

PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



May 6, 2021

A Letter from Rev. J. Patrick Vaughn

Dear Friends,

A few years ago, I sat comfortably in a recliner as I wrote the homily for a funeral. When I finished writing, I stood up to go to the kitchen. Well, I tried to stand up, but I couldn't. My back refused to cooperate. Bent over in pain, I was unable to move my legs. Having never experienced anything like this, I was more than a little frightened.

Over the next few days, the pain persisted. I hobbled to the living room, hobbled to the pulpit, hobbled to the car, and, finally, I hobbled to a chiropractor.

I didn't even know I had a sacroiliac joint, but a couple of adjustments later, I was pain free.

I asked the chiropractor, "How do I prevent this from happening again?" He recommended some exercises and stretches, but above all else he told me to keep moving. "Don't stay in one position very long," he said.

With the exception of a couple of episodes, I have found that to be

good advice. As long as I keep moving, my joints work well.

Not all of us will have a sacroiliac joint that stubbornly refuses to work properly, but most of us know that our bodies tend to protest when we don't regularly move, exercise, or stretch. We grow stiff, and our every movement seems slow, halting, and hesitant.

For more than a year we have Zoomed here and Zoomed there. We have spent a lot of time meeting remotely, worshipping remotely, and praying remotely. We have spent a lot of time in front of computer screens, and our collective body is a bit stiff. We are moving rather carefully and gingerly.

For example, some of us on staff are now spending time in the office each week, but seeing one another in person still comes as a bit of a surprise.

We have resumed holding worship in the Sanctuary, and, while necessary, wearing masks and sitting nine feet apart still feels awkward.

We have begun imagining and planning activities, events, and ministries for the fall, but uncertainties abound. Will we really be able to hold a stewardship celebration on the Roof Garden in October?

This week we will take another step towards normalcy. We will no longer ask anyone to register for worship, and we will open the Narthex doors so people will be able to enter the Sanctuary from the sidewalk. We will still keep track of our worshippers by asking all to sign in when they arrive.

All of this feels a bit awkward. We have been in one position for a long time. Our joints are stiff, and we are moving slowly, haltingly, and hesitantly.

But, thankfully, we are moving.

Thinking of you,
Patrick

Worship

Please join us for online worship.

The Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching Sunday, May 9.
His sermon is entitled "Do Religious People Annoy You, Too?"

Sunday Worship

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

[Click Here to Watch](#)

**Opportunity for Service -
Help Out in the New Clothing Closet!**



MAPC and St. James Episcopal Church are opening a free clothing closet for low-income New Yorkers in our former shelter space. If you can spare an hour after worship, please join members of the task force to sort through bags of clothing donations. We will sort from 11:45am-12:45pm in the basement of the church for the next few weeks - coffee provided!

Opportunities for Fellowship & Study

Zoom invites are sent regularly by email.

We are thankful to those of you who joined us for online fellowship this year. Now that we are worshipping in person, we look forward to seeing you face-to-face and on our other online gatherings.

A Walk in the Park - Saturdays at 9 am

Join April Martin for a masked walk in the park on Saturday morning 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.

Church Family Zoom Night, Friday, May 14 -- 6 pm via Zoom



It's time for another Zoom Church Family Night! We'll enjoy dinner together (at our own tables, of course) fellowship, games, and a short movie. The Zoom link will be sent out in an email that week. This is for the whole church family, not just those with children at home, and we hope you can join us for an intergenerational gathering. Please let us know if you plan to attend--RSVP to Lissette Perez-Erazo at lgp@mapc.com or sign up at the link below.

[RSVP for Church Family Night Here](#)

Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom

Mondays from 7 to 8 pm: May 10 (No Meeting on May 24), June 14 & 28

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 May 10, read Chapters 11-13.

Chesna Hinkley & April Martin will lead this group on Zoom.

On Sunday, May 23, the MAPC Young Adult group will meet after the 10:30 worship service for an end of year picnic in Central Park. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to April Martin at aem@mapc.com.

Sunday, May 9 at 9 am - Where Do We Go From Here?

We encourage you to join in this discussion as we reflect on a year of living, and being the church, through the pandemic and what our lives will look like as we begin to emerge from it. We will use the following article from The Christian Century as our starting point for discussion:

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/faith-matters/life-after-resurrection>

In preparation for the discussion please read the article and reflect on the following questions--both in terms of your own lives and the life of the church:

“What losses have we experienced in the past year?”

“How has this past year changed us?”

“What are our fears as we move into the next several months?”

“What are our hopes?”

“How will this past year change the life and ministry of the church going forward?”

Both Dr. Vaughn and Rev. Bartlett will lead the discussion on May 9th, and we hope you will join. A Zoom invitation will be sent out Sunday morning, May 9th.

Mystery Book Group! Thursday, May 13th, 7 pm via Zoom



The Mystery Book Group is having a wonderful time reading and discussing

good mysteries. Like most book groups the conversation broadens to cover other topics as well. The next book group meeting is May 13th, and our current mystery is "Full Dark House" by Christopher Fowler. If you'd like to know more, please email Rev. Bartlett, bab@mapc.com. An email with the Zoom link will be sent out the week of the meeting.

Adult Education Opportunities

New Adult Education Option Beginning May 16 at 9 am

Chesna will lead a Zoom reading group on the book of Genesis on May 16, 23, and all four Sundays in June. We will follow the same format as this Spring's Gospel Gatherings: complete the reading for the day and come prepared to share a passage or two that piques your interest. For May 16, read Genesis 1-9. Watch your email for the Zoom link and email Chesna (ceh@mapc.com) with questions.

Anti-Racism Discussion Group, Sunday Afternoons at 5 pm

The next group meeting is Sunday, May 9th. We will continue discussing "White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity" by Robert P. Jones. Please read through Chapter 2 for the May 9 discussion.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Beverly Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

Bible Studies

Monday Evening Bible Study, May 17 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 2 Samuel, chapters 13-19 in preparation for the discussion. Questions? Email Rev. Bartlett at bab@mapc.com.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study will meet by teleconference Monday, May 10 at 5:30 pm to continue their study of the Psalms. 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 meets bi-monthly on Tuesday nights via zoom.

YOUTH IN 2021:

Wednesdays from 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 8-10 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>. The video for April is "A Happy Sunday." Four weekly accompanying lesson plans and coloring pages can be printed below.

[Printable Coloring Pages](#)

MONDAYS FOR KIDS

(K-2nd grade) **on Zoom**. Our Spring Session entitled, "Going to Church," will run May 10 & 24, and June 7 & 21 at 4:30-5:15 pm.

PRETEEN CONNECT

(3rd-5th grade) **on Zoom**. Our Spring Session will run May 19 and June 2 & 16 at 4:30-5:15 pm. We will learn about worship, sacraments, and being members of the local congregation.

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/

