

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



January 21, 2021

A Letter from Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn

Dear Friends,

Have you ever wondered about the difference between an installed minister and a transitional/interim minister?

Probably not.

I can't imagine why anyone would ever give this much thought!

But I have.

Is it a difference in training? No. Not really. I was trained as an interim minister, and it was somewhat helpful. But nothing will ever be as valuable as the 33 years I served in small and large congregations.

Is it a difference in the length of service? Usually, but not always. Some installed ministers have shorter tenures and some interim/transitional have longer tenures.

Is it the ministry itself? No. Both strive to listen to the congregation, to get to know the members, to grow in awareness of how God has been at work in the history of the church. Both seek to discern a faithful path into the future. Both preach the gospel and nurture leadership.

And, whether installed or transitional, ministers should only introduce change when they know they will serve that congregation

long enough to see it develop and mature. This is probably the primary difference between the two. Installed ministers tend to have more time.

For many years I have said that all ministers are transitional ministers. Every. Single. One.

No minister is permanent. We might accept another call after three years of service or we might retire. We might walk out or we might get carried out, but one way or another all ministers leave. The same is true for members, of course.

Throughout my years as a pastor, wherever I have been, I have tried to keep this in mind: for all of us our time together is limited. I find this helpful because it has helped me

to enjoy the relationships I develop,

to savor those moments in ministry when we can almost see God's hand at work,

to appreciate the humor in so many situations,

to say "Thank you" for the unexpected blessings of being church together.

All of this brings me to my main point.

If I haven't said it lately, Thank you.

It is a joy to serve with you in ministry at MAPC!

Thinking of you,

Patrick

[Click Here to Join Rev. Vaughn's Gospel Gathering](#)

Meeting ID: 875 9406 5461

Passcode: 908581

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Sundays at 9 am

The Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held at noon on February 7, 2021 via Zoom. The Zoom link will be emailed to the congregation that morning. Our meeting will include the election of officers, a final report of our 2020 finances, a presentation of the 2021 budget, and approving the terms of call for our installed associate pastor, the Reverend Beverly Bartlett.

Worship

Please join us for online worship.

The Rev. Dr. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching this coming Sunday, January 24. His sermon is entitled "Business as Usual?"

Sunday Worship

Join us for pre-recorded services of worship on Sunday mornings.
Find all our services here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

**Morning Prayer In-Person
This Sunday at 10:30 AM, Sanctuary**



We will continue to offer Morning Prayer on Sundays as long as the public health guidelines allow for indoor gatherings of more than ten persons. Continuing any form of in-person worship also depends on worshippers following the church's guidelines below.

--Please use the Sign-up Genius link below to sign up. Since we must limit the number of people in the Sanctuary, we need to know how many people plan to attend.

--Masks completely covering both the mouth and nose must be worn at all times.

--Seating is marked, and worshippers may sit where the blue dots on the pews are located. If a couple or family occupies a blue dot, then the adjacent dot needs to be left vacant to allow for adequate physical distancing.

--As hard as it is, refrain from greeting and speaking with one another inside

the Sanctuary. Hold your conversations for outside on the sidewalk after the service. Talking together outside is exponentially more safe than inside.

--As much as we want to connect with one another, it is simply not safe for hugs, handshakes or other physical contact beyond the members of one's household. Please greet each other from a safe physical distance!

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

[Sign Up Here](#)

Cold Weather Accessories Drive

Throughout the winter, we will be giving away gloves, mittens, hats, scarves and socks to our Open Table guests. If you are able, please ship something from [our Amazon wishlist](#) or send a monetary donation to the attention of the Outreach Committee.

Wednesday Prayer

Weekly devotions will be posted on Wednesdays. We hope that with Wednesday devotions, Morning Prayer in person on Sundays and our recorded Sunday worship service you will find devotions and worship opportunities that help sustain you during these times. Click on the button below to find all of our videos.

[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

will be on hiatus with the arrival of actual winter temperatures until it warms up a little bit.

Upcoming Congregational Nurture Events

We have a long two or three months ahead of us. Most of us are tired of Zoom, but it is what we have, and even though it is on a screen, it is good to see each other's faces and hear each other's voices. The Congregational Nurture Committee has planned three fellowship events for the coming weeks, and a new book group that we hope will provide a chance for us to connect with each other and have a little fun:



Virtual Church Family Night - This Friday, January 22 beginning at 6 pm

We'll have dinner together (in our own homes of course), conversation, games and watch a short animated film. There will be an opportunity for younger children and youth to spend time in their own breakout rooms, family time when we are all together, a few rounds of Scattergories, paper-snowflake making (you just need white paper and scissors) and conversation. Sign Up by clicking on the button below.

[Sign Up Here](#)

New Mystery Book Group

First Meeting - Thursday, February 11, 8 pm via Zoom

With the pandemic and national crises swirling around us, we all need to give ourselves a bit of a mental break each day. We are going to start a mystery book group--what better way to escape than into a good mystery? Our first book will be Anthony Horowitz's latest, *Moonflower Mysteries*. Beverly Bartlett will facilitate this discussion of the book on February 11--surely a

month is long enough to finish a good mystery!

You can order the book through an independent bookstore by using Bookshop.org: <https://tinyurl.com/y2yweosv>

Or get it on Kindle through Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/y28rbpl6>

Unfortunately, there is a long waitlist for the ebook from NYPL. If finances are tight--and we know for many people they are right now--and you would like to read it and join the group, please let Beverly Bartlett know, bab@mapc.com.

Saturdays Crafterdays

On Saturday, February 6 at 3 pm, we'll gather by Zoom to make Valentines for some of our older members who are especially isolated during these times. You don't need to be artistic to make a Valentine's Day card! Just willing to enjoy some fellowship and make a greeting to let another church member know you are thinking of them. Here are some suggested supplies to have on hand:

--Construction paper: especially red, pink and white. But if you want to branch out into non-traditional Valentine colors--go for it!

--Scissors, ruler, pencil, pen, glue stick, colored markers.

--If you can order some of those heart-shaped paper doilies, you can use them to decorate your cards as well.

We'll have some ideas to follow, including some pop-up cards. We will also have a list of members and their addresses so you may mail your cards.

RSVP to Lissette Perez-Erazo, lgp@mapc.com.

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On Saturday, March 13 at 3 pm, let's get ready for St. Patrick's Day and make Irish Soda Bread together! We'll post a list of needed ingredients in a future newsletter.

Zoom links for these events will be sent by email as the dates draw near. It would be helpful to know who plans to come, so please respond to Lissette if you can.

Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom

Mondays from 7 to 8 pm: Jan. 25, Feb. 8 & 22, Mar. 8 & 22, Apr. 12 & 26

Young adults are studying Ephesians. 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.

On February 22, we'll begin reading *Faith Unraveled: How a Girl Who Knew All the Answers Learned to Ask the Questions* by Rachel Held Evans. You can find it on Amazon or Bookshop, or email Chesna Hinkley (ceh@mapc.com)

or April Martin (aem@mapc.com) and we will get you a copy.

Adult Education Opportunities

Anti-Racism Discussion Group, Sunday Afternoons at 5 pm

Please note the new time for this group!

The Anti-Racism Discussion Group is now meeting from 5 to 6 pm on Sunday evenings. We are reading Isabel Wilkerson's book *Caste*, and will discuss Part Three on the 24th. A Zoom link will be sent to the church email list that Sunday morning. All are welcome--whether you have previously been part of this group or not, we would love to have you join the discussion! If you have questions, please contact Rev. Bartlett, bab@mapc.com.

Curious About Jesus?

What did Jesus actually say? What did he actually do? Many of us are curious about Jesus but we tend to avoid Bible studies because we do not want to expose our lack of knowledge about scripture. Many of us are also interested in reading the Bible but we are not quite sure where to start. If you find yourself in this situation, you are invited to read the gospels with Reverend Vaughn. Beginning with Mark we will read one-third of a gospel each week. Then, on Sunday morning via Zoom at 9:00 we will gather together to share one or two passages that grabbed our attention. This is not a traditional class with a lecture. Instead, we will learn together as Patrick leads us in a conversation about the texts and questions that intrigue us. This is an opportunity to get a broad overall sense of the flow of the gospels. This week, read Mark 11-16. Questions? Write to Reverend Vaughn at jpv@mapc.com.

Bible Studies

Monday Evening Bible Study Resumes February 1 at 7 pm

On Monday, February 1 the Monday Evening Bible Study will begin its reading and discussion of the prophet Samuel, and King Saul and King David narratives, found in 1 and 2 Samuel and the first two chapters of 1 Kings. If you have not taken part in the Monday Evening Bible Study before, this would be a great time to jump in! Please read 1 Samuel, chapters 1 - 8 in preparation for the discussion on Feb. 1. Questions? Email Rev. Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, meets by teleconference. The next meeting is Monday, January 25 at 5:30 pm. Please contact Lissette Perez-Eraza for more details: lgp@mapc.com

Youth and Children at MAPC

Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)

CONFIRMATION:

Our confirmation class is in full swing. We are meeting on Zoom and look forward to exploring our faith bi-monthly on Tuesday nights!

YOUTH IN 2021:

January 27, February 3, 10, 17 & 24, 6-7 pm

Middle and High school youth groups will meet with April and Chesna on Zoom.

Virtual Children's Ministry

Questions about Children's Ministry at MAPC? Contact Chesna Hinkley (ceh@mapc.com) for more information or to be added to the mailing list.

CHILDREN'S TIME

During every Sunday service, one of our pastoral staff teaches on the sermon text in a short time just for kids.

RECORDED CHILDREN'S WORSHIP

(Designed for 3-8 years old) Every Sunday, a member of the staff or congregation leads a 10-15 minute chat about the lectionary Bible reading and a related children's book.

PRESCHOOL MINISTRY

(2-4 years old) Sunday School in a Box is **delivered** quarterly during the pandemic closure for at-home learning.

MONDAYS FOR KIDS

(K-2nd grade) **on Zoom**. The Winter Session of Mondays for Kids will meet January 25, February 8 and 22, March 8 and 22, and April 12 at 4:30-5:15 pm. We will learn about what God is like.

PRETEEN CONNECT

(3rd-5th grade) **on Zoom**. Our Winter Session will meet January 20, February 3, March 3 and 17, and April 7 at 4:30-5:15 pm. (No class on February 17 due to NYPS Midwinter Recess). We will learn about the Bible's call to gender equality, our place in God's plan, and using our gifts in the Body of Christ.

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 pre-recorded services of worship below.

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Children's Worship

Find all of our children's worship videos here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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/

