. Please join in this Sunday morning conversation. Below you will find links to download both the *Facing Racism* policy and the study guide. 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. *Please see note above about the Special Congregational Meeting and the beginning of this Sunday's Fellowship Hour.*

## **Gathering Together - on hiatus**

With other opportunities for gatherings and classes, we have decided to take a break from the Wednesday evening Gathering Together times for a while. Please join in the Sunday Fellowship Hours, Thursday Afternoon Teas and other offerings below.

## **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](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!

### **MAPC Afternoon Tea**

**Today, June 11 at 4 pm**

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

### **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.

### **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 16 at 3:30 pm to hang-out, play games and engage in a short devotion!

### **Lectio Divina via Zoom**

**Thursday, June 18 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**

**Thursday - June 18th at 8 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 18 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 22 at 6:30 pm. Please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo for details: [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com).

### **Youth**

The Youth regularly meet 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.

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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/)

