

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



March 18, 2021

A Letter from Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn

Dear Friends,

In one of her many books, the exceptional Christian author, Anne Lamott, writes that help is the "first great prayer."

Does that resonate with you? If so, how? In what situations have you found yourself asking for help?

In this week's sermon we will explore an often overlooked dimension of prayer. Help is certainly an important form of prayer, but is it as foundational as Lamott suggests? What might undergird even our requests for assistance, for relief, for support?

To prepare for our exploration of prayer on Sunday, you might want to consider the following:

How comfortable are you praying in public?

What do you find challenging about praying in private? When I am praying, for example, I might lift up those in my life who are hurting or grieving. I might ask for the gift of discernment, but, then, I suddenly realize that I am debating whether to cook chicken or spaghetti for dinner!

I sometimes find it difficult to maintain focus when praying. Is that ever true for you?

What else might be problematic?

Do you ever stutter and stammer because you are not quite convinced that anyone is actually listening?

Prayer is a gift from God but what do we do when we feel separated from the giver?

I'll see you Sunday.

Thinking of you,

Patrick

P.S. Please scroll down to the announcements about our Holy Week services. I hope you will be able to join us Easter morning!

[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

Worship

Please join us for online worship.

The Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching this Sunday, March 21.
His sermon is entitled "When Praying Is a Challenge."

Sunday Worship

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

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Sunday Morning Prayer, 10:30 am



We continue to offer Morning Prayer on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary. The service is 30 minutes long, including prayers, hymns, scripture readings, and time for reflection.

--Please use the Sign Up Genius link below to sign up.

--Masks covering both the mouth and nose must be worn.

--We will take temperatures and have those who attend sign a health attestation.

--Please note that we are following (and exceeding) the recommended safety guidelines for worshipping and singing together.

Please sign up here:

[Sign Up Here](#)

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

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



There is one session left in our Lenten series this year, in which we have been engaging in the spiritual practice of praying with scripture, using the contemplative practices of Lectio Divina and Ignatian meditation.

Please join us for the final session next Wednesday, March 24th, when Rev. Bartlett will lead us in an Ignatian meditation. The Zoom link will be sent by email.

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

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](#)

HOLY WEEK MUSICAL DEVOTIONS: Monday-Friday, March 28 - April 2

During Holy Week, Director of Music Dr. Andrew Henderson will offer a daily musical meditation focusing on a different piece of music including hymns, choral and organ music, with Passiontide themes. The virtual devotions will be emailed each morning.

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 6:30 pm.

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](#)

Donations for Easter Flowers

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.**

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering



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 through Easter (April 4), 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/>.

Cold Weather Accessories Drive



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.

Wednesday Prayer

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](#)

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 20 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, so we know who to look for this Saturday.

Mystery Book Group!

**Next Meeting - Thursday, April 15,
7 pm via Zoom [Note the New Time!]**



Our book for April is Jane Harper's, *The Dry*. Beverly Bartlett will facilitate this discussion of the book.

If you would like to support an independent bookstore, you can order *The Dry* from bookshop.org.

<https://bookshop.org/books/the-dry/9781250778574>

Unfortunately there is a waitlist for the e-book version through New York Public Library, but it is available on Kindle from Amazon.

Easter Fest in Central Park, April 10, 3 pm



We are hoping to have a time of fellowship with Easter activities and crafts in Central Park at 3 pm on Saturday, April 10th. We are awaiting confirmation for a reservation from the Central Park Conservancy. Stay tuned!! We'll post sign-up information when the space and time are confirmed.

Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom

Mondays from 7 to 8 pm: March 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 22, read the Introduction and Chapters 2-4.

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) 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

This coming Sunday we will discuss Ta-Nehisi Coates June 2014 article from the Atlantic, *The Case for Reparations*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

If you do not have a subscription, you are able to read a couple of articles a month free. You can also find it as a chapter in Coates' book, "We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy."

Beginning March 28th, we will read and discuss Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s book, *The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song*.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Beverly Bartlett at 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 John 8-14. Questions? Write to Reverend Vaughn at jpv@mapc.com.

Bible Studies

Monday Evening Bible Study, April 5 at 7 pm

The Monday Evening Bible Study group is reading and discussing 1 and 2 Samuel which contain 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 27-31 and the first 2 chapters of Geraldine Brooks' book "The Secret Chord" in preparation for the discussion. Questions? Email Rev. Bartlett at 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

Youth and Children at MAPC

Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)

CONFIRMATION:

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

YOUTH IN 2021:

March 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.

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) 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 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**. The last class of our Winter Session is 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.

Four 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 four 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/

