

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

## PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



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**March 4, 2021**

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### **A Letter from Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn**

Dear Friends,

Sometimes, words can be confusing. Take interim and transitional, for example. I tend to use these terms interchangeably, but their meanings are actually distinct.

For many, many years an interim minister was someone who essentially kept the pulpit warm between pastorates. They preached on Sundays, moderated Session meetings, and visited the sick.

Transitional ministers do these things too, but to borrow a phrase often quoted by the Interim Ministers Network, "While all transitional ministers are interim ministers, not all interim ministers are transitional ministers."

"Transitional minister" is an expression that has become increasingly popular over the last five to ten years. It points to an intentional time that a congregation devotes to exploring its vocation. Who is God calling us to be? What is God calling us to do? Where is God calling us to go?

Importantly, transition refers to more than simply a change from one

pastor to another. It describes the various shifts that a congregation seeks to navigate. These might include moving from strictly in-person worship to one that incorporates a robust online presence, increasing/decreasing from one size to a different size, from focusing more on membership to focusing more on discipleship, from seeing our elected leaders primarily as doers to primarily as inviters and equippers, etc...

At our Session meeting last week I asked our Elders, "Where do you see us in our transition?" I found the ensuing conversation very helpful. There was strong consensus that we at MAPC need to engage in self-reflection and examination before seeking a new minister, and there was general agreement that while we do not want to rush the process we want to see it begin sooner rather than later. Thankfully, it does not appear that we will need to conduct an in-depth mission review as you did five years ago, but there was recognition that we are not the same church that we were then.

At our Personnel Committee meeting this week, I shared that I am glad to serve the congregation either as an interim or a transitional minister, but I wanted to make sure our expectations are in alignment. "Which do you prefer?" I asked. Reflecting the sentiment expressed at Session, they affirmed the importance of using our time together as an opportunity to assess and strengthen our ministry.

Where does this leave us?

Well, in a few months I will write a report that conveys my recommendations of MAPC. This will include, of course, a description of both strengths and challenges but I will also recommend specific steps you could take to help you grow as a community of faith. This document will probably be ready in late spring. (I had wanted to wait until I had an opportunity to experience you worshipping together and interacting with one another in person before finalizing my impressions. I'm not sure when that will be, however, and I want to give you an opportunity to consider them before fall arrives.)

Also, I have begun looking for a way to help you engage in self-reflection. A colleague has recently developed a process to assist churches in building on the insights and new ministries developed during the pandemic. It looks like we will be able to adapt that for our purposes in early fall.

Finally, what excites you about MAPC? If you would, please share

this with me by writing to [jpvc@mapc.com](mailto:jpvc@mapc.com). I want to include your responses in my report.

Thinking of you,

Patrick

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[Click Here to Join Rev. Vaughn's Gospel Gathering at 9 am](#)

**Meeting ID: 875 9406 5461**

**Passcode: 908581**

Dial by your location  
+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)  
Sundays at 9 am

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## Worship

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**Please join us for online worship.**

The Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching this Sunday, March 7.  
His sermon is entitled "Is Jesus Really THE Way?"

### **Sunday Worship**

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

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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## **Morning Prayer Service & Baptisms This Sunday, March 7, 2021 at 10:30 am Special Zoom Link**

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At the 10:30 am Morning Prayer Service this coming Sunday, March 7, 2021, we will be baptizing Madeline and Margaux Chang, daughters of members Allan Chang and Dianne Suh. We invite the congregation to join in this service and participate in the baptisms along with those gathered in the Sanctuary. Below is the Zoom link. Please join in this celebration of the sacrament of baptism as we welcome Madeline and Margaux into the body of Christ.

Dial by your location  
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 946 050 9731  
Passcode: 329861

## Sunday Morning Prayer, 10:30 am



*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 worshipers 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.*

*--Please refrain from conversation with one another inside the sanctuary, and wait to greet one another after the service on the sidewalk. 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!*

Please sign up here:

[Sign Up Here](#)

If you have trouble making your reservation, please contact Beverly Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto:bab@mapc.com).

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## **Bishop Tolton Presentation Now Available on Vimeo**

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### **"Fear Not, The Movements Are Greater: Black Lives Matter, Pan Africanism & A 21st Century Christian Renaissance"**

The recording of Bishop Tolton's February 21st talk on the global racial movement is now available for those who could not attend and those who would like to view it again.

[See Bishop Tolton's Presentation Here](#)

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## **Wednesday Evenings in Lent A Lenten Spiritual Practice: Praying with Scripture**

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For our Lenten series this year we are engaging in the spiritual practice of praying with scripture, alternating between the contemplative practices of Lectio Divina and Ignation meditation. Praying with scripture is a different approach than Bible Study--it is sometimes referred to as being "formational" rather than "informational." We encourage you to join in these Wednesday sessions as a Lenten discipline. Zoom links will be sent out a few days prior to the meetings.

**The remaining dates for this series are March 10, 17, and 24 and Rev. Bartlett, Dr. Vaughn and Ms. Hinkley will share in leading the sessions.**

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**Holy Week & Easter at MAPC!**  
**Join us for Virtual and In-Person Worship**

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**PALM SUNDAY, March 28**

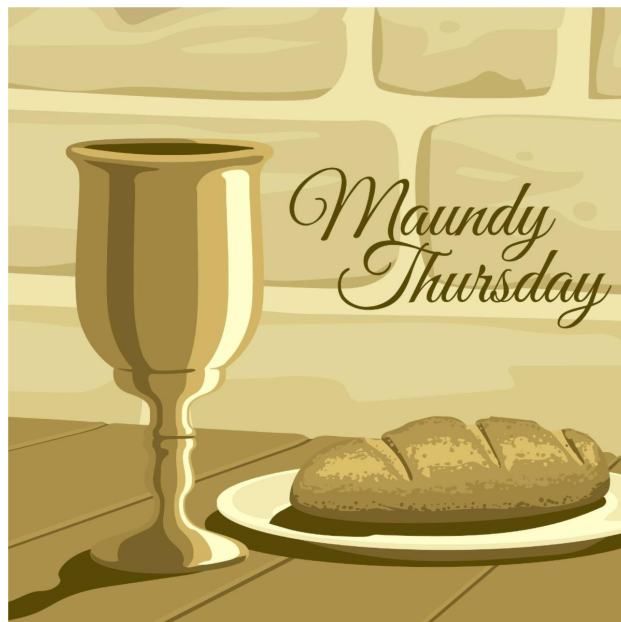


- A link to our Palm Sunday service of Word & Sacrament will be emailed at 8 am.
- 10:30 am Morning Prayer in the Sanctuary with appropriate and stringent precautions in place. **Advance registration for this service is required.** Please sign up by clicking the button below.

[Palm Sunday In-Person Sign-up](#)

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## MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 1



Our **Maundy Thursday Service** will take place at **7 pm via Zoom**, including a meditation by the Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn, music, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, with optional Fellowship/Communal Dinner beforehand at

## GOOD FRIDAY, April 2



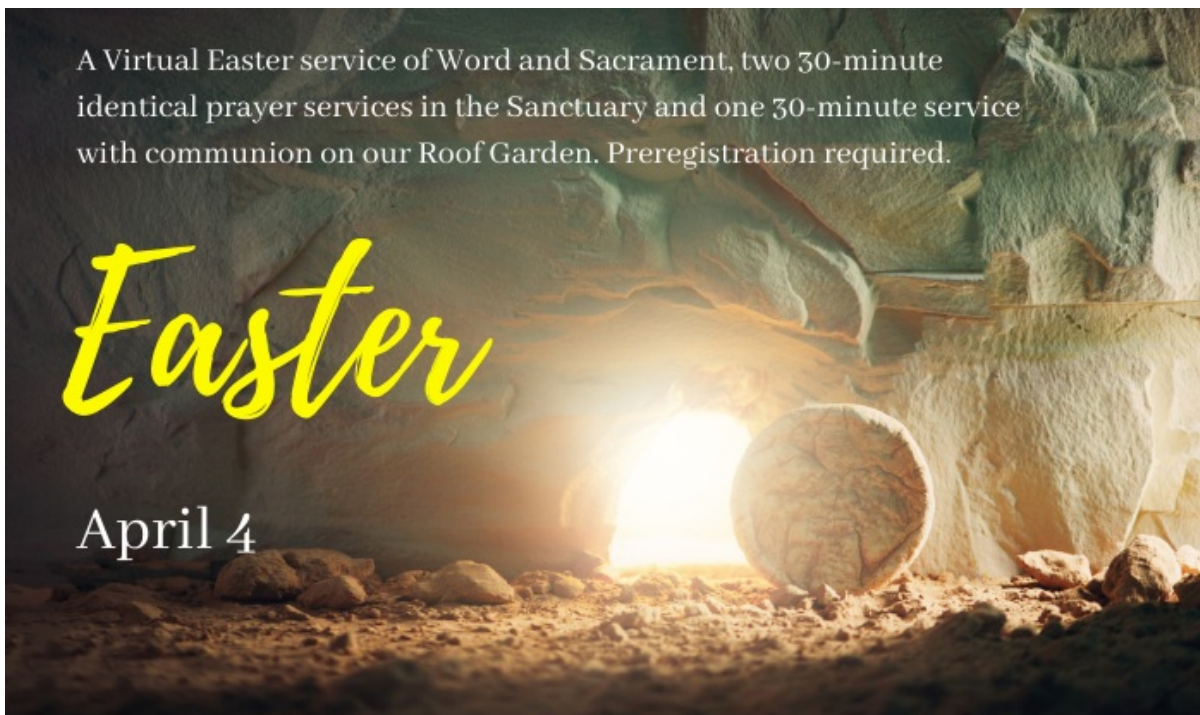
- Our **Good Friday Tenebrae** service with a telling of Christ's Passion from the Gospel narratives and music sung by the Choir of MAPC. A link to the service will be emailed.
  - Our **Good Friday Family Service** will be held at 7 pm via Zoom. Everyone from our Church Family is welcome to participate in this service led by staff, children and youth of MAPC.
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## EASTER SUNDAY, April 4

A Virtual Easter service of Word and Sacrament, two 30-minute identical prayer services in the Sanctuary and one 30-minute service with communion on our Roof Garden. Preregistration required.

*Easter*

April 4





- A link to our virtual Easter service of Word and Sacrament with a sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn and music sung by the Choir of MAPC, with guest instrumentalists, will be emailed at 8 am.
- **We will offer two 30-minute, identical Morning Prayer Services in the Sanctuary at 8:30 am and 10:30 am**, with appropriate and stringent precautions in place. Both services will feature hymns, scripture readings and prayers, with music sung by members of MAPC's professional octet. **Advance registration for these services is required.** Please sign up by clicking either of the buttons below.

Sign Up to Join Us on Easter at 8:30 AM

Sign Up to Join Us on Easter at 10:30 AM

- **We will offer a 30-minute Service of Communion on the Roof Garden at 9:30 am**, with appropriate and stringent precautions in place. **Advance registration for this service is required.** Please sign up by clicking the button below.

Sign Up to Join Us on Easter on the Roof at 9:30 AM

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## Donations for Easter Flowers

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We are now accepting donations in memory or in honor of loved ones for the lilies and other flowers that will beautify the sanctuary for Easter. The suggested donation for each name is \$40. To make a donation you may make a contribution through our [website](#) (click “Give Online” and select “Flower Fund” from the drop-down list), adding your loved ones’ names in the “Note” field provided. You can also access a [printable form here](#) and return it with your contribution to the Church Office. **We will need to receive your donation by Monday, March 29 in order to include names of loved ones in our pre-recorded and in-person Easter services.**

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## One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

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ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

**You Shall Be Called  
Repairers of the Breach**

— ISAIAH 58

The Presbyterian Church (USA) receives the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering during the Lenten season to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People. We will collect this offering on Palm Sunday, March 28, but you may give any time before then through our website or by noting “OGHS” on your check. Please give generously to feed, clothe, and care for Jesus Christ in our neighbors. Read more about the impact of OGHS here: <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/>.

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## **Cold Weather Accessories Drive**

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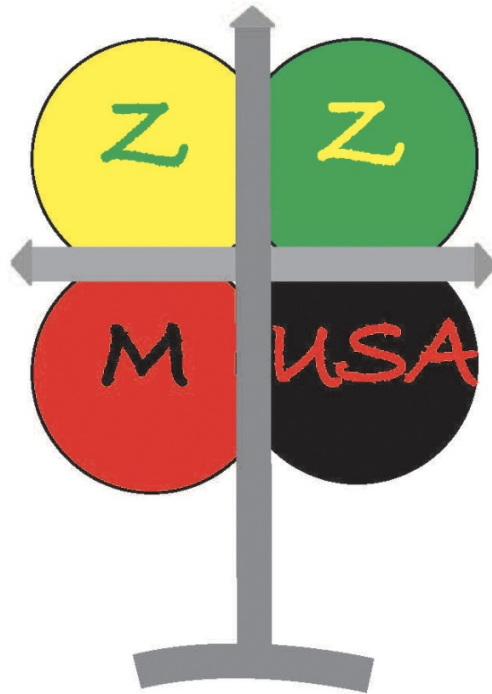


Thank you for donating so many cold weather accessories this winter! The church fence is now a source of warmth for our neighbors in need.

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

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**Zimbabwe Zambia Mozambique USA Mission  
Network Newsletter**



*Zambia Zimbabwe Mozambique USA  
Mission Network*

For many years now, MAPC has been involved in mission projects in Southern Africa, mainly in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Because of this ongoing commitment, MAPC is one of the few congregations that participates in the leadership of the PCUSA's Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, USA Network (ZZMUSA). [Click here to read the network's November 2020 newsletter.](#) Contact Chesna Hinkley with questions.

[See Newsletter Here](#)

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## Wednesday Prayer

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Weekly devotions will be posted on Wednesdays. We hope that with Mid-week 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](#)

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# 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 - Saturday, March 6 at 9 am

Please join April Martin for a masked walk in the park at 9 am. We will meet at the 72nd St. and 5th Ave entrance. RSVP to Lissette Perez-Erazo, [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com), so we know who to look for this Saturday.

## Mystery Book Group!

**Next Meeting - Thursday, March 11,  
8 pm via Zoom**



Our second book is Peter May's, *The Blackhouse: Murder Comes to the Outer Hebrides (Lewis Trilogy 1)*. Beverly Bartlett will facilitate this discussion of the book on March 11.

*The Blackhouse* is available as an ebook on the New York Public Library's Overdrive site, and for Kindle or in paperback on Amazon.

## Saturday Crafturdays



On Saturday, March 13 at 3 pm, let's get ready for St. Patrick's Day and make Irish Soda Bread together! The recipe is in the email sent last week with a zoom link.

Please RSVP to Lissette if you can, [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com), so we can mail you bingo cards and chips for each member of your household who plans to join this event.

### **Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom**

***Mondays from 7 to 8 pm: Mar. 8 & 22, Apr. 12 & 26***

Young Adults are reading and discussing *Faith Unraveled: How a Girl Who Knew All the Answers Learned to Ask Questions* by Rachel Held Evans. Bring your drink for a mid-evening happy hour and join us for fellowship and discussion. For March 8, read the Introduction and Chapter 1.

Chesna Hinkley & April Martin will lead this group on Zoom. Please watch your email for the link and more information. You can find it on Amazon or Bookshop, or email Chesna Hinkley ([ceh@mapc.com](mailto:ceh@mapc.com)) or April Martin ([aem@mapc.com](mailto:aem@mapc.com)) and we will get you a copy.

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## **Adult Education Opportunities**

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### **Anti-Racism Discussion Group, Sunday Afternoons at 5 pm**

The Anti-Racism Discussion Group will continue their discussion of Isabel Wilkerson's book *Caste* this coming Sunday, March 7, discussing Part 6. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Beverly Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto: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 Luke 17-24. Questions? Write to Reverend Vaughn at [jpv@mapc.com](mailto:jpv@mapc.com).

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## **Bible Studies**

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### **Monday Evening Bible Study, March 15 at 7 pm**

The Monday Evening Bible Study is reading and discussing 1 and 2 Samuel which contains the stories about the prophet Samuel, King Saul and King David, and the transformation that happened to Israel when they moved from a company of tribes to a nation ruled by a monarchy. Newcomers are always welcome! Please read 1 Samuel, chapters 22-26 in preparation for the discussion on March 15. Questions? Email Rev. Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto:bab@mapc.com).

### **Women's Bible Study**

The Women's Bible Study is on hiatus for Lent and will have the next meeting on Monday, April 12 at 5:30 pm. Please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo for more details: [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com)

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## **Youth and Children at MAPC**

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### **Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)**

#### CONFIRMATION:

Our confirmation class meets bi-monthly on Tuesday nights via zoom.

#### YOUTH IN 2021:

March 10, 17 & 24, 6-7 pm

Middle and High school youth groups will meet with April and Chesna and adult volunteers for bible discussion and games on Zoom.

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Questions about Children's Ministry at MAPC? Contact Chesna Hinkley ([ceh@mapc.com](mailto: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) We encourage you to download the Bible App for Kids at <https://www.bible.com/kids> and use it for at-home Christian Education for preschoolers. Search for fun, musical, 25-minute episodes in the app or watch in your browser at <https://bibleappforkids.com/parents/videos>. Our suggested schedule for the Sundays in March is "The King and the Kingdom," "A Test in the Desert," "Through the Roof," and "The Donkey and the King." Accompanying coloring pages can be printed here:

[Printable Coloring Pages](#)

### MONDAYS FOR KIDS

(K-2nd grade) **on Zoom**. The Winter Session of Mondays for Kids will meet March 8 and 22 and April 12 at 4:30-5:15 pm. We will learn about what God is like. The Spring Session begins after Easter and will run through June.

### PRETEEN CONNECT

(3rd-5th grade) **on Zoom**. Our Winter Session will meet March 17 and April 7 at 4:30-5:15 pm. We will learn about the Bible's call to gender equality, our place in God's plan, and identity in Christ. The Spring Session begins after Easter and will run through June.

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## **Four 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, click on the link below to see the four ways you can give:



*Thank you for your faithful giving!*

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## Links for MAPC Worship Services

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### 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](#)

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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/)

