

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



October 15, 2020

A Letter from Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn

Dear Friends,

As many of you are aware, the view of Central Park from the manse is spectacular. As Deb and I enjoyed the sunset one evening last week, I reflected on the events that brought you and me together.

It began with a surprise phone call from my Presbytery Executive several months ago. She asked, "Would you like to live in New York City?"

"Of course!" I replied. After a short pause, I said, "Uh. But where?"

"Manhattan."

"Manhattan? Absolutely!"

Another short pause.

"But which church? I am not aware of any vacancy in Manhattan."

"Madison Avenue."

"But they have a minister."

"Well, I don't know what happened but that person left, and they will soon search for a Transitional Pastor. May I submit your name?"

"Yes," I answered. "That would be fine."

My curiosity was piqued.

I had heard of the congregation but I really didn't know anything about it. After some research the situation seemed somewhat familiar: long term pastorate followed by a very brief tenure.

And this took place during the early days of the pandemic?

I have a passion for pastors and churches who have been hurt, wounded or deeply disappointed by the somewhat capricious nature of ministry. This is a very large group, and over the next few weeks I found myself thinking about you. Wondering how you were doing. Praying for you.

When the search committee later contracted me, we scheduled a couple of interviews. I was struck by how well they went. The elders were warm and caring, easy to talk to. They had a good sense of humor, and their love for MAPC was so apparent.

Throughout most of my ministry I have served as an installed pastor, and over the summer I pondered where I might serve next. I was open to both installed and transitional ministry positions, and, thankfully, a variety of opportunities presented themselves.

I wasn't sure where I would end up, and as Carolyn Clark, the chair of the search committee, can tell you the invitation to serve MAPC actually caught me a bit off guard.

I visited the church and had long conversations with Carolyn, Beverly, and Laura Jervis. That evening and over the next few days Deb and I discussed the possibility from a variety of angles.

We soon made our decision.

A year ago I could not have imagined serving MAPC, and you could not have imagined that another pastor would lead you.

But here we are. God has this curious habit of surprising us, startling us, and blessing us.

What might God have in store for us in the future? How will we grow and stretch and learn? How will we offer hope to a world bound by the fear and the uncertainty of a deadly pandemic?

These are just some of the challenges and opportunities that await us.

I love New York, and I am very thankful to join you at MAPC.

Thinking of you.
Patrick

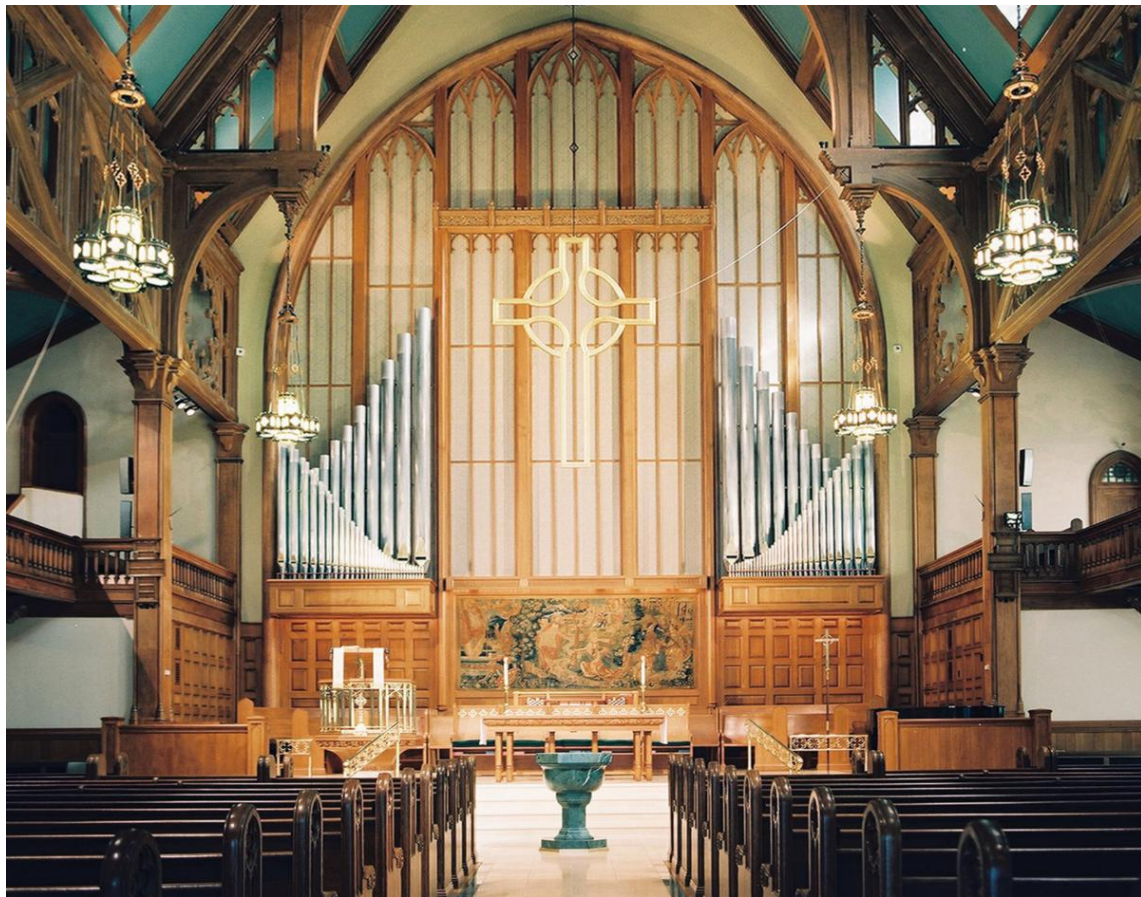
Peace and Global Witness Offering

MAPC will receive the 2020 Peace and Global Witness Offering this Sunday, October 11. The Presbyterian Church USA collects this offering annually to equip the saints throughout the world to fulfill our mission of peace and reconciliation in the name of Jesus Christ. This year, 75% of MAPC's offering will go to this fund and 25% directly to the International Justice Mission, which intervenes to rescue and advocate for victims of human trafficking in the developing world.

Memorial Sunday

We are receiving the names of loved ones to be remembered during our virtual service on Memorial Sunday, November 1. It is particularly appropriate to remember those who have died in the last year. If you have someone whose name you would like to have read and included in the service, please contact Andrew Henderson at aeh@mapc.com. **The deadline for the receipt of names is Wednesday, October 28.**

2020 Stewardship Campaign



The Stewardship and Development Committee has worked diligently to plan this fall's stewardship campaign. In the spring it became clear that the original plan for the fall would have to be adjusted since in-person gatherings would not be possible. Next week MAPC members should watch for an invitation, sent both by email and hard copy, to participate in a virtual fall fellowship gathering. There are eight gatherings you can choose from (the dates will be in the invitation). We will limit these Zoom gatherings to a maximum of 20 people to allow for the opportunity for conversation. Our Transitional Minister, Dr. Vaughn, will be at each gathering as will Rev. Bartlett. It is a challenging time to get to know a new pastor, and this is one of the ways we can do that. We hope to see you at one of the fall fellowship gatherings.

In addition to the gatherings, church officers will be calling active members to check in, see how you are doing, share news about the church's ministry

and finances, and encourage you to join them in making a pledge for 2021.

Giving is a joy. It is one of the ways we respond to God's grace and abundant mercies. And now more than ever, we, our city and our world need the church's ministry and witness to the love and justice of Jesus Christ.

The verses below, selected from Isaiah 58, provide the theme for this year's campaign. We encourage you to read and reflect on the entire chapter.

"If you remove the yoke from among you
And satisfy the needs of the afflicted
The Lord will guide you continually
And you will be like a watered garden
Like a spring of water
Whose water never fails."

When we use our time, energy, and resources to bring life and wholeness to others, we in turn will flourish as a well-watered garden.

Worship

Please join us for online worship.

The Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching regularly starting this Sunday, October 18.

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, October 18 at 9 am on the Roof Garden

As long as the city and state health guidelines allow, we will continue to offer Morning Prayer services on the Roof Garden on Sunday mornings at 9 am through the month of October. If you are unfamiliar with this type of service-- it is not that different from a regular Sunday service, minus the sermon and communion! It is about a half-hour long, and includes prayers, hymns, scripture readings and some time for reflection. We can accommodate 25 to 30 people and request that you sign up ahead of time.

We need to keep track of numbers and 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 who attend sign a health attestation-which is the church's policy for everyone entering the building. Please note that we are following (and exceeding) the recommended safety guidelines for participating in worship and singing hymns together.

If you have trouble making your reservation, please contact Beverly Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

Here is the link for signing up:

[Reserve Your Spot Here](#)

NYCCC on the GRAMMY Ballot

Congratulations to the New York City Children's Chorus on their album, *Christmas in New York*, being included on the GRAMMY ballot in the following categories:

Best Choral Performance
Best Engineered Classical Recording
Producer of the Year

Christmas in New York was recorded in MAPC's sanctuary in May, 2019, and has also received recent critical acclaim:

"This is a remarkable treble choir...the sound is a perfect balance between blend and clarity" - Fanfare, March/April 2020

"Mary Wannamaker Huff builds a thrilling climax with exquisite tuning and a gloriously open sound." - The American Organist, October 2020

Congratulations to our NYCCC program!

A Virtual Music on Madison Series

As with so many aspects of our lives this year, the Saint Andrew Music Society will be doing something different this fall! We invite you to join us for a series of special online broadcasts on Sunday afternoons from the sanctuary of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. This coming Sunday's performance features students from the Mannes College of Music performing a "Tribute to Johann Sebastian Bach" as part of their Mannes Sounds series, and recorded from all different corners of the USA and beyond! While we'll be releasing the performance this Sunday afternoon, the concert will be

available for future viewing anytime. Be on the lookout for an email blast this Sunday at 3 pm, check out the SAMS section of our [website](#), or “Like” our [Facebook](#) page.



Daily Prayer

Daily Prayer – Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Find all of them here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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.

A Walk in the Park

Please join MAPC friends and April for a masked walk in Central Park, Saturday morning, Oct. 17th.

We will meet at the south entrance of E. 72nd Street and 5th Ave at 9 am this

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.

Halloween Gathering in Central Park

Since we cannot have our usual Halloween bash in the Parish Hall this year, we will have a gathering in Central Park for 25-30 people (that is the Park's limit for group gatherings). We have a permit for the lawn at Cedar Hill from 4 to 6 on Saturday, October 24th. We'll have snacks, a craft, and some games. Please bring a blanket to sit on and your own beverages. Wear your costumes so we can all admire them! We ask that everyone, except babies and toddlers, wear a mask unless you are eating or drinking. Please use the link below to sign up.



[Sign Up Here](#)

Trick or Treating on the Steps

If conditions and safety guidelines allow, we will once again have trick-or-treating on the church steps from 4 - 6 pm on Halloween. We will do it a little differently this year--setting out a table with treats so we are not directly handing things to people. Watch this space for exact times. We hope this gives the congregation an opportunity to safely drop by and say hello!

If you are able to drop off a bag or two of candy to contribute to our Trick-or-Treating on the steps, please leave them with the church receptionist. Thank you!

Blessing of the Animals

This year happily marks the fourth service of Blessing of the Animals at MAPC. This year, MAPC's Fall In-Person Youth Program, Youth on the Roof, recorded this brief service for animals and the humans that love them. If you haven't already viewed it, please tune in here, and share with others that might also enjoy this short worship service.

[Watch the Service Here](#)

Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom

Mondays from 7 to 8 pm:

Oct. 26, Nov. 9, Nov. 23, Dec. 7, Jan. 11, and Jan. 25

Young adults will be studying Ephesians this fall. Bring your drink for a mid-evening happy hour and join us for fellowship and discussion.

Chesna Hinkley & April Martin will lead this group on Zoom. Please watch your email for the link and more information.

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.

We will read and discuss chapter twelve this coming Sunday. Please join in this important conversation as we continue to educate ourselves on what it means to be anti-racist.

Adult Education Class, Sunday October 25th, 10 am via Zoom

The Remarkable Life of Anne Askew: Protestant Martyr and Early Feminist

MAPC member and Reformation scholar Roy Lennox will finish his series on the English Reformation, begun last winter before the pandemic arrived, with a presentation via Zoom on Anne Askew, appropriately timed for Reformation Sunday!

Anne Askew was a remarkable young woman, martyred for her beliefs a few months prior to the death of Henry VIII. While imprisoned before her execution, she wrote an account of her experiences that told of her interrogation, some of it while she was illegally under torture in the Tower of London. Some of the questions Roy will address in this class include: Was Anne a proto-feminist? How did she impact the English Reformation? Why did she choose to die for her beliefs? Watch your email for the Zoom link for the class.

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 19th. We are studying the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew, using Amy-Jill Levine's book, *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*, and will be discussing chapter 2 on the 19th. You are welcome to jump into the Monday Evening Bible Study at any time--just contact Rev. Bartlett at bab@mapc.com so she can send you the Zoom link.

You can order a copy (hard copy or Kindle) of Dr. Levine's book through Amazon, or order from bookshop.org to support independent bookstores. Here is a link for both options:

<https://bookshop.org/books/sermon-on-the-mount-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=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEyWTdlWkEwOTk1VTThPjMvY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNjM5NTAyMlJMWESyTDZVUF11QiZlbnNyeXB0ZWZlZElkPUEwNzA5NjUyMkhCV05VSVVVVVUJRQSZ3aWRnZXR0YW11PjNwX2F0ZiZhY3Rpb249Y2xpY2tSZWRpcmVjdCZkb05vdExvZ0NsaWNRPXRydWU=

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, meets by teleconference. The next meeting is Monday, October 26. Please contact Lissette Perez-Eraza for more details: lgp@mapc.com

Youth and Children at MAPC this Fall

Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)

YOUTH ON THE ROOF! For TWO more Wednesdays this fall, we invite all youth in middle and high school to join us *in-person* and *virtually*, on our roof from 5:45-7 pm for food, fellowship, music, study, and fun. We will begin with a safely-prepared box dinner courtesy of Chef Jim. 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.

October 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, 5:45-7 pm.

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)

Delivery of Christian Education Materials for Children

Chesna, April and one of our youth have been delivering materials for preschoolers, early elementary children and preteens. Preschoolers received "Sunday School in a Box" for eight sessions of at-home activities and learning. K-2nd graders received materials for the Mondays for Kid Zoom gatherings, and preteens were sent learner sheets to use in the Wednesday Preteen Connect group. Look out for your delivery or let Chesna Hinkley know if you would like one. You can email her at ceh@mapc.com.

MONDAYS FOR KIDS! (K-2nd grade) **on Zoom**. This fall, we will learn about covenants. Mondays for Kids will meet **on Oct. 19, Nov. 2, 16 & 30, Dec. 14 at 4:30-5:15 pm.**

Contact Chesna Hinkley (ceh@mapc.com) for more info and watch this

space for updates!

PRETEEN CONNECT (3rd-5th grade) **on Zoom.**

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

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!

Links for MAPC Worship Services

Sunday Worship

See link for Worship above.

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Children's Worship

Find all of our children's worship videos here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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.

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/

