



middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church

MARCH 2017

Celebration! Worship
Sundays at 11:15 AM

Watch live on middlechurch.org

MARCH 5

Women's History Month

"It's Not Her Fault!"

Jacqui Lewis, preacher

Genesis 2.15–17; 3.1–7

Middle Church Choir

In-the-Middle Choir

Communion

MARCH 12

Women's History Month

"On Sheep"

Lynn Min, preacher

Psalm 23

Middle Church Choir

Jerriese Johnson

Gospel Choir

MARCH 19

Women's History Month

"Close Encounters of the
Transforming Kind"

Robin Stillwater and

Joe Tolbert, preachers

John 4.5–42

Middle Church Choir

New Members Welcomed

MARCH 26

Women's History Month

"Born Again?"

Jacqui Lewis, preacher

John 3.1–17

Middle Church Choir

Jerriese Johnson

Gospel Choir

*Each Sunday in
March we will honor
the special gifts
of women in our
community.*

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

MARCH 1

We start our Lenten journey together with the In-the-Middle Choir and reflections from Jacqui Lewis.

Honoring Women—Every Day

I have mixed feelings about a month to celebrate women. Every day, we should celebrate women!! Women make the world go around. There would be no civilization, no people, if there were no women. Giving birth, nursing, nurturing, growing, leading, guiding, training, raising, chastising, encouraging, holding, shaping.

I love women's special ways of being! Alice Walker coined the term *womanist* to describe a "black feminist or feminist of color." She says womanist behavior is "outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful..." A womanist "appreciates and prefers woman's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter,) and a woman's strength."

I was raised by a womanist woman, who was raised by a womanist woman. Ma'dear—Mommy's mommy—was fierce, big-boned, beautiful, smart and as strong as her 12 brothers. When her mother died, she cared for her brothers, all but three older than her. Then she courageously raised three children—two girls and a boy—working as a sharecropper and a nurse's aid. She was audacious in her expectations that they would survive Mississippi, and they did. They survived and thrived.

Mommy is a brilliant, warm, loving, outrageously funny and generous woman. Though she did not go to college (working instead to send her little sister), she nurtured in six children a passion for reading and learning; she tutored us, encouraged us, and stood up



for us in a sometimes unfriendly world. She taught us to love fiercely, to forgive often, to listen carefully, and to tell the truth, all of the time.

Mommy has been fighting Stage IV lung cancer for almost seven years now. She is resilient, she is still here. Mommy is amazing!

I honor my mom this month, and every day, for her impact on my life. I honor the many women in my life—teachers, professors, mentors, friends, colleagues, congregants, artists and authors—who taught me that my womanhood is a gift to myself and to the planet.

We will celebrate women this month at Middle Church with special programming, including a concert on Sunday, March 5, and special guests.

Honoring women every day means standing up for women, standing with women. This means standing in for our rights to earn at least what men do for doing the same job. To have our bodies honored rather than objectified. To make reproductive decisions for ourselves in conversation with partners and in our spiritual communities.

Stay tuned to what strong women are doing by following the ongoing Women's March on twitter @womensmarch. And stay tuned for Wednesday, March 8 for a General Strike: A Day Without a Woman.

Here's to the amazing ways of women. Excuse me for saying it this way, but you are bad-ass!

Love,
Jacqui

Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis is Senior Minister at Middle Collegiate Church.

Bléatrice de Géa

Middle Singles Mingle

Saturday, March 4 • 3:00-6:00 PM • Social Hall

Looking to get boo'd up or maybe just looking for a binge-watching buddy? Either way you're invited to join us for our first Middle Singles Mingle. An afternoon of music and munchies, fun and games, hosted by Middle's own Darren Major (so you know the vibe's going to be sassy but the mood will be light.) Whether you identify as bi or trans, gay or straight, male or female or labels aren't really your thing. Millennial or "mature." All are welcome. **Please RSVP at bit.ly/middlesingles.** Suggested admission is \$10.

A Concert for Women's History Month

Sunday, March 5 • 2:30-3:30 PM • Sanctuary

Celebrate Women's History Month at this special concert with the women of Middle. From gospel and classical to Celtic and pop, this music will touch your heart and get you on your feet. Performers and groups include women of the Middle Church Choir, women of the Jerries Johnson Gospel Choir, women of the ITMC Choir, Rising Sun, Aherne Sheehan School of Irish Dance, Manhattan Girls Chorus, Rebecca King, Elizabeth Stanley, Sheila Moses, Sarah Griffiths, Allison Sniffin, Dionne McClain-Freeney, BAASSIK, Bernice Brooks, and Lynn Min. Admission is free.

Lenten Bible Study

Sundays, March 5-April 9 • 9:30-10:45 AM • Parlor

Experience the season of Lent grounded in scripture. The Middle Church Lenten "Sacred Presence" Bible study will meet for prayer and reflection using the Gospel According to Luke as our text. 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, write in a journal, and share with the group. As we journey together, we hope the Gospel writings will open up and perhaps give us insights into our lives in these times.

Participants may attend all sessions, or drop in as you are able. The Bible Study is led by Middle members Catherine Torpey, an ordained minister, and Susanna Williams. **To RSVP, contact Rob Stephens at rstephens@middlechurch.org.**



Jacqui Lewis moderated a passionate discussion on race with Van Jones (CNN), Traban Shorters (BMe Community), Aunjanue Ellis (actress and activist), and Anurag Gupta (BeMore America and Middle member) at NYU's Reynolds Program for Social Entrepreneurship in February. Middle member Genesis Be and award-winning musician Ebonie Smith also performed. Watch and share the video: http://www.nyu.edu/reynolds/speaker_series/livestream.html



A mural made by children at the January Interfaith Play Date.

Interfaith Play Date

Sunday, March 19 • 1:30-3:30 PM • Middle Church

Children in Kindergarten to Grade 5 from our neighborhood mosque, synagogues and churches are invited to Middle Church to create art, play, and eat together. Our children's relationships and experiences with kids of all faiths is central in this time.

Kids from the Bhakti Center, Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection, Catholic Worker, Madina Masjid, Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, Shul of New York, Sixth Street Community Synagogue, and Town and Village Synagogue will participate at this second gathering. RSVP by March 17 to Marte Samuelstuen (Interim Director for Children, Youth, and Young Adults) at msamuelstuen@middlechurch.org.

Mosaic Concert Series: To Benefit Women

Monday, March 27 • 7:00-8:30 PM • Reception to Follow

What art and beauty will we create from the places where we feel broken? How can we bring the most marginalized to the center and create spaces where Women's Lives, Black Lives, Muslim Lives, and LGBT Lives are all sacred?

Our next Mosaic will celebrate Women. Broadway actors and professional singers will donate their gifts to raise money for the organization Women, Action and the Media (WAM!). WAM! brings together feminists dedicated to taking action and using the media to get their messages across in a way that makes a difference. Executive Director and national speaker, Jamia Wilson will also offer an inspiring talk at the event. \$20 Suggested donation. RSVP at <http://bit.ly/MarchMosaic>.

What is Mosaic? After the election, Middle member and actor Matthew Johnson Harris felt called to create a concert series to raise money for groups marginalized by current politics. Since November, Mosaic concerts have raised more than \$3,000 to benefit LGBT youth, Muslims, and the Black Lives Matter movements. Even if you can't attend, please consider donating. This is a sliding scale event—please donate what you are able.

Get Connected at Middle

Sing in the gospel choir, volunteer for a food ministry, or join a community of artists working together for social justice. Study with a group, lead a class, or just spend time being with others on a spiritual journey.

EVERY SUNDAY

Wee Care (under age 4) • The Ark (Grades K–6) *except first Sundays* • Chat & Chew • The Breakfast Club (Grades 7–12) • Lenten Bible Study • Adult Education: Reading the Bible from the Middle

SUNDAY SMALL GROUPS

Erasing Racism • Praying Dangerously • Money Talks • Moms in the Middle • New Member Gatherings

MIDWEEK EVENTS

Acting Class • Book Club • Creative Writing • Mosaic • Pub Theology • Middle Out Loud • Middle Singles Mingle • Harlem Meetup

SING WITH MIDDLE

Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir • In-the-Middle Choir • Freedom School Village Chorus for Children and Youth (Ages 6–14)

OUTREACH/VOLUNTEER

Butterfly—*Returns on Easter!* • Chat & Chew • Ushers & Greeters • Sanctuary Preparation • Momentum Meals and Food Pantry • Office Administration • MiddlePrays • Middle Cares Greeting Card Squad

For more information, contact Lynn Min at linmin@middlechurch.org or 212-477-0666 ext 307

For the latest schedule, visit middlechurch.org

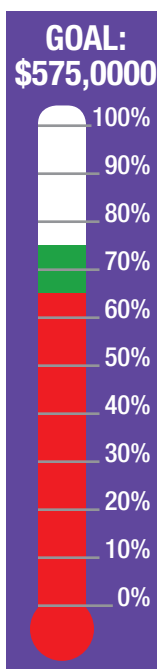
Partnership Update

You are so power-full, Middle Family. The events in this newsletter? YOU made them happen! Please continue to support our programs with your body, soul, and funds!

Our congregational budget reflects God's dream for racial, LGBTQ, and economic justice. We have from now until June 30 to raise the remaining funds to meet our \$575,000 goal. Will you help us complete the dream? At this writing, **we have raised \$368,331**—64% of our goal—and **we have pledges for 10% more.**

- **Donate now**—visit bit.ly/power-love
- **Make your pledge to Revolutionary Love**—visit bit.ly/RevLovePledge

Your may also send your donation in the envelope provided. Please consider a pledge today.



March

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
- **Lenten Bible Study** – 9:30–10:45 AM • Parlor
- **In-the-Middle Choir** – **MAR 5** – 10:00–10:45 AM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Family Breakfast** – **MAR 5** – 10:00–11:00 AM • 4th Floor Studio
- **The Breakfast Club** (Gr. 7–12) – 10:00–11:00 AM • Offsite
- **CELEBRATION! WORSHIP** – 11:15 AM–12:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **The Ark** (Gr. K–6) – 11:30–12:30 PM • 3rd Floor • *except first Sundays*
- **Chat & Chew** – 12:30 PM • Social Hall
- **Family Room** (All Ages) – 12:30–2:30 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Village Chorus** (Ages 6–14) – 1:00–2:30 PM • Community Room
- **New Member Orientation** – **MAR 12** – 1:00–3:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Reading the Bible from the Middle** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Erasing Racism** – **MAR 5** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Praying Dangerously** – **MAR 5** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Money Talks** – **MAR 19** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Moms in the Middle** – **MAR 19** – 1:30–2:30 PM • Parlor
- **Interfaith Play Date** – **MAR 19** – 1:30–3:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Women's History Month Concert** – **MAR 5** – 2:30–3:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **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
- **Middle Consistory Meeting** – **MAR 20** – 6:30–8:30 PM • Parlor
- **Mosaic** – **MAR 27** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Sanctuary • \$20 donation

Tuesdays

- **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

- **ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP** – **MAR 1** – 7:00–8:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **Harlem Peeps Meetup** – **MAR 8** – 6:30–9:00 PM • RSVP to Allison Mickelson at amickelson@middlechurch.org for more information.
- **Pub Theology** – **MAR 29** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Jimmy's No. 43, 43 E. 7th
- **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 Studio

Thursdays

- **Creative Writing** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **JJ Gospel Choir Rehearsal** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Community Room
- **Faith & Justice Film Series** – **MAR 30** – 7:00–9:00 PM • Social Hall
- **Al-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio

Fridays

- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services** – **MAR 3, 17** – 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

- **Middle Singles Mingle** – **MAR 4** – 3:00–6:00 PM • Social Hall
- **NA/Meat and Potatoes** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **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



Jacqui Lewis



Brian McLaren



Traci Blackmon



Miguel De La Torre



William Barber



Valarie Kaur

Disruptive Ethics to Dismantle Racism • April 28–30, 2017 at Middle Church
Register at bit.ly/RevLove2017 • Use code MCC2017 for the Middle rate of \$100



Middle Collegiate Church

welcoming • artistic • inclusive • bold

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

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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.