

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



September 24, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Beverly A. Bartlett

Dear Friends,

What does one write in a pastoral staff letter to the congregation when all one wants to do is rant, and worse, over the outrages of the day's news? That is the dilemma I find myself in as I write this on Wednesday evening. But ranting and raving does not feel very pastoral. Unless you feel like ranting and raving, too, and it is somehow comforting to know that your pastor feels the same way. I am deeply saddened, angry, and fearful about so much these days: the racism so deeply embedded in our society; the facts that more than 200,000 people have died of the coronavirus in our country, that the number is only going to climb, and that we did not have to lose this many people; the upcoming election which we are already being told will be contested and that our ballots might not even be counted; and the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg who spent her life fighting for equal rights for women and so many others.

I am reminding myself tonight of what I wrote last week and what I often remind you when it is my turn to record the weekday devotion: "Breathe. Breathe. 'Be still and know that I am God.'" When I stop to breathe, to once again ground myself in the presence of the Holy Spirit, I know I am not alone. We have a lot of work to do to live into God's kingdom, and stopping to breathe, to rest in God, even for a moment or two, gives us the measure of peace we need to continue to live our lives of faith. If all I am doing is ranting and raving, I am not going to bear much fruit in this

world. And that's what God calls us to do--bear fruit--the fruit of righteousness, justice, peace, and love. So I am now breathing and remembering God is with us through it all. I hope you are, too.

We learned this week of the death of member Geoffrey (Jeff) Thompson on August 3. Jeff had served as both a deacon and trustee at MAPC in past years. We extend our condolences to his family and friends.

It was a joyful occasion to baptize baby Eleanor last Sunday with her family in the sanctuary and congregation members joining by Zoom. On October 4th, we will celebrate another baptism during our Zoom Fellowship Hour--that of Stephen Eng as he and fiancée Megan Rau join the church.

Remember!!! We need you to reserve you or your family's spot for the Morning Prayer service on the Roof Garden this Sunday at 9 am. We have to know who is coming! Please see the details below and click on the link to sign up.

We had such a good time on our Walk in the Park last Saturday, that we are going to make it a habit--at least until it gets too cold. See below for details and a photo from last Saturday's walk.

Finally, a joyful announcement: welcome to the world Charles (Charlie) Ethan Crook! Charlie was born September 18th to MAPC member Ali Gemma and Ian Crook. Charlie is the newest grandson of Deacon Penny Gemma.



Meet Charlie Crook!



A Walk in the Park - Sept. 19th

Join us this Saturday, Sept. 26 @ 9 am on the corner of E. 72nd and 5th Ave

Christ's peace to you all,
Beverly A. Bartlett
Associate Pastor and Acting Head of Staff

Worship

Please join us for online worship. Here is the schedule of preachers over the next four weeks:

Sunday, September 27, The Rev. Beverly Bartlett

Sunday, October 4, The Rev. Denise Welsh

Sunday, October 11, The Rev. Beverly Bartlett

Sunday, October 18, Transitional Pastor, The Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn will preach--his first Sunday with MAPC!

Sunday Worship

Join us for pre-recorded services of worship on Sunday mornings.

Find all our services here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Morning Prayer, Sunday, September 27 9 am on the Roof Garden

We will offer an in-person Morning Prayer service on the Roof Garden at 9 am on Sunday, September 27. This will be a shorter service with prayers, scripture readings and music, probably no more than a half-hour. We have to limit the numbers to 25 people (plus staff), so **reservations are required**.

Not only do we have to keep a count, but we have to have names and contact information for contact tracing. Masks covering both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times in the building and on the Roof Garden. We will take temperatures and have those attending sign a health attestation--which is the church's policy for everyone entering the building. If it goes well, we will have additional Morning Prayer services before it gets too cold.

If you have trouble making your reservation, please contact April Martin at aem@mapc.com.

Here is the link for signing up:

[Reserve Your Spot Here](#)

Do You Need Tech Help to Connect with MAPC?

If you or someone you know is unable to watch our worship services online or join in various fellowship gatherings or Bible study by Zoom because they are struggling with the technology, please let us know! We have tech-savvy

staff, members and youth who would love to help. We don't want to leave anyone out during this time we must meet virtually. Please let us know if you are aware of someone that needs help connecting! Contact April Martin at aem@mapc.com.

Choir at MAPC

We are pleased that some of MAPC's choral programs have resumed with in-person rehearsals and recordings, exceeding the scientific guidelines for safe choral singing that have been published recently. You will see and hear our professional octet during our Sunday worship videos, and we have scheduled members of the Church Choir to join in for the next two weeks. Rehearsals are taking place on our open-air Roof Garden with safe distancing, and our New York City Children's Chorus program is running simultaneous virtual and in-person sessions, utilizing the Roof Garden, as well. We hope that you enjoy the additions of beautiful choral music to our online worship services again!



Dr. Andrew Henderson rehearsing with the Church Choir.



Mary Huff, Director of New York City Children's Chorus, practicing safely on MAPC's Roof Garden.

Daily Prayer

Daily Prayer – Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Find all of them here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Three Ways to Give to MAPC During this Time

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, click on the link below to see the three ways you can give:

[Give Now](#)

Thank you for your faithful giving!

Ways to Stay Connected

Sunday Worship

See link for Worship above.

Children's Worship

Find all of our children's worship videos here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

For Adults--Opportunities for Fellowship & Study

Zoom invites are sent regularly by email.

Virtual Fellowship Hour

Sundays at 12 noon

Please join us for Virtual Fellowship Hour. Every Sunday.

**NOTE: An email with the Zoom link will be sent out on Sunday mornings at 8 am.

NEW! A Walk in the Park

Please join MAPC friends and April for a masked walk in Central Park, Saturday morning, September 26th. Beverly will lead the walk on October 3.

We will meet at the 72nd Street and 5th Avenue entrance at 9 am this week. October 3rd's meeting place will be announced next week. Please let us know if you plan to come, so we will know who to watch for. RSVP to Lissette Perez-Erazo, lgp@mapc.com

Lectio Divina & Tea/Discussion Gatherings

Next week we will resume our Thursday afternoon gatherings. On the first and third Thursdays of the month, Beverly Bartlett will lead Lectio Divina at 3:30 pm, and on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays, April Martin will lead discussions based on Kate Bowler's podcast and other materials about grief at 4 pm. Join this safe space for Tea and discussions!

TODAY, September 24, at 4 pm, Tea & Discussion

Thursday, October 1, at 3:30 pm, Lectio Divina

Thursday, October 8, at 4 pm, Tea & Discussion

Young Adult Happy Hour

Watch this space for updates about our Fall programs.

Becoming Anti-Racist, Sunday Morning Discussion Group, 10 am

The Sunday morning group is reading and discussing *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo through October 18. If you are not able to obtain it through your local bookstore, it is available on Amazon on both Kindle and paperback. *We will read and discuss chapters four and five this coming Sunday.* You can also check out an e-book version through the New York Public Library. Please join in this important conversation as we continue to educate ourselves on what it means to be anti-racist.

Bible Studies

Monday Evening Bible Study

1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 7 pm

The next Evening Bible Study will be Monday, October 5th. We have finished our study of the Gospel According to Mark, and we are beginning a new study on the Sermon on the Mount.

If you have not participated in the Monday Evening Bible Study before now, this is a great time to join, and we would love to have you! Email bab@mapc.com if you are interested.

We will be using Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's book, *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*. If you would like for me to order you a copy, which you can pick up from the receptionist at the church, I need to know by close of day on Friday (tomorrow!). Please email me at bab@mapc.com.

If you would like to get your own copy (hard copy or Kindle) you can get it through Amazon, or order the book through bookshop.org to support independent bookstores. Here is a link for both options:

<https://bookshop.org/books/sermon-on-the-mountain-a-beginner-s-guide-to-the-kingdom-of-heaven/9781501899898>

https://www.amazon.com/Sermon-Mount-Beginners-Kingdom-Heaven-ebook/dp/B0859M58ZL/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?dchild=1&keywords=sermon+on+the+mount+levine&qid=1600734777&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEyWTdIWkEwOTk1VThpJmVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNjM5NTAyMlJMWEsyTDZVUF11QiZlbnNyeXB0ZWZlZElkPUEwNzA5NjUyMkhCV05VSVVVVUJRQSZ3aWRnZXR OYW1lPXNwX2F0ZiZhY3Rpb249Y2xpY2tSZWRpcmVjdCZkb05vdExvZ0Nsa WNrPXRydWU=

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, meets by teleconference. The next meeting is Monday, September 28. Please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo for more details: lgp@mapc.com

Youth and Children at MAPC this Fall

Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)

YOUTH ON THE ROOF! For six Wednesdays this fall, we invite all youth in middle and high school to join us *in-person* and *virtually* from 5:45-7 pm for food, fellowship, music, study, and fun. We will begin with a boxed-dinner safely prepared by Chef Jim on our roof. Masked study, fellowship and fun will follow, all keeping our physical distance, but strengthening our faith and friendships. Virtual youth are welcome to join from their homes, eating dinner and joining in discussion.

September 30; October 7, 14, 21, 28.

YOUTH IN THE GYM! For two Wednesdays in November, we will meet *in-person* in the MAPC gym for safe games and pizza-to-go. Lots of fellowship, food, and fun!

November 4 and 18.

YOUTH ON THE ROAD! On December 9, we will carol outside for our neighbors who are staying "Safe at Home" during the pandemic.

December 9.

Children: Faith and Fun (Connecting Virtually)

PRESCHOOLERS! At-home resources will be mailed to families with preschool age children in October.

WEDNESDAYS FOR KIDS! (K-2nd grade) on Zoom. This fall, we will learn about covenants. Wednesdays for Kids will meet **every first and third Wednesday** this fall. Contact Chesna Hinkley (ceh@mapc.com) for more info and watch this space for updates!

PRE-TEEN CONNECT (3rd-5th grade)

This fall, we'll learn about the beginnings in God's story. Contact Chesna Hinkley (ceh@mapc.com) for more info and watch this space for updates! Sept. 30, Oct. 14 & 28, Nov. 11 & Dec. 9 - 4:30-5:15 pm on Zoom

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/

