



middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church

FEBRUARY 2018

Celebration! Worship
Sundays at 9:30 AM
and 11:45 AM

Watch live at 11:45 AM on
middlechurch.org or Facebook

FEBRUARY 4 **Black History Month** "...No Ways Tired"

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Isaiah 40.21-31
Middle Church Choir
Communion

FEBRUARY 11 **Black History Month** **Transfiguration Sunday** "Mountain Top Moments"

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Mark 9.2-9
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Special Music by
Tituss Burgess

FEBRUARY 18 **First Sunday of Lent** "Close Encounters of the Holy Kind"

Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Mark 1.9-15
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Village Chorus for Children
and Youth

FEBRUARY 25 **Second Sunday of Lent** "Race Matters"

Amo Ngoepe and
Gloria Moy, homilies
Genesis 17.1-7, 15-16
Middle Church Choir
Rod Rogers Dance

Ash Wednesday **Worship at 7:00 PM**

FEBRUARY 14
Begin the Lenten season
with your Middle family at a
worship featuring music and
reflection

Rob Stephens, preacher
In-the-Middle Choir
Allison Sniffin, organist
Communion
Ashes

Can You See It?

Dear Middle Family:

Friends, our nation needs a course correction, so we can fully and finally realize our dream of liberty and justice for all. So we can live and flourish in God's Dream. There are lots of ways to talk about this, but the earliest followers of Jesus called it Love.

Though faith, hope, and love were all incredible gifts, they declared that love was the greatest. They said it was impossible to love an unseen God and hate a neighbor right in front of them. They asserted that God is love and those who abide in love abide in God and God abides in them. And that there is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear.

America has a fear problem. We fear that those whom we do not understand are fundamentally different than we are, and, therefore, threaten our way of life. We fear that well-being is a zero-sum game in which the sharing of power puts our survival at risk. These fears must be dismantled with light. This hatred must be driven out with love. These lies must be dispelled with the truth.

The truth is our vulnerability, is our strength. Our yearning for connection is what makes us uniquely human. There are more than enough resources for each of us to not only survive but to thrive. We are inextricably connected one to the other, and connection is the power we have to heal ourselves and our world.

We know this truth as well: We stand on the shoulders of people who have struggled, failed, and forged new wisdom; people who have been tested by disappointment and disaster; and what they have left us is confidence. We know how to help our neighbors in need, to save each other in times of trial. We know how to stand up for those who are left behind, to protest and march and lobby until laws and structures are changed.

And so as we turn our faces toward February, toward African American History Month and the celebration of the Lunar New Year; as we turn our hearts toward a day set aside to celebrate love, let us love like revolutionaries.

Revolutionary love sees each human being as a beautiful creation, capable of amazing acts of kindness and justice, designed to partner with God to complete God's dream. Revolutionary love understands political upheaval as birthing pains, as the universe pushes the creation toward Shalom. Revolutionary love is empathic; it binds us together. It means when a child is hungry in Haiti or Hell's Kitchen, my stomach growsl.

Our staff and Consistory have been listening to you, trying to see what you see for our future. And this is the vision statement we created to guide us in these next years:

Middle Collegiate Church Vision Statement

Middle Collegiate Church is a multicultural, multiethnic, intergenerational movement of Spirit and justice, powered by Revolutionary Love, with room for all. Following in the Way of Jesus' radical love, and inspired by the prophets, Middle Church is called by God to do a bold new thing on the earth. We aim to heal the soul and the world by dismantling racist, classist, sexist, and homophobic systems of oppression.

Because our God is still speaking in many languages, we work in interreligious partnerships to uproot injustice, eradicate poverty, care for the brokenhearted, and build the Reign of God on earth. This activism is fueled by our faith; our faith is expressed in art; our art is an active prayer connecting us with the Holy Spirit. We affirm the transformative power of moral imagination, reclaiming and reframing Christianity inside our walls, on the street, and in virtual spaces around the globe.

Can you see it? If we can see it, we can do it.

*In Revolutionary Love,
Jacqui*





Middle congregants participated in the New York City Women's March on January 20. We sang songs like "Rich Man's House," "Woke Up this Morning with My Mind Stayed on Freedom," "Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land," and "Over My Head," and took the spirit of Middle Church and our hunger for justice to the streets. It was fun to see the joy and the dance that the music evoked from those near us.



Jacqui Lewis interviewed civil rights legend, Ruby Sales, at our annual King Sunday teach-in. Watch the video and hear Ruby Sales' wisdom on our Facebook page: bit.ly/RubySales-JacquiLewis



You can experience Middle Church worship online each week. Listen to the **audio podcast** of the entire worship each week on our website: middlechurch.org/about/blogs/middle-church-celebrations. Watch **video of the entire worship** in the video section of our Facebook page. View **songs and sermons** at YouTube.com/MiddleChurch. Please follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to stay connected throughout the week.

A Rock in a Weary Land: A Concert Celebrating African-American Spirituals

Sunday, February 4 • 2:30–3:45 PM • Sanctuary

Join the Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir, the Middle Church Choir, and the In-the-Middle Choir as we begin Black History Month with music that roots us in our faith, nourishes our soul, and calls us to act. \$20 suggested admission. **Reserve at <http://bit.ly/Spirituals-MC>**

Middle Literary Magazine Needs You!

Submit your writing and/or art to our 7th annual Literary Magazine! The theme will be "Complete the Dream: Finish and Start." 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 4.**

New Member Orientation

Sundays, February 11, 18 • 10:50–11:40 AM • Conference Rm

Whether you worship at 9:30 or 11:45, join Jacqui and Rob for a special two-part New Member Orientation between the two morning worship celebrations. New members will be welcomed

at both worship celebrations on February 18. For more info and to RSVP, contact Rob at rstephens@middlechurch.org. Stay tuned for a new date for a special New Member Mini-Retreat!

New Adventures

Thursday, February 15 • 2:00–3:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Whether you're retired, semi-retired, between jobs, or just have Thursday afternoons free and want to share time with new friends, New Adventures is for you! For information or to RSVP, contact Rob at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Youth Movie Night: *Black Panther*

Thursday, February 15 • 5:30–10:15 PM

Middle school and high school students are invited to see *Black Panther* in theaters on opening night! (Midwinter Recess begins the next day.) Tickets are limited, so participants are encouraged to turn in payment plus completed parent/guardian permission slip to guarantee their spot. \$10 covers reserved movie ticket and dinner at Middle Church before we head to the theater. **For more information or to RSVP, contact Marte at msamuelstuen@middlechurch.org.**

Bible in the Middle: Lenten Small Groups

Sundays, February 18–March 25 • 10:50–11:40 AM

Join small group discussions on readings from the Bible and selections from the writings of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the launch of the Poor People's Campaign in 1968. Various groups will meet throughout the church building. For more info and to RSVP, contact Rob at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Lenten "Sacred Presence" Bible Study

Sundays, February 18–March 25 • 11:45 AM–1:00 PM • 4th Fl

Experience the season of Lent grounded in scripture. The Lenten "Sacred Presence" Bible study will meet for prayer and reflection on Biblical texts. We will reflect on short passages using a distinct listening process that helps to focus our attention. We will then listen to our inner response, journal, and share with the group. In this way, together, we will receive insights into our lives in these times. Led by Middle member Catherine Torpey, an ordained minister. RSVP to Rob at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Just Faith: A Lenten Bible Study of Mark

Wednesdays, February 21–March 28 • 7:00–8:30 PM • 4th Fl

Join Minister Rob Stephens and Rev. Hershey Mallette Stephens for a journey through Lent in the Gospel of Mark, which is full of questions about who Jesus is to the disciples and the community. We will consider who Jesus is in times like these, and where we see Jesus at work in our lives and the world. The Bible Study is a open to people of all faith traditions, and those without a faith tradition. Reading the Bible in community is a wonderful way to walk through Lent—watch for ways to participate online. RSVP to Rob at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Revolutionary Love: Complete the Dream

Friday, April 6–Sunday, April 8 at Middle Church

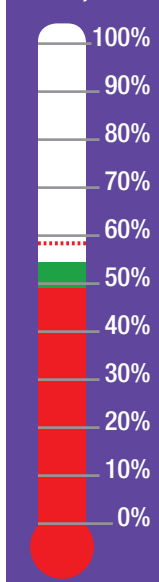
Join us as we strategize across generations at our annual conference, "Revolutionary Love: Complete the Dream." Confirmed speakers include William J. Barber II, Traci Blackmon, Simone Campbell, Mark Charles, Stosh Cotler, Miguel De La Torre, Valarie Kaur, Brian McLaren, Otis Moss III, Parker Palmer, Joerg Rieger, Ruby Sales, Linda Sarsour, and angel Kyodo Williams. **Register at bit.ly/Rev-Love2018.** Choose 1 General Admission ticket. Then, in the top right, click "Enter Promotional Code." **Enter the code Middle2018 to receive special discount rate of \$100 per ticket.**

Partnership Update

Together, we are building a movement toward God's dream for a healed, whole, and just world. We have an offering goal of \$625,000 for July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. **As of this writing, you have given \$304,716.36—48.75% of our goal at 58% of the program year—and we have pledged for 7% more.**

Donate now—visit bit.ly/power-love. For your convenience, consider creating a recurring weekly donation.

**GOAL FY 2017
\$625,000**



February

Check middlechurch.org for full details of all events.

Sundays

- **Wee Care** (under age 4) – 8:30 AM–2:30 PM • 3rd Floor Nursery
- **Family Room** (Grades K–5) – 8:30–9:30 AM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **CELEBRATION! WORSHIP** – 9:30–10:45 AM • Sanctuary
- **BRUNCH in the Middle** – 10:50–11:40 AM • Social Hall
- **BIBLE in the Middle** (Adult Ed) – 10:50–11:40 AM • 4th Floor Studio
- **KIDS in the Middle** – 10:50–11:40 AM • Grades K–5 – 3rd Floor Studio
- **YOUTH in the Middle** (Gr. 6–12) – 10:50–11:40 AM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **CELEBRATION! WORSHIP** – 11:45 AM–1:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **Lenten "Sacred Presence" Bible Study** (Adult Ed) – FEB 18, 25 – 11:45 AM–1:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Family Room** (Grades K–5) – 1:00–2:30 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Village Chorus for Children & Youth** (Ages 6–17) – 1:15–2:30 PM
- **Moms in the Middle** – FEB 4 – 1:15–2:30 PM • Parlor
- **Dads in the Middle** – FEB 4 – 1:15–2:30 PM • Conference Room
- **Young Adults Small Group** – FEB 4 – 1:15–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **In-the-Middle Choir Rehearsal** – FEB 11 – 1:15–1:45 PM • Parlor
- **A ROCK IN A WEARY LAND: A Concert Celebrating African American Spirituals** – FEB 4 – 2:30–3:45 PM • Sanctuary
- **AA/Big Book Meeting** – 4:00–5:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Monday

- **Momentum Meal** – Lunch 11:30 AM–1:00 PM / Dinner 5:30–6:30 PM • Social Hall
- **Acting Class** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **In-the-Middle Choir Rehearsal** – FEB 12 – 6:00–9:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **NA/Village Spiritual Workshop** – 6:30–7:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Meditation on the Lower East Side** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Parlor
- **The Church Office will be closed February 19 for Presidents' Day.**

Tuesdays

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

Wednesdays

- **Jam Session** – FEB 7 – 7:00–8:30 PM • Social Hall
- **In-the-Middle Choir Rehearsal** – FEB 14 – 5:30–6:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP** – FEB 14 – 7:00–8:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **Just Faith: A Lenten Bible Study of Mark** – FEB 21, 28 – 7:00–8:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Thursdays

- **New Adventures** – FEB 15 – 2:00–3:30 PM • Parlor
- **Creative Writing** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **JJ Gospel Choir Rehearsal** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Community Room
- **AI-Anon/East Village Topics** – 7:30–8:45 PM • 3rd Floor Studio

Fridays

- **Annual Spiritual Retreat: Transformation From the Inside Out** – FEB 23–25 – 6:00 PM – Offsite – Registered participants should meet at Sanctuary at 6:00 PM. The bus will depart promptly at 6:30 PM and will return to Middle Church on Sunday, February 25 at about 5:00 PM.
- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services** – FEB 2, 16 – 6:30–8:30 PM • Social Hall
- **NA/It's About Change** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **NA/Finally Found a Home** – 8:00–9:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Saturdays

- **AA/Beginners** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **AA/Open Discussion** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **AA/Closed Discussion** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio



Middle Collegiate Church

50 East 7th Street • New York, NY 10003

REVOLUTIONARY LOVE



William Barber

Jacqui Lewis

Brian McLaren

Valarie Kaur

Otis Moss III

Ruby Sales

Complete the Dream | April 6-8, 2018 (NYC)

Register at bit.ly/RevLove2018



Middle Collegiate Church

welcoming • artistic • inclusive • bold

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

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Care Line In case of pastoral emergency, please leave a message at our Pastoral Care line, **212-477-0666, ext. 318**. Your call is confidential.
In case of medical emergency, please call 911.