

The Pastoral Staff Letter

**Sunday Worship
December 17, 2017
3rd Sunday of Advent**



**Madison
Avenue
Presbyterian
Church**

Issue #11

December 14, 2017

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 *“Bearing Witness”* will be based on the texts: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; and John 1:6-8, 19-28. 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

Annual Christmas Pageant/Fellowship Hour, 10 am, Parish Hall

Church Choir Rehearsal, 10:20 am, Choir Room

Fellowship Hour, 12:30 pm, Lobby

Special Meeting of Session, 1 pm, 8th AR

ESL Classes, 1 pm, 5th Floor

Confirmation Class, 1 pm, Youth Lounge

13th Annual Carol Sing, 4 pm, Sanctuary

White Elephant Party, 6 pm, 5th Floor

Overnight Shelter, 6:30 pm, Shelter Space

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*

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This Sunday

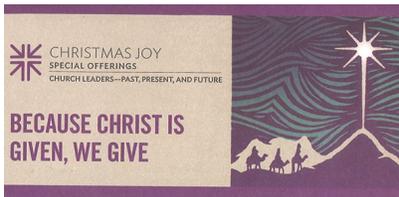
Christmas Pageant

This Sunday is our annual MAPC Christmas Pageant: *God With Us*, presented by our Kids Club and Church School families! We invite everyone to join us in the Parish Hall at 10:10 am to enjoy refreshments, fellowship, and to gain a glimpse back in time to the Birth of Jesus as we seek to understand its continued meaning in our lives of faith today.



A reminder for our families participating in the pageant, we ask that your child is simply dressed in black and white. We will provide the other costume props that are needed.

Christmas Joy Offering

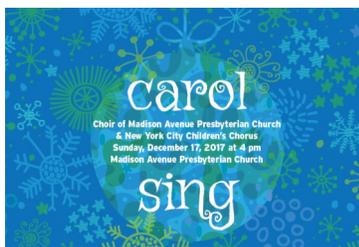


A Presbyterian tradition for over seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering supports the PCUSA Board of Pensions for assistance programs. Through these Assistance Programs, the Christmas Joy Offering recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers, including pastors and others, by providing funds to help them through difficult times.

In addition, the Christmas Joy Offering helps the Presbyterian Church (USA) support its racial ethnic schools and colleges by providing scholarships to deserving students as well as help with basic operating costs. These institutions develop leaders in the church and in society, and they enable students to discover and pursue their professional goals. Please plan now for your Christmas Joy Offering!

This year's Christmas Joy Offering will be received in worship December 17, 24, and 25. Please consider making a gift to support this offering, using either one of the special offering envelopes that will be in the bulletins later this month, or online at <http://www.mapc.com/giving/donation>, being sure to apply your donation to "Christmas Joy" in the drop-down list.

13th Annual Carol Sing: December 17 at 4 pm



The Saint Andrew Music Society's 13th Annual Carol Sing is **this Sunday at 4 pm**, Andrew Henderson & Mary Huff conducting. The Choir of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and the New York City Children's Chorus will sing works by Halley, Holst, Leontovich, Luboff & Willan. In addition to these musical offerings, we will be delighted by seasonal readings and poetry read by Lyn Baier & David Carleton. As always, the audience will be invited to join in the singing of hearty Christmas Carols in the seasonal resplendence of our decorated Sanctuary. A reception will follow in the Parish Hall. Admission is Free, although donations are gratefully received in support of the Saint Andrew Music Society, which funds our annual Carol Sing.

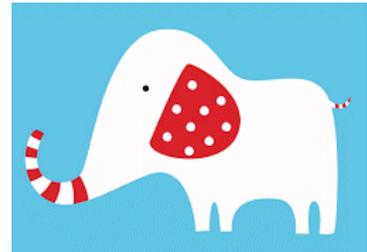
White Elephant Christmas Party for Tweens and Teens

This Sunday at 6 pm in the Youth Lounge

Come ready to eat pizza, have fun with friends, and ring in the Christmas season with our popular annual White Elephant Pizza

Party! Bring in a wrapped gift that costs under \$20, and after we read the Christmas Story (with its hidden directions for what to do with the gifts), we'll see who walks away

with what...as we have fun unwrapping our presents. Feel free to invite friends, just make sure to RSVP to Christina Cosby at cac@mapc.com.



Other Events & Announcements

Andy Smothers to Bahrain



At the end of last week, the Rev. Andy Smothers announced that he had accepted a call to serve as a Mission Worker with the Reformed Church in America, serving the National Evangelical Church of Bahrain. Andy has been with MAPC since June, 2014, first as a Global Ministry Fellow, and then for the last two years as Interim Associate Minister for Evangelism and Outreach. We congratulate Andy on this call, and thank him for his service to this church. Andy's last day with us will be Sunday, December 31, when he will preach and lead worship. He will be back on Sunday, January 7, at which time we will celebrate his ministry here with a reception following the 11:15 service. If you cannot be here then, please say thank you to him in the coming two weeks.

Last Chance: 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 Eve and Christ-

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



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. **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.**

Yoga for Every Body, Friday, December 22 at 9 am on the 5th Floor



Take a break from the holiday busyness and enjoy a relaxing hour of yoga on Friday, December 22, beginning at 9 am. Your body, mind, and spirit will thank you! This class is open to everyone, regardless of experience, level of fitness—or lack thereof. Bring a mat if you have one (we have a few available to borrow, if not). We ask for a \$20 donation to help pay the instructor. Please bring a friend! The 5th Floor is a great space for yoga and there is plenty of room.

No Child Care on December 24th & December 31!

Children are welcome in worship this Christmas season! For the next two weeks, we invite infants, toddlers and children of all ages to enjoy worship with their family. There will not be any child care in the nursery provided on December 24th or 31st, as the staff is enjoying the holiday season with family.

Assist Ministries with Alternative Christmas Gifts This Year



On any ordinary day, we might enjoy a breakfast of scrambled eggs, have a ham sandwich for 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/ 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.

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/ for more information or to donate.



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

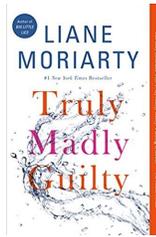
Save these Dates! January Congregational Nurture Events:

Though it is hard to think past Christmas, January will be upon us very soon, and there are many fellowship opportunities to put on your calendars:

Monday, January 8—Moms' Night Out at an UES restaurant

Tuesday, January 16, 4 pm—the MAPC Book Club starts up again, meeting in the Hood Li-

brary. The book under discussion for January is *Truly, Madly, Guilty* by Liane Moriarty.



Friday, January 19, 6 pm—Church Family Night in the Parish Hall

Friday, January 26, 6 to 9 pm—Friday Night Fireside Jazz

Sunday, January 28, 1 pm—Library Awareness Sunday Author Luncheon (*Please note this is a change from the original date published in MAPC Life. The Senior Fellowship Lunch scheduled for this Sunday will*

Highlights of the November Session Meeting

The Session met in regular meeting on November 28, 2017. Click [here](#) for more information.

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 pro-

gram has no appreciable connection to our shelter program. If you would be willing to volunteer to serve around 120 hungry neighbors from 6-8 pm on Thursday nights,

contact Kathy Hoffman at 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—New Photos!

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 few photos on the status of the church received

December 5. They have made significant progress on brickwork and installing window and door frames. Many will remember that MAPC funded the superstructure for the building.



Join Us For a Celebration of Christmas All Are Welcome!



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 Av-
enue Presbyterian Church

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

Service of Word and Sacrament

Christian Education at MAPC

Call for Children's Worship and Youth Worship Volunteers

This Advent season we encourage you to discern new ways to engage in ministries of MAPC as we begin the new church year. 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 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.

Youth Worship

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

4th grade and up are invited to attend.

Kids Club

Wednesday afternoons from 3:45-6 pm

Kids Club is on Christmas break and will resume on January 10, 2018.

If your family plans to be around for the 5 pm Family Service on Christmas Eve, please



let Christina Cosby at cac@mapc.com know.

Church School

10:10 am in the Parish Hall

We invite all Church School families who are not in the pageant to come to the Parish Hall and support their friends as they present

this year's rendition of the Christmas Pageant.

If your family plans to be

around for the 5 pm Family Service on Christmas Eve, please let Christina Cosby at cac@mapc.com know. Soon

we will begin preparations for the Tableau portion of the worship service.

Middle and High School Ministries

T(w)een Club

Wednesday afternoons from 4 to 6 pm
Tweens and Teens, we hope that you enjoy your Christmas and New Year's holidays. We will be on hiatus until January 10. We look forward to hearing about your holiday activities when we return.

Sunday Youth Hour

Sunday Morning at 10:10 am

This week we invite all youth to join our larger church family in the Parish Hall for the annual MAPC Christmas Pageant: "God With Us."

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 (On Hiatus for the Holiday Season)
January 10th, we will pick up with Psalm 59.

20s/30s Group: (Next Meeting is Today, December 14, 2017)

5:30-8 pm, in the 4th Floor Apartment

Come enjoy a holiday meal, fellowship, and Christmas festivities as we decorate Christmas cookies for our Men's Shelter.

Women's Bible Study: (Meets This Monday, December 18, 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 finish reading Colossians!

Men's Bible Study:

The Men's Bible Study will resume in January.

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

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**We're on the
web
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-Eraza at 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. Let's put our faith into action!

The Thursday Open Table 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 to volunteer for this opportunity (formerly known as Shelter Dinner)

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 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.

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!"