

# *The Pastoral Staff Letter*

**Sunday Worship  
December 3, 2017  
1st Sunday of Advent**



**Madison  
Avenue  
Presbyterian  
Church**

**Issue #9**

**November 30, 2017**

**To Check out the  
Church's Calendar:**

Go to the website at  
[http://www.mapc.com/  
calendar/calendar/](http://www.mapc.com/calendar/calendar/)

**MAPC is on Facebook!**

*See you in church!  
The Pastoral Staff*

## **Worship Schedule 9 am & 11:15 am**

**Infant Nursery—4th Fl. Phillips Building, 8:30 am—1 pm**

**Toddler Nursery—4th Fl. Church House, 8:30 am—1 pm**

This Sunday, The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted is preaching. His sermon entitled ***"Help!"*** will be based on the texts: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; and Mark 13:24-37. This being the first Sunday of the month, prayers for Healing & Wholeness will be offered during communion. Preview the latest Sunday bulletin, or listen to sermons and service highlights from previous Sundays on MAPC's website.

**Children's Worship, 9:15 am & 11:30 am, Phillips Lounge**

**Youth Worship, 9:15 am & 11:30 am, Dana Chapel**

**Fellowship Hour, 10 am & 12:30 pm, Lobby**

**Adult Education, 10:10 am, Dana Chapel (*more info inside*)**

**Church School/Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 10:10 am,  
Parish Hall**

**Youth Hour, 10:10 am, Youth Lounge**

**Church Choir Rehearsal, 10:20 am, Choir Room**

**Confirmation Class, 12:30 pm, Youth Lounge**

**Congregational Nominating Committee, 1 pm, Community  
Services Room**

**ESL Classes, 1 pm, 5th Floor**

***Music on Madison: "Christmas on Madison Avenue", 3 pm,  
Sanctuary***

**Overnight Shelter, 6:30 pm, Shelter Space**

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# This Friday

Church Family Night, This Friday, December 1, 6 to 9 pm, Parish Hall



Come enjoy a relaxing evening of fun and fellowship at the start of a crazy season. In addition to our usual dinner, movie, craft and gym time, we are adding Christmas carols to this Church Family Night. Come enjoy singing your favorites. We need to know how many to plan for, so please let us know ASAP if you are coming: RSVP to Wendy De Los Santos in the church offices, [wlds@mapc.com](mailto:wlds@mapc.com). We ask for a \$20 donation for adults and a children over 12, and a donation of your choice for your child, based on their appetite.

# This Sunday

## Adult Education

Join us this Sunday, as we engage with Scripture through the ancient spiritual practice of *Lectio Divina*. *Lectio Divina*, a Latin term, suggests a form of divine reading. This practice is a way to open ourselves to what the Word of God has to say as we let go of

our own assumptions and agendas. As we wait with patient anticipation for the coming of the Christ Child, let us open ourselves more fully to what God has to say to us this week.

Christina Cosby will lead our

practice. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday morning at 10:10 am.



## Volunteers Needed for Homeless Shelter (Day and Night)

The MAPC/St. James' Church Shelter is usually in great need of volunteers in December, January, February, as potential volunteers become busy with the holiday season and other demands. Both evening (6:30 to 8:30 pm) and overnight (8:30 pm

to 7:00 am) volunteers are needed. To learn more or to start the training process, please consider attending our next orientation at 1 pm on Sunday, December 3, in the Shelter Space. We also have a

need for one more people to assist during the week while the guests are not in the shelter. If you would be interested in talking about one of these opportunities, please contact Andy Smothers at [ads@mapc.com](mailto:ads@mapc.com).

## Music on Madison: "Christmas on Madison Avenue", 3 pm



The Concert choir of our New York City Children's Chorus will sing seasonal choral works for treble voices, including excerpts from Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* & Randall Thompson's *The Place of the Blest*, plus works by Norman Luboff and Paul Halley—including the world premiere of Halley's *The Bright Daystar*, composed for the 5th Anniversary of the NYCCC. Mary Huff, artistic director; Andrew Henderson & Paolo Bordignon, organ/piano; Jacqueline Kerrod, harp. Tickets are available in advance at [www.mapc.com/music/sams](http://www.mapc.com/music/sams) or at the door; admission is \$25 (\$20—Students/Seniors); Children 12 and under: free.

## Christmas Angel Gifts Due at MAPC, Sunday, December 3



Thank you to those who committed to buying gifts for children of incarcerated parents through our partnership with Church of Gethsemane! Please do bring those gifts to the

receptionist in the MAPC Church House Lobby by Sunday, December 3, so that we can ensure that they are delivered to the children for Christmas.



## Other Events & Announcements

### Company of Deacons Gathering, December 6, 7 pm in the Parish Hall

Once again, the Board of Deacons will host a Company of Deacons gathering in the Parish Hall on Wednesday, December 6. All MAPC folk who have been ordained a deacon, whether they currently serve on the Board or not, are invited to attend. We will have some delicious refreshments and engage in conversation on how we provide a ministry of compassion in the midst of anxious times.

### Spiritual Faith and Growth Sharing Group, Thursday, December 7 1 pm in the James Lenox House Library

This is an open group of MAPC members and James Lenox House residents that meets for a time of reflection on a scripture passage. Rather than an academic Bible study, this is a formational approach to scripture—listening for what God is saying to us in this day and at this time in our lives. Participants find these bi-monthly gatherings to be a source of strength and meaning. The group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month, at 1 pm, and finishes between 2 and 2:30.

### Yoga for Every Body, December 8 and 22, 9 am on the 5th Floor

Come enjoy a relaxing hour of yoga in this very busy month. You will feel much more grounded as you face the December whirl of activity and demands. Everyone is welcome, regardless of experience. Please bring a mat (we have a few available to borrow, if you don't have one) and any yoga props you own: blocks or straps. We begin at 9 am on the 5th floor, and ask for a \$20 donation to help cover the teacher's fee.



### Senior Fellowship Lunch, Sunday, December 10 at 1 pm in the Parish Hall



MAPC Seniors and friends, please come downstairs to the Parish Hall after coffee hour to enjoy a relaxing time of fellowship with a light lunch on Sunday, December 10. Suggested donation for lunch is \$10.

## Donations for Christmas Flowers

We are now accepting donations for the poinsettias and wreaths that will beautify the Sanctuary during the Christmas season. Gifts may be made in memory or in honor of loved ones. To make a donation, please use the special insert in the bulletins for the next few Sundays, or print out a

PDF copy [here](#). You may place your completed form and contribution in an envelope in the offering plate, or mail it to Lissette Perez-Erazo in the Church Offices. The suggested donation for each name is \$40. In order to include the names of loved ones in the bulletins on Christmas Even and

Christmas Day, **we must receive your donation by Monday morning, December 18.**



## Assist Ministries with Alternative Christmas Gifts This Year



On any ordinary day, we might enjoy a breakfast of scrambled eggs, have a ham sandwich lunch, and maybe some roast chicken for dinner. Many of us drink water throughout the day, straight from the tap, knowing it is safe. If we fall ill, we go to our doctor or emergency room, trusting that we will be seen promptly and receive good care.



Imagine living somewhere where these experiences are impossible

or at least very difficult to come by.

Every year at this time, MAPC joins together for an Alternative Gift Fair to support three mission organizations that provide essential services for people in countries where food, medical services, and jobs are badly needed. It is our way of giving Christmas gifts to people around the world that we hope will encourage their independence and sustainability. This year, we will not have a particular day assigned but invite you to continue to purchase gifts from the same ministries.

Through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, you can fund animals like chickens, pigs, or fish; or wells, rainwater catchment systems, bags of seeds and farming tools; or training programs that will help families survive and start a farming business. See [presbyteriangifts.org/gifts/](http://presbyteriangifts.org/gifts/) for details and to donate.

Donations to Church World Service can be earmarked to literacy classes, birthing kits, or disaster emergency relief, among many options. Research or donate at [cwsbestgifts.org](http://cwsbestgifts.org).

Your contribution to the Medical Benevolence Foundation can be earmarked to provide medical care for people in 19 underdeveloped countries throughout the world. Check [mbfoundation.org/donate-now/give-an-alternative-gift/](http://mbfoundation.org/donate-now/give-an-alternative-gift/) for more information or to donate.



The above are just a few examples of the types of support these three organizations provide.

## Ushers and Greeters Needed for Sunday and Special Worship Services

We benefit from two small teams of greeters during our worship services who greet members, friends, and visitors; distribute bulletins; collect our offering; and assist people attending worship. We could use several additional people to help in these ministries on Sunday mornings. If you would be willing to help in this way, please contact Andy Smothers at [ads@mapc.com](mailto:ads@mapc.com). We also need greeters for our special services this holiday season. If you would be willing to serve on Sunday, December 24 (11:15 am, 5 pm, and 10:30 pm services) or Monday, December 25 (11:15 am service), please contact Andy.

## Highlights of the November Session Meeting

The Session met in regular meeting on November 28, 2017. This was an extensive and lengthy meeting as the Ad Hoc Financial Committee, which was formed in May, made its report and recommendations for the 2018 budget. After a thorough discussion, the Session adopted four of the five recommendations. All of these recommendations involved cuts of various sorts. A fifth motion was tabled in order to study its implications further. The committee was tasked with bringing future expenditures in line with expected income, in order that the endowment remain sturdy and not be depleted. They were sensitive both to budget issues and the impact on programs. These recommendations will go to the Budget Committee who will use them to propose a 2018 budget. The details of that budget will be made known to the congregation when the process is completed. In additional business, the Session also approved two recommendations to go to the congregation for changing the by-laws: first, to reduce the size of the session from 18 to 15, the trustees from 15 to 12, and the deacons from 30 to 24; second, to require that all officers make at least 60% of the year's scheduled meetings, or have excused absences. Finally, Personnel was charged with forming a search committee to replace Richard Frey upon his announced retirement at the end of May 2018.

## Shelter Dinner is Now “Thursday Open Table”

The Outreach Committee has chosen to rename our weekly dinner for those who are food insecure from Shelter Dinner to Thursday Open Table, realizing that the program has no appreciable connection to our shelter

program. If you would be willing to volunteer to serve around 120 hungry neighbors from 6 to 8 pm on Thursday nights, contact Kathy Hoffman at [kfhoffman@earthlink.net](mailto:kfhoffman@earthlink.net) to be added to her recruitment

list. Those already on the Shelter Dinner list will automatically be maintained.



## Update on Harare City Church

Those who watch news related to Zimbabwe are likely aware of the rapid changes that have happened in the last three weeks, as the military took control of the country, long-time President Mugabe resigned, and a new president has been installed. We have continued to be in contact with our partners there; though, they

have not shared very extensively regarding the events—perhaps due to security and safety concerns. Please continue in prayer for our partners in Zimbabwe.

In the midst of these significant events, the synod has continued work on City Church in Harare. We are including a

couple of photos on the status of the church. They have made significant progress on brickwork and installing window and door frames. Many will remember that MAPC funded the superstructure for the building. You may also find a video sweeping through the building by clicking [here](#).



## Join Us For a Celebration of Christmas—All Are Welcome!

### 13th Annual Carol Sing: Sunday, December 17 at 4 pm

Choir of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church  
& New York City Children's Chorus  
Seasonal Choral Music, Audience Carols, Readings & Poetry

### Christmas Eve: Sunday, December 24

11:15 am: Service of Word & Sacrament for 4th Sunday of Advent

5 pm: Family Service with Christmas Tableau

10:30 pm: Candlelight Communion Service

Prelude begins at 10:15 pm  
Choral works by Holst, Gjeilo & Willcocks,  
with guest instrumentalists  
The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted preaching

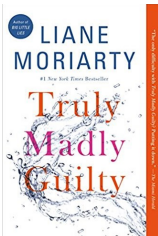


### Christmas Day: Monday, December 25, 11:15 am

Service of Lessons & Carols  
Carols & Anthems sung by the Choir of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

### 1st Sunday after Christmas: Sunday, December 31 at 11:15 am

Service of Word and Sacrament



## MAPC Book Club on Hiatus until January 16, 2018

Due to holiday travel plans, the MAPC Book Club, has decided to take a break until January 16, the regularly scheduled third Tuesday of the month date. The book for the January meeting will be *Truly, Madly, Guilty* by Liane Moriarty. Please pick up a copy and plan to join the book group at 4 pm, January 16 in the Hood Library—you have plenty of time to read it!

## Christian Education at MAPC

### Call for Children's Worship and Youth Worship Volunteers

As we begin the Advent season, we encourage you to discern new ways to engage in ministries of MAPC. Children's and Youth Worship are always in need of volunteers. Volunteering is simple and requires no preparation ahead of time. Your role is simply to engage in the worship experience with the youngest generation of MAPC!

The mission of this ministry is to provide a time during the regularly scheduled worship services for children to engage in a liturgy designed for them, and a Bible lesson that mirrors the Sunday sermon. Our hope is this experience allows parents and children the opportunity to discuss the day's scripture passage together.

If you would like to sign-up or have questions, please contact Christina Cosby, [cac@mapc.com](mailto:cac@mapc.com) or (212) 288-8920 x8480.

## Children and Family Ministries

### Children's Worship

*Children's worship takes place during both Sunday services (9 am and 11:15 am), and is an interactive worship service designed specifically for children 3rd grade and under.*

*4th grade and up are invited to attend.*

### Kids Club

*Wednesday afternoons from 3:45-6 pm*  
Families are always welcome to sign up for this year's Kids Club.

### Youth Worship

*Youth worship occurs during both Sunday Services (9 am and 11:15 am). All children*

*This past week, Kids Club began preparing for this year's presentation of the annual Christmas Pageant, which takes place on Decem-*



ber 17th. Teachers led their classes in reading the Christmas Story and understanding the meaning behind this season for their lives. Throughout the month of December, this will be a primary focus of our time together.

For more information visit the MAPC [website](#) or contact Christina

Cosby at [cac@mapc.com](mailto:cac@mapc.com).

**Church School**  
10:10 am on the 5th Floor

Church School will begin preparing for this year's annual Christmas Pageant this Sunday. All children who are regular participants in Church

School and/or Kids Club are welcome to participate.

## Middle and High School Ministries

**T(w)een Club**  
Wednesday afternoons from 4 to 6 pm

Tweens and Teens are always welcome to join us on Wednesday afternoons for this after-school program designed with them in mind. More information can be found on the [website](#).

**Sunday Youth Hour**  
Sunday Morning at 10:10 am,

*in the Youth Lounge*

**Youth: Thursday Open Table Volunteer Opportunity (formerly "Shelter Dinner")**  
Thursday, December 7 at 6 pm in the Parish Hall

Shelter Dinner now has a new name, Thursday Open Table, but the premise remains the same. We will serve a warm meal to our

neighbors who struggle with food insecurity.

If you are interested in attending this service opportunity, please contact Christina Cosby at [cac@mapc.com](mailto:cac@mapc.com).



**Please stay tuned for more Fall service opportunities coming up, or go to the MAPC [website](#) for a complete list or click here to find an [easy-to-print](#) calendar.**

## Bible Studies at MAPC

Looking for a place to read Scripture together and get to know people at MAPC? Come to one of our Bible Studies; newcomers are always welcome! For more information, go to <http://www.mapc.com/christian-ed/adultclasses/>.

### Reading Through the Bible:

12:30 pm-1:30 pm, Phillips Lounge

Reading Through the Bible meets every Wednesday in the Phillips Lounge. On December 6th we will pick up with Psalm 51.

### 20s/30s Group: (Next Meeting is Today, November 30, 2017)

5:30-8 pm, in the Youth Lounge on the 5th Floor

If you are in your twenties or thirties, join us for a time of fellowship and food and a time of Bible study.

### Women's Bible Study: (Next Meeting is Monday, December 4, 2017)

1st and 3rd Mondays, 6:30 pm, Phillips Lounge

Currently, we are studying Paul's letters. Come join us for an enriching conversation as we continue reading Colossians!

### Men's Bible Study:

The Men's Bible Study is on hiatus and will resume in January, 2018.

## Stay Connected to Worship at MAPC

*Did you know* that even if you're away or unable to make it to church that you can listen to Sunday worship services at MAPC? Sermons and service highlights (including scripture

lessons, hymns and anthems) are uploaded afterwards, and are permanently accessible. They can be downloaded to your electronic device or listened to directly on MAPC's website: [peruse](#) this val-

uable online resource today! Once ready for print, our Sunday bulletins are also uploaded to our website on Thursday afternoons and are made permanently available for download.

## Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

921 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10021  
Phone: 212-288-8920  
Fax: 212-249-1466

**We're on the  
web  
[www.mapc.com](http://www.mapc.com)**

### Flowers for the Sanctuary

Is there someone you would like to honor or remember through a gift of flowers for Sunday worship? If so, please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo at [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com) or 212-288-8920. The cost for Sunday flowers is \$110.

## Thank You for Filling the New York Common Pantry Grocery Carts

The New York Common Pantry, the city's largest private food pantry and long-time MAPC Outreach partner, is asking for your continued support: canned or dried beans, canned chicken/salmon/tuna, rice, dried pasta, fresh or canned vegetables, and peanut butter. Please—no glass containers. You can drop off items in the grocery carts in the Church House Lobby or the Sanctuary Narthex, or you could even order groceries to be delivered through one of your grocers. (8 East 109th Street, New York, NY 10029, Phone: 917-720-9700). Thank you for taking seriously Christ's command to "feed my sheep!"

### Clothing Donations Needed for Women and Men

The Homeless Outreach Program at Jan Hus Presbyterian Church, one of MAPC's long-term outreach partners, continues to see a dramatic increase of homeless persons seeking assistance. Both casual and business clothing for men and women, as well as new undergarments, are among their most urgent needs. If you have clothing items in clean and neat condition, we encourage you to take them to the Jan Hus Clothes Pantry at 351 East 74th Street at 1st Avenue. The clothes pantry is available to take donations Monday through Saturday from 8 am-8pm and on Sunday from 9 am-3:30 pm. NOTE: Please bring all clothing to Jan Hus **directly**—clothing may no longer be left in the coatroom off of the MAPC Church House Lobby.

## Hands-on Ministries

### Ways to get involved at MAPC with hands and hearts!

*"Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." The following opportunities to participate in hands-on ministries are provided by the Outreach Committee. If you are interested in exploring any of these opportunities, e-mail Andy Smothers at [ads@mapc.com](mailto:ads@mapc.com). Let's put our faith into action!*

### The Thursday Shelter Dinner Needs YOU!

Can you spare 2 hours on a Thursday evening from 6-8 pm? If so, then you can help feed 120 hungry neighbors a hot meal, offering them Christian hospitality.

Please contact Kathy Hoffman at [kfhoffman@earthlink.net](mailto:kfhoffman@earthlink.net).

### Host at the Shelter

Hosts are needed for the Shelter! The Shelter is comfortable and the experience of helping these men get their lives back on track is one that will change your heart. Two shifts are offered each evening. Early evening hosts volunteer from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm; overnight hosts volunteer from 8:30 pm to 7 am. Contact Andy Smothers at [ads@mapc.com](mailto:ads@mapc.com) for more information.

### Search and Care

Can you spend an afternoon with an elderly person on the Upper

Eastside to walk their pet, go with them to a doctor's appointment, help them shop, balance their checkbook or even just offer them the gift of companionship? If so, contact Robin Strashun at [SandC@searchandcare.org](mailto:SandC@searchandcare.org).

### New York Common Pantry

The New York Common Pantry offers opportunities for volunteers to help pack and distribute food to the working poor on Saturday mornings and other times each week. MAPC has supported this very well-organized and effective organization since its inception 30 years ago. This is a wonderful way to follow Christ's command to "feed my sheep!"