



middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church

DECEMBER 2016

Celebration! Worship
Sundays at 11:15 AM

Watch live on middlechurch.org

DECEMBER 4

Second Sunday of Advent

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Matthew 3.1-12
Middle Church Choir
In-the-Middle Choir
Baptism
Communion
Lighting the Candle of Peace

DECEMBER 11

Third Sunday of Advent

Lynn Min and Rob Stephens,
preachers
Matthew 11.2-11
Middle Church Choir
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Lighting the Candle of Joy

DECEMBER 18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gift to Give Sunday

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Matthew 1.18-25
Middle Church Choir
Gospel Choir Ensemble
Lighting the Candle of Love

DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Luke 2.1-20
Middle Church Choir
Carol Sing

CHRISTMAS EVE
Saturday, December 24

7:00 PM
A CLASSICAL CHRISTMAS
Middle Church Choir
The Manhattan Brass
Jacqui Lewis, homily
Candlelight

9:00 PM
A GOSPEL CHRISTMAS
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Jacqui Lewis, homily
Candlelight

11:00 PM
A MIDNIGHT CHRISTMAS
Gospel Ensemble
Jacqui Lewis, homily
Candlelight

We Are Light



Ellen Matlach

Something is happening. Even while a new administration is being ushered in. Even as we who believe in freedom are curious about which freedoms will be eroded. Even as a national anxiety grabs hold of us, a kind of non-specific anxiety that hangs heavy in the air, like a dark cloud.

Something is happening. It is also in the atmosphere. It is like what happens on a mountaintop, or on a grassy plain. The cloud is thick, heavy, dark. And then the sky turns from midnight blue to navy. Just over the horizon, there is a hint of gray as the sun begins to bounce off the mist. Soon shades of green and yellow appear, and the cloud is rolled back by the light of dawn, leaving whispers of something left over—scattering, feathery, evaporating, and then, light.

In the beginning, the poet says, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered everything. God spoke and light appeared, scattering the dark shadowy cloudy mist and illuminating a forming thing. Earth. Sky. Waters. Creatures. Humankind.

In the beginning, another poet writes, was the Word; this Word was the light of all humankind and the darkness could not overtake it.

We know the darkness comes, though, don't we? It comes on schedule. It comes and we need its arrival. It slows us down, it causes us to light

candles and soft fires and lamps for reading. It brings a short sabbath, it lulls us to sleep and then we awake, once more, to the light.

The darkness comes, and with it fertility in soil, and babies in the womb. Photographs in the soup of development, new ideas developing in times that feel desperately dark.

The Light that was the light of all humankind was, our stories say, born of a woman in the darkness of a womb. Pushed out into the light while she squatted over hay. Caught by the gnarly hands of her carpenter husband Joe. Nursed by his mama Mary.

Something is happening. In the cycle of dark and light. In the circle of life that includes death and birth. Something is happening, something totally new, and totally necessary. We are becoming, in the dark and in the light, we are becoming allies, family, colleagues, agents of change.

Something is happening, the dawning of hope, the rising of new visions of possibility, the gestation of new life.

We are becoming light workers, we are light itself. We are light, and nothing can overcome the light.

Thank you for being the light.

*You are so loved,
Jacqui*



Béatrice de Géa

The Butterfly team has finished its ministry for the year. Thank you to every volunteer who made sandwiches, packed 180 bag lunches, and delivered them to Tompkins Square Park and Sara Roosevelt Park each Sunday from Easter through Thanksgiving—that's more than 5,700 lunches to the hungry in our community! You are love in action. Special thanks to team leaders Danita Branam and George Winters.



Nicola Bailey

On the day after the election, hundreds of New Yorkers gathered in Washington Square Park for our interfaith gathering, Songs for the Soul. Jacqui spoke and our team helped lead music. It was a time to lament, grieve, and worship together. We organized the event with our partners at Auburn Seminary.



Béatrice de Géa

From the joy of Homecoming to the challenge of the election, worship this autumn has been full of inspiring songs and thoughtful sermons. Thank you for generously donating your time and talents to share your gifts of music, dance, and art both in our sanctuary and throughout the city at rallies for racial, LGBT, and economic justice.



We are excited to announce that Chad Tanaka Pack will be ordained in the Reformed Church of America (RCA) at Middle Church on January 15, 2017 at 4:00 PM. This is a photo of Chad and Jacqui after he passed his exams at the Classis of New York meeting in November. Thank you to all of you who have organized and supported Chad and this process with Revolutionary Love over the last eight years.

Middle Literary Magazine Needs You!

Submit your writing and/or art to our 6th annual Literary Magazine! The theme will be "Dismantle, Disrupt, and Dream." Poetry, fiction, essay, art, photos, children's work—even a video clip—are all welcome! **Send your submissions to editor Carol Wierzbicki at litmag@middlechurch.org by February 5.**

Order Memorial Poinsettias for the Sanctuary this Christmas Season

**Cost: \$20 each – check or cash
No IOUs accepted.**

Deadline – Sunday, December 18, 2016

Purchase online at bit.ly/poinsettia2016

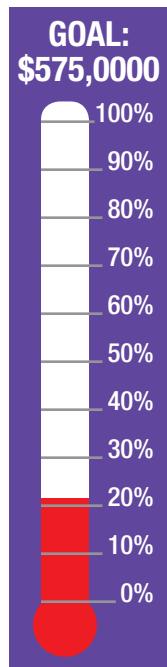
Or mail your payment in the enclosed envelope

Partnership Update

Middle Church is Powered by Love, God, and YOU. Your generosity will help us meet our mid-year goal of \$316,250 (55%) by December 31. As of November 21, 2016, Middle Church raised \$127,788 toward our offering goal of \$575,000 by June 30, 2017. We are 22% on our way to our goal at 40% of the program year. Please consider a weekly donation of at least \$20. Thank you!

Ways to Give: As diverse as we are!

- Online.** Make a weekly recurring gift using a credit or debit card online.
- During Worship.** Place cash or a check in an offering envelope during worship.
- Text to Give.** Simply text "[Donation Amount]" to 917-924-4666.
- Matched Giving Program.** Check if your employer programs match your donation.



Advent

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – Sunday, December 4

- **Celebration! Sunday Morning Worship at 11:15 AM**

Jacqui Lewis, preacher • Middle Church Choir • In-the-Middle Choir • Lighting the Candle of Peace • Communion

- **Village Chorus for Children and Youth Holiday Concert at 2:00 PM**

Ring in the season with our youngest singers.

ADVENT EXHIBIT OPENING – Wednesday, December 7 at 6:00 PM

“From Dark to Light, and the Gifts in Both” Though we yearn for the light, God is also present in the dark, where a miracle grows, and dreams of justice, wholeness, and Revolutionary Love wait to be born. Works by Patrick Mulcahy, Peter Calderon, Neil Harvey, and Becket Logan, curator.

ART & SOUL – Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 PM

Join us for midweek music, inspiration, and conversation.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – Sunday, December 11

- **Celebration! Sunday Morning Worship at 11:15 AM**

Lynn Min and Rob Stephens, preachers • Middle Church Choir • Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir • Lighting the Candle of Joy

- **Greening of the Church Brunch at 12:30 PM**

Decorate the Middle Church Christmas tree.

- **Holiday Readings and One-Act Plays at 2:00 PM**

Middle Players & Writers cordially invite you to our holiday readings and one-act plays. Enjoy the creative fruits of our writing and acting classes, with some holiday spice! Readings 2:00 PM; Plays 3:00 PM.

HOLIDAY PUB THEOLOGY – Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 PM

Share the spirits of the season with Jim Kast-Keat at Jimmy's No. 43.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – Gift to Give Sunday, December 18

- **Celebration! Sunday Morning Worship at 11:15 AM**

Jacqui Lewis, preacher • Middle Church Choir • Gospel Choir Ensemble • Lighting the Candle of Love

- **Christmas Concert at 2:30 PM**

Gospel and Classical music featuring the Middle Church Choir and the Middle Church Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir

A MOSAIC CHRISTMAS – Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00 PM

Join Matthew Johnson Harris and friends for a musical evening to benefit the Arab American Association of New York. • \$20 donation.

CHRISTMAS EVE – Saturday, December 24

- **A Classical Christmas Candlelight Worship at 7:00 PM**

Middle Church Choir • The Manhattan Brass • Jacqui Lewis, homily

- **A Gospel Christmas Candlelight Worship at 9:00 PM**

Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir • Jacqui Lewis, homily

- **A Midnight Christmas Candlelight Worship at 11:00 PM**

Gospel Ensemble • Jacqui Lewis, homily

If you can't be with us on Christmas Eve, watch the live webcast at 7:00 and 9:00 PM on middlechurch.org!

CHRISTMAS DAY – Sunday, December 25

- **Celebration! Sunday Morning Worship at 11:15 AM**

Jacqui Lewis and Rob Stephens, preachers • Middle Church Choir • Carol Sing

The Church Office will be closed December 26-27.

JAZZY NEW YEAR – Saturday, December 31 at 6:00 PM

A jazzy tribute to ring in the year • Lynn Min, homily • Music from Cassandra Kellam and Dionne McClain-Freeney



December

Check middlechurch.org for full details of all events.

Sundays

- **Butterfly Meal Preparation** – on hiatus until Easter
- **Wee Care** (under age 4) – 9:30 AM–2:30 PM • 3rd Floor Wee Care
- **In-the-Middle Choir** – DEC 4 – 10:00–10:45 AM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **The Breakfast Club** (Gr. 7–12) – 10:00–11:00 AM • 4th Floor Studio
- **CELEBRATION! WORSHIP** – 11:15 AM–12:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **The Ark** (Gr. K–6) – 11:30–12:30 PM • 3rd Floor Studio • hiatus DEC 4
- **Chat & Chew** – 12:30 PM • Social Hall
- **Greening of the Church** – DEC 11 – 12:30 PM • Social Hall
- **Village Chorus** (Ages 6–14) – 1:00–2:30 PM • Community Room
- **Reading the Bible from the Middle** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Erasing Racism** – DEC 4 – 12:45–1:45 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Praying Dangerously** – DEC 4 – 12:45–1:45 PM • 5th Floor Parlor
- **Money Talks** – DEC 18 – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Mothers & Spirituality** – DEC 18 – 1:30–2:30 PM • 5th Floor Parlor
- **Village Chorus Holiday Concert** – DEC 4 – 2:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **Holiday Readings & One-Act Plays** – DEC 11 – 2:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **CHRISTMAS CONCERT** – DEC 18 – 2:30–3:30 PM • Sanctuary • \$20
- **AA/Big Book Meeting** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Mondays

- **Momentum Meals** – 11:00 AM–1:00 PM • Lunch and Food Pantry / 4:00–6:30 PM • Dinner and Food Pantry • Social Hall
- **Acting Class** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **NA/Village Spiritual Workshop** – 6:30–7:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom

Church Office closed December 26–27 – Open for 12-step programs.

Tuesdays

- **Alateen** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **AA/Artists in Recovery** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **AA/Step Meeting** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Al-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • Community Room
- **AA/Closed Discussion** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Wednesdays

- **Art & Soul** – DEC 7 – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Pub Theology** – DEC 14 – 7:00–8:30 PM • Jimmy's No. 43, 43 E. 7th
- **Advent Exhibit Opening** – DEC 21 – 6:00 PM • Social Hall
- **A Mosaic Christmas** – DEC 21 – 7:00 PM • Sanctuary • \$20 donation
- **Meditation on the Lower East Side** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Parlor
- **NA/Our Whole Lives Ahead of Us** – 7:30–8:45 PM • 4th Floor

Thursdays

- **Debtors Anonymous** – 12:30–1:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Creative Writing** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **JJ Gospel Choir Rehearsal** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Community Room
- **Al-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio

Fridays

- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services** – DEC 2, 16 – 6:30–8:30 PM • Social Hall
- **NA/It's About Change** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **AA/Young and Wise Group** – 8:00–9:00 PM • Community Room
- **NA/Finally Found a Home** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Saturdays

- **NA/Meat and Potatoes** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** – DEC 24 – 7:00–8:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **AA/Beginners** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **AA/Open Discussion** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **NA/SRA** – 8:00–9:30 PM • 5th Floor Parlor
- **AA/Closed Discussion** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** – DEC 24 – 9:00–10:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP** – DEC 24 – 11:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **JAZZY NEW YEAR WORSHIP** – DEC 31 – 6:00–7:00 PM • Sanctuary



Middle Collegiate Church

50 East 7th Street • New York, NY 10003



SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Complete the Dream

JANUARY 6–8, 2017

Register at bit.ly/CompletereDream • Deadline DEC. 4

Gift to Give Sunday: Powered by Love

December 18, 2016

You are Revolutionary Love. You are powering love! Your generosity will help us meet our mid-year goal of \$316,250 (55%) by December 31.

Please consider making a year-end donation in worship on December 18 or online by December 31.

middlechurch.org/connect/donate



Middle Collegiate Church

welcoming • artistic • inclusive • bold

Rev. Jacqueline J. Lewis, Ph.D., Senior Minister

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New York, NY 10003

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EMAIL middleinfo@middlechurch.org

FOLLOW US! facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch

twitter.com/middlechurch

youtube.com/MiddleNYC

Middle Collegiate Church is a celebrating, culturally diverse, inclusive, and growing community of faith where all persons are welcomed just as they are as they come through the door. Rooted in Christian tradition as the oldest continuous Protestant Church in North America, Middle Church is called by God to boldly do a new thing on the earth.

As a teaching congregation that celebrates the arts, our ministries include rich and meaningful worship, care, and education that nurture the mind, body, and spirit, social action which embraces the global community, and participation in interfaith dialogue for the purpose of justice and reconciliation.

Care Line For pastoral care emergencies, call **212-477-0666 EXT 318** to leave your urgent message in the Pastoral Care Mailbox. A Middle Church pastor will return your call as soon as she or he is able. Only Middle pastors have access to the Pastoral Care Mailbox. All messages are treated confidentially.