

# MAPC



LIFE

THE MAGAZINE OF MADISON AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | WINTER 2017-2018

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# FROM THE PASTOR



During this fall's Fellowship Gatherings, Julian Schroeder, chair of the Stewardship Committee, and a member of the Pastor Nominating Committee, spoke a bit about some of the things that the PNC had learned and experienced in their months of talking to many, many candidates. One of those things is the state of religion in the country. If you didn't know it already, be aware then, he noted, that the world we live in has become increasingly secular. It is also now woefully ignorant about what goes on inside our walls, about what people do and believe and how they act, and what they want and what they actually get in churches like ours. All that people see, if they don't go to a church, is the caricatures of religion on the far right and far left that the media serve up daily. This is what we have to deal with, he said. The issue is an important one in selecting a new minister. How would that person deal with this issue?

I will let that person make the case as she or he is called to do so in due order. But at the beginning of this season, awaiting that person, I can't wait to say something on my own about what it is that we do have to offer. In doing so, I would like to draw on the testimony of Christian Wiman, one of our finest contemporary poets. Wiman grew up in a home where the faith was practiced, but, like many, he lost the habit as a young adult. He describes his return in some eye-opening ways.

Initially, he points out that if you "live long enough in a secular culture, long enough to forget that it is secular culture, then at some point religious belief becomes preposterous to you. Atavistic. Laughable." That is the experience, indeed, of many New Yorkers.

But still he returned. Why? It was not because of some bolt out of the blue. Rather, because of a great disruption in his life, the diagnosis of a rare blood cancer, he saw the vanity of an entirely secular world. He realized that it was inadequate. He says, "My old ideas simply were not adequate for the extremes of joy and grief that I experienced, but when I looked at my life through the lens of Christianity – or more specifically through the lens of Christ, as much as Christianity seemed (and still seems) uselessly absurd to me – it made sense. The world made sense." (*My Bright Abyss*, 90-91).

What we have to offer here is not simply a set of doctrines, and rituals, but most of all a world of meaning that can accommodate our highs and lows, and even create ones that we never knew about. What we have to offer here is a way of making sense of them, too, as well as a way of expressing them in word and song, as well as in silence. We give voice to what it means to live faithfully to a divine promise that surrounds us. We have to offer a sense of life that can give us great joy and hope, even as it causes us not to turn away from pain or sorrow.

In this season, we appear to propose something preposterous – God has become a man by means of his birth of a virgin. What we are deep down saying in proposing that absurdity is that the world we can live and experience has become huge and wonderful and meaningful. That is our Good News. Tell it to somebody this season.

Peace,

Eric





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# Stewardship Update



This fall saw an approach to stewardship that was quite different than that of the past several years. It was one that sought to strengthen our community and help members better understand what is currently of concern to MAPC.

Eight households offered to host gatherings. All church members were invited to a gathering, with options for changes if one's schedule could not easily accommodate the original invitation. Each gathering was a time of fellowship and sharing wine, food and conversation. A member of the Stewardship Committee then explained how MAPC finances its programs, and the need for members to continue to pledge generously. While building usage fees and a healthy endowment provide some income, costs continually rise, and we cannot draw unlimited amounts from the endowment without depleting it. Members were urged to be faithful and generous in their ongoing support for the church. Chris Trinka then provided important information about planned giving.

The gatherings also provided a time to ask questions about the "State of the Church." Members of the Pastor Nominating Committee gave a report on their deliberations, and we also discussed some of the challenges churches face in an increasingly secular world.

Pledges were received in worship on November 19, and all enjoyed a celebratory brunch afterwards. If you were not able to be in worship that day, we urge you to send your pledge in to the church office, or to pledge online if you haven't already.

We would like to thank Kristin and Frank Hohmann, Ann McChord, Maggie Mills, Jennifer and Roy Lennox, Laura and Bill Burg, Barbara and Dick Iverson, Meme and Art Peponis, and Ruth and Julian Schroeder for opening their homes to their fellow members and for being such gracious hosts.





# All Church Retreat at Camp Holmes

WORSHIP  
CONVERSATION  
RELAXATION  
PLAY



# Pastor Nominating Committee Update

Over the course of its many months of work, the Pastor Nominating Committee has looked at pretty much every minister of experience east of the Great Plains and north of the Ohio River, as well as deep into the southeast, and as far as the northwest. It has met faithfully every Monday night over that time. Everyone on the committee has learned a great deal about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the state of the Christian faith in our time, knowledge that has sharpened their focus as they search for a new pastoral leader for MAPC. While there is in such tasks really no news until there is all the news, the PNC has been willing to share that they are no longer simply looking widely and in an introductory way at candidates. As Julian Schroeder explained at the Fall Fellowship Gatherings, “we are in conversation with more than one person of the highest quality, and like any good relationship, it takes time. Both we and the candidates are people of quality who consider this call with deep discernment. We cannot rush into this relationship, and indeed God is answering our prayer for wisdom in the selection of our new pastor with a careful, thoughtful process.”

Thus they have also learned that the discernment that they have asked for in their prayers together means being given the time to think carefully and with patience about what each candidate says, and about what they are looking for. The PNC is thus grateful to the congregation for its patience, and its unwavering trust; in short, the congregation’s willingness to give them the space that is needed to make such an important choice. They would also like everybody to know that even as they are in what they have described as a “constructive phase,” there are many steps in the process which include the third partner in any call, the Presbytery of New York City, and those steps, involving many people, will of themselves take time.

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## Welcome Kristen Levens

Kristen Levens is entering her fourth year at Princeton Theological Seminary as a dual degree candidate for the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation; her concentration is Ministry with Young People. Before moving to New Jersey, Kristen lived in rural North Carolina where she has lived most of her life. She grew up on a farm surrounded by her extended family. She completed her Bachelor's degree in English and Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina--Greensboro in 2012. Kristen is in the ordination process for the PCUSA, hoping to be ordained into parish ministry following her 2018 graduation from Princeton. In her spare time Kristen loves to cook, read novels, and snuggle with her miniature poodle, Buttercup.



Kristen's role at MAPC centers on our children and youth ministries. We are thankful for her energy, creativity, and passion for working with young people in our church!

## Youth Ministry Update

Fall 2017 has been a busy time in the life of children's and youth ministries at MAPC. We have enjoyed Bible studies, worship, service opportunities, and fellowship events! Our main goal has been to love God, love our neighbors, and learn together.

**CROP Hunger Walk:** Our confirmation class, youth, and larger church family joined together to support the fight against hunger in our neighborhood! The MAPC team had five walkers and raised a total of \$400. Throughout the walk we engaged with folks we passed on the street, providing them with information and resources that outlined ways they can help neighbors near and across the globe that struggle with food insecurity.



## Adult Education

Sunday mornings at 10:10 am

This past October marked the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing 95 Theses onto the door of Wittenberg Castle Church in Germany, which sparked the Protestant Reformation. This year MAPC commemorated the past 500 years of the church, as we discussed the church's work in the world, looked at the trajectory of the Reformation, and dreamed about the future of the Reformed tradition!

This winter we will celebrate what it means to be Presbyterian and the unique call MAPC holds as part of this tradition. Stay tuned to the Pastoral Staff Letter and the MAPC website for more information.

### Reading through the Bible

Wednesday from 12:30-1:30 pm

We are currently reading through the Psalms.

### Women's Bible Study

Every other Monday from 6:30-8:00 pm

Currently, we are studying Paul's letters. All are welcome to join us as we make our way through the New Testament! We enjoy a time of fellowship beforehand beginning at 6:00 pm. Bring your dinner and engage in conversation as we learn more about faith and each other.

### Men's Bible Study

Meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month

Men's Bible Study will resume in January, and begin with reading Paul's Letters.

### 20's and 30's Bible Study

The 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month in the Youth Lounge.

20's and 30's discern ways in which our Christian tradition calls us to respond when life throws us lemons. Topics from politics to personal challenges have been at the heart of our conversations from week to week. Anyone who is in their 20's or 30's is welcome to join us for a time of food, fellowship, and Bible study.





## Preschool Ministries

**Sunday Nursery** (Infants and Toddlers), Sunday morning from 9:00 am -12:30 pm on the 4th floor.

**Preschool and Children's Worship** (Preschool through 3rd Grade)

Sunday mornings during both worship services in the Phillips Lounge.

**Wee Kids** (Preschool), Wednesday 4:30-5:00 pm

This afternoon program for preschoolers helps them discover the love of God through story time and play led by a member of the MAPC Pastoral Staff.

Afterwards all families are invited to dinner in the Parish Hall.

## Children's Ministries

**Preschool and Children's Worship** (Preschool through 3rd Grade)

Sunday mornings during both worship services in the Phillips Lounge.

**Church School** (Preschool through 5th Grade), Sunday mornings 10:10 am on the 5th floor. At church school we learn about God's love for us and the world through Bible study, hymns, crafts, and more! All of our church school teachers are volunteers from the congregation, and this provides a unique opportunity for children to engage with adults in the congregation on a personal level, creating a family of faith.

**Kids Club** (K-5th Grade), Wednesday 4:00-6:00 pm

Through the course of the afternoon children enjoy a nutritious snack, engage in Bible study with a member of the MAPC Pastoral Staff, make a joyful noise in choir (1st grade and up), participate in recreation, and share a meal with other church families.



## Youth Ministry

**Youth Worship** (4th-7th Grade), Sunday mornings during both worship services in the Dana Chapel.

**Youth Hour** (Middle and High School Students), Sunday 10:10 - 11:00 am. This winter we will focus on questions of faith in relation to the world. Youth are encouraged to ask questions, share concerns, and talk openly about faith as it relates to their daily life.

**T(w)een Brunches** (Middle and High School Students), Takes place one Sunday each month from 12:30-1:15 pm in the Youth Lounge.

**Confirmation** (8th Grade +), Every Sunday from October 15, 2017-May 13, 2018 at 1:00 pm in the Youth Lounge.

Confirmation helps youth to discern what being a full, active member of Christ's Body—the Church—looks like in their life.

**T(w)een Club** (Middle School Aged Youth), Wednesday 4:00 - 6:00 pm.

This after-school program is designed with Tweens in mind. Youth have the opportunity to engage creatively with Scripture, enjoy games, sing with the church choir, and share dinner with their peers.

**Shelter Dinner** (7th-12th Grades)

The first Thursday of every month youth have the opportunity to share in this outreach ministry of MAPC, as they serve a warm meal to 100+ men and women who struggle with food insecurity in our neighborhood.

**James Lenox House Service Group** (7th-12th Grades), Select Mondays from 4:00-6:00 pm

James Lenox House is an apartment building for seniors 55 years of age and older and is a neighborhood outreach partner of MAPC. The purpose of this project is to both help the residents and build intergenerational community through assisting with technology, reading mail, and engaging in conversation.

## Calendar of Christian Education and Youth Ministry Special Events

**Shelter Dinner Service Opportunities for Middle and High Schoolers:**

December 7, 2017

January 4, 2018

February 1, 2018

**James Lenox House Service Group**

December 11, 2017

January 22, 2018

February 26, 2018

**T(w)een Brunch**

January 28, 2018

February 25, 2018

**Advent Party:** Come enjoy ringing in the Advent season as we make crafts together! November 26, 2017, during the 10:10 Christian Education Hour

**Advent Family Service:** Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 5:15 in Dana Chapel

**Christmas Pageant:** December 17, 2017, During the 10:10 am Christian Education Hour

**White Elephant Christmas Party:** December 17, 2017 at 6:00 pm on the 5th floor

**Christmas Eve Family Service:** December 24, 2017 at 5:00 pm

**Epiphany Family Service:** January 3, 2018 at 5:15 in the Dana Chapel

## A Sense of Belonging at the Day School

*“One of our guiding beliefs is that every adult, like every child, has an individual voice which can positively impact the community.”*



Laura Graham  
Day School Director



At the Day School we recognize that authentic relationships – first within the family, and then beyond - are critical to children’s healthy development. The bonds formed promote security, trust and a sense of belonging which enables children to thrive. One of our guiding beliefs is that every adult, like every child, has an individual voice which can positively impact the community. Opportunities abound for parents to play a visible, active role in the life of the school. Participating in our Parents Committee, organizing events to share cultural and faith traditions, communicating with teachers, visiting the classroom, and reading to children in the library are just some of the many ways parents partner with the school. Community celebrations illuminate our interconnectedness and communicate the shared values we aim to instill in our children.

Our most recent Parent Back to School party on the Roof Garden and our Family Potluck in the Parish hall were overwhelmingly well-attended events. It is our parents of the Day School that ignite the excellence of our well-established program and at the same time introduce us to new ideas, enthusiasm and relationships.

We appreciate the sacred quality of childhood which deserves to be nurtured and preserved.







## Family Gatherings



MAPC offers a yoga class twice a month for every body!! We really mean it. We intend for any and every one to feel welcome regardless of experience, level of fitness, body shape or size, age, or whether you own the latest in yoga fashion or just a beloved old pair of sweats.

We meet at 9 am on two Friday mornings a month on the 5th Floor of the Church House. Our usual dates are the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, but those are subject to change depending on holiday schedules and teacher availability. For December, Yoga for Every Body will be on the 8th and 22. Now who couldn't use an hour of yoga to restore and stretch one's body and soul in the midst of December?

Check the weekly Pastoral Staff Letter or the calendar on the MAPC website ([www.mapc.com](http://www.mapc.com)) for the dates in the new year.

We ask for a \$20 donation to help cover the cost of the instructor. While we do have a few mats available to borrow, we encourage you to bring your own if you have one.

## Yoga for Every Body at MAPC

## CONGREGATIONAL NURTURE EVENTS



## FRIDAY NIGHT Fireside Jazz

January 26, 2018, 6 to 9 pm

We had so much fun at our first Friday Night Fireside Jazz event last winter that we are doing it again! The Congregational Nurture Committee invites you to come enjoy an extended cocktail hour with jazz in the Church House Lobby, beginning at 6 pm. If you came last year, you will remember that the food, music, fellowship and overall vibe were fabulous! The suggested donation for the evening is \$40 per person. Where else can you enjoy an evening of beverages, delicious food, engaging conversation and good music in NYC for \$40? We will offer childcare on the 5th floor, and ask parents to contribute \$15 per child for the evening. Come enjoy a fun evening of fellowship with the MAPC community! RSVP to Wendy De Los Santos in the church office, [wlds@mapc.com](mailto:wlds@mapc.com), or sign up in the Church House Lobby after Sunday worship services in January.



## Library Awareness Lunch, Sunday, January 21, 2018 at 1 pm in the Parish Hall

The Hood Library Fellowship will be offering something new for their annual Library Awareness Sunday—a lunch in the Parish Hall with special guest speaker Janet Groth, author of *The Receptionist: An Education at The New Yorker*. The Receptionist is a thoroughly enjoyable trip through years that celebrate a high water mark in American writing.

Janet Groth, Emeritus Professor of English at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, also has taught at Columbia, Vassar, Brooklyn College, and the University of Cincinnati. She has held positions as a Fulbright lecturer and as a Visiting Fellow at Yale.

Mark your calendars and watch for further details in the weekly Pastoral Staff Letter email and the Sunday bulletin announcements.

## Library Luncheon

# Advent

## Meditation

Rev. Beverly Bartlett



*L'Apparition de l'ange à saint Joseph by Georges de la Tour*

The Annunciation is a specific event in the Church, referring to the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary and his announcement that she would bear a son, Jesus, the Son of God. But if we take a broader sense of the word, there are a few angelic annunciations in this season's scriptural passages: Gabriel also appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of

John the Baptist, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph to tell him to go ahead and marry Mary, and there was that glorious annunciation on the hills around Bethlehem when the angels appeared, terrifying the shepherds and announcing that the Savior was born.

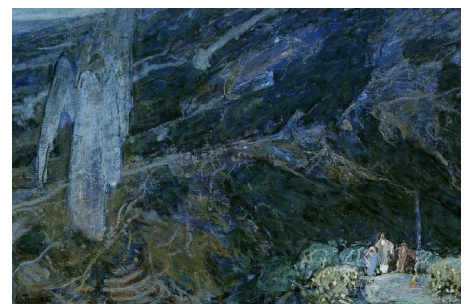
For this Advent devotion, we'll look at one of the four annunciations for each week of Advent. I invite you to read the passage and the devotion at the beginning of the week—perhaps Sunday evening, then re-read it, ponder it, and listen for the Spirit's annunciation to you throughout the week. What is God saying to you through these passages in this Advent season, as we anticipate the One who is to come?

### First Week of Advent, beginning Sunday, December 3

**Read: Luke 1:5-23**

A common response to an angelic appearance was fear. "When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him." An angel's first words to whomever they are visiting are almost always, "Do not be afraid!" Try to clear the common images of angels out of your head. They are so well known and loved that they have made angels tame. And angels are not tame. They are terrifying! They are God-sent with messages that shake our foundations and change the course of our lives (even the course of the world). Angels and their messages up-end us. Zechariah could not believe the wondrous news Gabriel brought him, that he and Elizabeth, in their old age, would have a son who would be great, the one to turn people back to God and prepare the way of the Lord. How could anyone believe such a thing? Gabriel seems offended by Zechariah's lack of trust. I imagine Gabriel's voice thundering and reverberating as he says, "I AM GABRIEL!! I STAND IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, AND I HAVE BEEN SENT TO SPEAK TO YOU AND TO BRING YOU THIS GOOD NEWS!!" And because Zechariah didn't believe him, Gabriel struck him dumb until the child, John, was born.

Take a few moments to sit in silence and imagine what it would be like to receive a visit from Gabriel, from an unearthly being who has come straight from God's glorious presence. Spend some time, a few moments throughout the week, simply listening for God's message to you. What wondrous, seemingly impossible word might God be sending to you in this season of anticipation? How does preparing for the One who is to come up-end your life?



*Henry Ossawa Tanner - Angels Appearing before the Shepherds, 1910*



## **Second Week of Advent, beginning Sunday, December 10**

### **Read: Luke 1:26-38**

This is the Annunciation with a capital “A” - the one depicted in Fra Angelico’s artwork on the cover of this magazine, and in so many other masterpieces. Sixth months into Elizabeth’s pregnancy, Gabriel is sent again, this time to Mary. He says, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” And Mary, amazingly, is not terrified—but instead, is “much perplexed.” I think that is probably an understatement. Gabriel again says, “Do not be afraid.” Mary has found favor with God. We don’t know why. Gabriel proceeds to tell her something even more impossible than the news he bore to Zechariah. She is going to conceive and bear a son, Jesus, who will be the son of the Most High, the Messiah, the one who will have David’s throne, and who will reign forever. Try to put aside the hundreds of times you have heard this story, and imagine what it would be like to hear that message for the first time. This message from Gabriel is world-changing, world-saving. This simple, young woman in a backwater town of Galilee is going to bear God’s own son into the world. Gabriel tells her about Elizabeth’s miraculous pregnancy, and declares, “nothing will be impossible with God.” And, in what is perhaps the most remarkable part of this story, Mary says, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” She doesn’t say like Zechariah, “No way! This can’t possibly happen!” She offers herself as God’s servant, and says, “Okay. Let it be.”

In your reflections and prayers this week, listen for how God wants to use you to help carry out God’s work. How can you bear Christ into this world? To what does God want you to say “yes, let it be”?

## **Third Week of Advent, beginning Sunday, December 17**

### **Read: Matthew 1:18-25**

Matthew tells us Joseph’s annunciation story. An angel of the Lord appears to him as well, because Joseph has to be stopped from doing what any man of that time would do upon learning that his betrothed is pregnant and he is not the father. God needs Joseph to stay with Mary, to keep her and Jesus safe, and to be Jesus’ earthly father. Joseph is clearly a good man. He doesn’t want Mary to be publicly disgraced. As far as he knows and everyone else knows, Mary is guilty of adultery. The law even permits her to be executed if Joseph wanted to take it that far, but Joseph is righteous and is going to simply end the betrothal quietly. God can’t let that happen, and sends an angel to Joseph in a dream to tell him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife. The child is from the Holy Spirit, and he is the Savior, Emmanuel, God with us. And, like Mary, Joseph does not question what the angel has told him. When he wakes, he does as the angel of the Lord said.

Joseph is not a primary character in the story of the incarnation. He plays a supporting role, but it is a critical one. Mary and Jesus have little chance of surviving in that world without him. Indeed, Joseph listens to the angel again a couple of years later to get them safely to Egypt, out of Herod’s reach. Reflect on how God uses you in similar ways. How do you, or can you, quietly play a part in carrying out God’s work, in small but vital ways that make a difference; ways that reveal Emmanuel, God-with-us, to others?

In your prayer and reflection time this week ask: how does God speak to me? Joseph received God’s messages in his dreams. When and where do you hear God’s voice? Through whom? Is it in silence? Through a passage of scripture? Through music or art? In another person’s words? Maybe, like Joseph, in your dreams? Or is it simply through a feeling of peace, well-being, deep joy, or a compulsion to reach out, to act?

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24**

### **Read Luke 2:8-20**

Because of the way the calendar falls, we don’t get a fourth week of Advent this year, just a Fourth Sunday, on Christmas Eve. But what a glorious annunciation we have in this story we will hear at the Christmas services. Not just one angel, but a whole host of angels appear to the shepherds. First, the angel of the Lord appears, with the glory of the Lord shining around them, and, of course, they are terrified! And the angel says, as all angels say, “Do not be afraid!” And then tells them the most joyous news possible. The Messiah has been born, and is lying, of all places, in a manger. Then the multitude of angels appears singing praises to God. The shepherds make haste to Bethlehem, find Mary, Joseph and the baby, and make their own announcement, telling them what the angels had said about this child. Then they go off noisily into the night, glorifying and praising God on their way back to the fields.

Find some time in the rush of Christmas, or perhaps during the following days of Christmas to sit quietly and imagine this scene. How glorious and terrifying and breath-taking it must have been to have an angel of the Lord, wrapped in God’s glory in your midst, and then a whole multitude of them praising God. We always imagine this night as a quiet one—“Silent Night, Holy Night”—but at least in this scene, it was full of joyous, glorious, cacophonous noise! Noise from both the angels and the shepherds. In these times that can be so fearful and anxiety-ridden, try to imagine and feel the joy of this annunciation, the deep joy and peace that comes with the angels’ news that the Savior is born.



# The Challenges & Blessings of Zambian Immersion:

By Rev. Paula Cooper, Phillips Talbot Global Ministry Fellow

By the time you are reading this article, I will have been in Zambia for almost three months. I want to share some minor adjustments, and some emotional and enlightening moments that I have been experiencing.

One minor adjustment is coping with the presence of the critters. Now do not misunderstand me—I have seen bugs in my lifetime, but we have been able to afford exterminators or to live in places that have not been infested. I am truly a city girl, who has become accustomed to certain things and privileges, and I have not had to focus on them.

However, since arriving in Zambia, my focus has changed! What am I doing? I am purchasing cans of repellent; and spraying, spraying, spraying! I find myself on watch-duty for flying or crawling critters; they remind me of trespassers or squatters, who will not (do not) want to contribute to the rent or the bills (perhaps it reminds some of us of our grown children). I have also become aware that I am constantly turning my head. I see things out of the corners of my eyes, that sometimes are just dark marks or dents on the walls or the floors from the construction.

I believe this has been more of a focus here than back home because of the threat and fear of contracting malaria. I am truly trying to remain healthy and not hinder my work and ministerial opportunities. First and foremost, I am praying to live into the verse that Saint Paul urges, “for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” I am turning my focus – with God’s help – to that verse rather than malaria. Second, I do not want to be a burden to the TEEZ staff and its work. Hence, I am dealing with this minor adjustment!

Another minor adjustment is coping with the results of a fall into the mud and jamming my toe in September. What a discomfort! It has limited me from getting around without some minor aches and pain. I love to walk, so this mishap has been difficult. But it is healing! Thank God!

The emotional and enlightening moments arise when I see an abundance of Black/Brown faces; and for this, I thank God! It warms my heart and encourages my spirit to be surrounded by many people who look like me; to see more Black/Brown faces serving in important and worthwhile positions than at home. Some are directors, supervisors, deans, chancellors, bishops, presidents, administrative assistants, chaplains, or many positions within the government (e.g., Zambia’s Immigration Office). I must truly say that I was expecting this governmental office to be managed by Europeans; the surprise was on me!!

There are many Black/Brown faces in governmental positions in Zambia– not just a handful that often times, in America, reflect decisions of deliberate tokenism, exceptionalism, or Affirmative Action, at best. The scales of justice in America are not balanced! *“But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream”* (Amos 5:24, NRSV). I am not a politically-minded person; however, I can observe injustices that affect minorities – People of Color.

Many will probably say that there is a lot of corruption in some of the political offices held in Africa; and that may be true. I wonder, though, how it compares to the corruption we can find in the United States among business and political practices or behaviors.

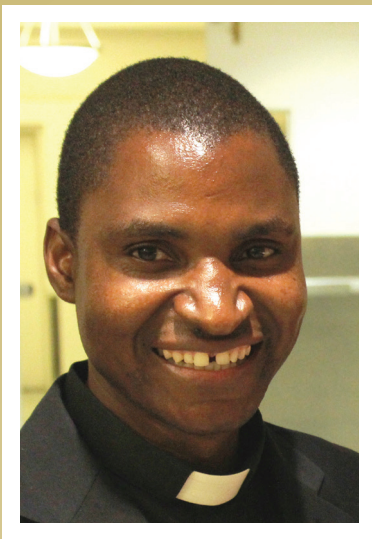
Most of us know that Africa has been robbed and raped of her rich resources (minerals and people) from the intrusion of Christian missionaries and business-related Europeans arriving on the continent. As a Black/Brown child growing up in America, I wish I had been taught about how prosperous and knowledgeable Africans were before those intrusions. I am very aware that the privileges I have become accustomed to would surpass most Africans’ dreams to escape scarcity; and yet, I still have not escaped it! Poverty comes in all forms, especially when it robs you of a good education and health care.

In spite of the lack of “whatever”, it is uplifting to my spirit to see people that look like me everywhere I go and turn! It is uplifting to see Black/Brown people laughing, smiling, and loving in spite of their circumstances. It reminds me of the plight and afflictions of most Black people at home, but in spite of it all, we live and we die, we cry and we laugh, we rejoice and we lament, we dislike and we love.

I have been greeted by some with a “Welcome home!” The sentiment brings tears to my eyes. Thus far, the immersion this past three months has been emboldening.







# An Update from

our Partners in the Church of  
Central Africa Presbyterian [CCAP]  
Synod of Harare, Zimbabwe  
By Libias Boloma, General Secretary, Synod of Harare

1. Ordination: On 22 October we had the Ordination ceremony of one of our pastors, Rev Shepard Kim at Hwange Congregation. We now have 21 ordained pastors in our church.

2. New pastors deployment: In November, three pastors will have completed their studies. Among them is Excitars Phiri, the first female pastor in our Synod. Thanks be to MAPC for sponsoring her studies. Excitars Phiri has been deployed to Chegutu. Isaac Malemelo will be going to Rugare congregation, and Alexander Mwale will be at Karoi congregation. These new pastors are expected to start work early January 2018.

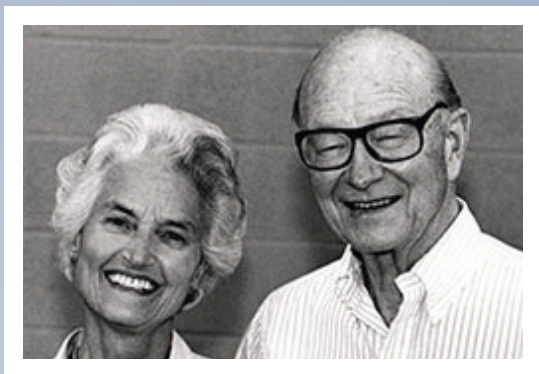


3. Opening a theological college: The CCAP Synod of Harare is planning to open its own theological college in February 2018. This has been necessitated by the acute shortage of pastors. This new theological college will be at Rock Haven Lay Training Centre and it will also be training lay leaders, youth leaders, and women's guild leaders. Training is still a necessity in our churches to help in deepening knowledge among our people. The church in Africa is vastly growing but with a very shallow depth of faith.

4. CCAP General Assembly: Our Synod shall be hosting this special meeting for the first time next year in June. The CCAP General Assembly is when all the five synods come together every four years. Since it was established in 1963, this will be our first time to host this big event.

5. Celebrating 500th Reformation anniversary: this year we celebrated the Reformation in a unique way. Churches of the Reformation (Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Reformed) that are in the Zimbabwe Council of Churches signed a memorandum of association with the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference. It was both a joyous moment and a confessional moment. There were five commitments that were signed for in this memorandum;

- i. Catholics and churches of the Reformation will seek to promote Christian unity and contribute to social cohesion in Zimbabwe.
- ii. Members of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and members of Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) will join hands in promoting active citizenship and good governance in Zimbabwe.
- iii. Members of ZCBC and members of ZCC shall commit themselves to visible unity and ongoing revitalization of the Church through joint theological and biblical study and worship from time to time.
- iv. Members of the ZCBC and those of the ZCC shall work closely together to promote the dignity of all Zimbabweans.
- v. Leaders of the ZCBC and leaders of the ZCC shall share in joint public witness as they speak against all forms of oppression and injustice that deprive Zimbabweans of their fullness of life.



# A Legacy of Music from Gordon & Lillian Hardy

By Andrew E. Henderson, Director of Music & Organist

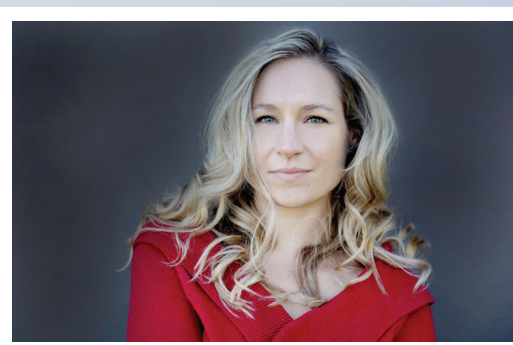
Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church has recently established a special music endowment fund through the generosity of longtime members Gordon and Lillian Hardy. Gordon and Lillian, both natives of Indiana, joined MAPC in 1959. Lillian (née Studebaker) was an accomplished painter, and Gordon was a pianist and music educator. He served as a faculty member and Dean of Students at The Juilliard School, in addition to serving for 28 years as both President and Dean of the Aspen Music Festival and School. While Gordon and Lillian were not regularly able to attend services by the time of my arrival as Director of Music in 2005, I soon got to know them and enjoyed frequent visits in their home. They were always interested in all of our musical activities, frequently listening to recordings of our Saint Andrew Chorale and New York City Children's Chorus concert programs. I found it fascinating to talk to them about the founding of the Saint Andrew Music Society, as Gordon was active as a member of the Music Committee during the 1960s when the SAMS program was proposed and founded. Although he apparently did so with modest reluctance, Gordon even conducted Poulenc's Organ Concerto with an orchestra comprised of Juilliard students at the dedication of our Casavant organ in 1962.

Gordon died in 2013 at the age of 94, and Lillian died at the age of 91 in 2015. Through their estate plans, initiated through a pledge to the Fund for Renewal capital campaign, they provided for a \$500,000 gift to fund special musical contributions to the MAPC community. They were very specific to restrict the fund's use for non-routine musical expenses, including the funding of special concert presentations, commissioning music for performance at the church, additions to the sanctuary organ and improvements to the sanctuary's acoustics: in short, they wished to provide enhancements to the worship and concert life that have long existed at this church, allowing programmatic creativity to the Director of Music as overseen by the Worship & Music Committee and Session.

One potential initiative that I raised with Gordon and Lillian, and for which they showed enthusiasm, is establishing a series of regular commissions from young and up-and-coming composers to write choral works for our Sunday liturgies. In this way we would enhance our liturgical life, encourage young composers to write for a liturgical context, and potentially reach countless others as a new composition becomes known and is sung by other choirs in other congregations. While planning our choral program during the summer months, I have often lamented that certain biblical texts appointed in the Revised Common Lectionary don't have quality choral settings, or that certain texts could do with a "fresh" musical setting. I am pleased to announce that the first commission resulting from the Gordon & Lillian Hardy Music Fund has been commissioned and composed! Last Spring I approached a young Minnesotan composer, Jocelyn Hagen, to set a text from Isaiah appointed for the 5th Sunday after Epiphany in the coming liturgical year, specifically February 4, 2018, which also happens to be the day of MAPC's annual meeting. I first became acquainted with Jocelyn's skillful choral compositions as a result of her being a finalist in the Sorel Competition in New York City in 2015. Jocelyn has arranged to be with us on February 4 and has agreed to present during the Christian Education hour on her work as a composer and approach to setting texts, with musical examples and a "sneak preview" of Hagen's *Have You Not Heard* provided by the Church Choir.

In honor of Gordon and Lillian's thoughtful vision for the music program at MAPC, I requested that the work be dedicated to their memory. I hope that you will plan to attend both the 10:10 am Christian Education presentation and the 11:15 am service on February 4 to hear this new work at its "premiere," sampling what I hope will be the first of many new musical works to enhance our congregation's liturgical life in the years to come!

For more information about Jocelyn Hagen and her compositions, please visit: [www.jocelynhagen.com](http://www.jocelynhagen.com).





**Friday, December 1**  
Church Family Night  
6 to 9 pm, Parish Hall & Gym

**Sunday, December 10**  
Senior Fellowship Lunch  
1-3 pm, Parish Hall

**Monday, January 8**  
Moms Night Out  
7 pm, Location TBD

**Friday, January 12**  
Pizza & Game Night  
6-8 pm, Youth Lounge, 5th Floor & Gym

**Friday, January 19**  
Church Family Night  
6-8 pm, Parish Hall & Gym

**Sunday, January 21**  
Library Awareness Luncheon  
1:00 pm, Parish Hall

**Friday, January 26**  
Friday Night Fireside Jazz  
6:30-10 pm, Lobby, 5th Floor, PH

**Sunday, January 28**  
Senior Fellowship Lunch  
1-3 pm, Parish Hall

**Sunday, February 4**  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
12:45 pm, Parish Hall

**Wednesday, February 14**  
Ash Wednesday Services  
12 pm & 7 pm, Sanctuary

**Wednesday, February 28**  
The Lenten Series Begins  
7-9 pm, Parish Hall

# Saint Andrew Music Society

## Concert Announcements

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December 3 at 3 pm

Christmas on Madison Avenue  
Concert Choir of the New York City Children's Chorus

December 17 at 4 pm

13th Annual Carol Sing  
Choir of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church  
New York City Children's Chorus  
Seasonal Choral music, readings & audience carols

January 28 at 3 pm

Steinberg Duo, Meeting of Musical Minds:  
Brahms, Grieg & Tchaikovsky  
Louisa Stonehill, violin; Nicholas Burns, piano

February 11 at 3 pm

Liszt, Busoni & Respighi  
Steven Vanhauwaert, piano

March 4 at 3 pm

Amuse Singers- Colin Britt, Conductor  
Weather Reports

March 18 at 3 pm

Margaret Mills, piano  
Works by Brahms & Debussy

March 25 at 3 pm

Bach: St Matthew Passion  
Saint Andrew Chorale & Orchestra



# MAPC

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church • 921 Madison Avenue New York, NY, 10021 • (212) 288-8920 • [www.mapc.com](http://www.mapc.com)

## Sunday, December 17 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

### 9 & 11:15 am – Services of Word & Sacrament

The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted preaching

### 10 am – Christmas Pageant

### 4 pm – 13th Annual Carol Sing

Saint Andrew Chorale & New York City Children's Chorus

An MAPC favorite! Audience carols, choral music, seasonal readings. Free admission.

# Celebrate Christmas

at MAPC

## Sunday, December 24 – 4th Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve

### 11:15 am – Service of Word & Sacrament

The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted preaching

(note: no 9 am service!)

### 5 pm – Christmas Eve Family Service

A child-friendly, 40-minute service that includes the telling of the Christmas story in a tableau enacted by children in our Kids Club program, along with the Litany for Christmas and the singing of carols.

### 10:30 pm – Candlelight Communion Service

The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted preaching

Seasonal choral music, including Holst's Christmas Day, with guest instrumentalists

(Prelude begins at 10:15 pm)

## Monday, December 25 – Christmas Day

### 11:15 am – Service of Lessons & Carols with Communion

A quiet, meditative service that includes the telling of the Christmas story through scripture, choral music and congregational carols.

## Sunday, December 31 – 1st Sunday after Christmas

### 11:15 am – Service of Word & Sacrament

(note: no 9 am service!)