



middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church

FEBRUARY 2017

Celebration! Worship
Sundays at 11:15 AM

Watch live on middlechurch.org

FEBRUARY 5
Black History Month

“Shout Out Loud”
Jim Kast-Keat and
Rod Rodgers Dance,
preachers
Isaiah 58.1-9
Middle Church Choir
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Communion

FEBRUARY 12
Black History Month

“Blessed, Salt and Light”
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Matthew 5.3-16
Special music from
Matthew Johnson
Harris, John Del Cueto,
Allison Mickelson, and
Tami Petty

FEBRUARY 19
Black History Month

“Here Is What You
MUST Do...?”
Jacqui Lewis and
Rob Stephens, preachers
Leviticus 19.1-2, 9-18
Middle Church Choir
In-the-Middle Choir

FEBRUARY 26
Black History Month

Transfiguration
“Spirit Move”
Village Chorus for
Children and Youth,
preachers
Exodus 24.12-18
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir

Ash Wednesday
Worship at 7:00 PM

MARCH 1

Begin the Lenten season
with your Middle family at a
worship featuring music and
reflection
In-the-Middle Choir
Allison Sniffin, organist
Communion
Ashes

Our History

It began in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, historian Carter G. Woodson and a pastor, Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). Their intention was to research and promote achievements by Black Americans and other people of African descent. The group sponsored a national Negro History Week in 1926, choosing the second week in February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. By the late 1960s, fueled in part by the Civil Rights Movement, the week had become a month.

Since 1976, the year I graduated high school, the Bicentennial year, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as National African American History Month. Then-President Gerald R. Ford called upon the public to “seize upon the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, take this month to honor the extraordinary contributions that people from the African diaspora have made to world history.

Middle Church will seize the opportunity to honor the accomplishments of African Americans in the month of February. We will because we know it is important to rehearse the stories, to retell the stories, to learn new stories.

Did you know that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded on February 12, 1909, the centennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln? Did you know that Rosa Parks was the second Black woman to stay on the bus, to refuse to give up her seat? That Claudette Colvin was arrested on March 2, 1955, nine months before Ms. Parks, for

refusing to give up her seat? That her testimony in a case called *Broder v. Gayle* helped lead a three-judge panel on June 13, 1956 to determine that the segregation laws for buses in Alabama were unconstitutional and that the U.S. Supreme Court held up their ruling in December of 1956?

We don’t know her story, because it was not publicized. She was a teenager—17 years old and reportedly carrying a married man’s baby in her womb. Some thought her an inappropriate symbol of the Civil Rights Movement. Ms. Colvin once said, “Young people think Rosa Parks just sat down on a bus and ended segregation, but that wasn’t the case at all.”

Did you know that when Trayvon Benjamin Martin was killed on February 26, 2012 in Sanford, Florida, he was only 17 years old? If Ms. Colvin’s life was pivotal in the movement for African American Civil Rights,

then Trayvon’s tragic, much-too-young death was pivotal in the movement for Black Lives. Jonathan Capehart wrote in a *Washington Post* article in February 2015, “If the grand jury decisions to not indict the police officers involved in the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner gave birth to the ‘black lives matter’ movement, then it was conceived in the early evening of Feb. 26, 2012, in Sanford, Fla.”

Middle will commemorate African American History Month, and reflect on the contributions of Black people, and the value of Black lives. Why? Because African American History is American History.

Let’s read, rehearse and remember.

Love,
Jacqui





Béatrice de Géa

Dear Middle Family,

This last year brought me many life changes and opportunities. And as with any big shifts in my life, I talked with Jacqui and my other mentors. What did they see in me and what possibilities exist for ways I can continue to lean into my gifts and call?



Béatrice de Géa

Through these questions and conversations, hypotheticals became new possibilities. I was offered to be the Associate Minister of Digital Strategies and Online Engagement at The Riverside Church. This will allow me to focus deeply on my passion for online content and virtual space—a space about which I dream.

My last Sunday at Middle Church will be Sunday, February 19. I'm eager to connect with you as I can between now and then. And on Sunday, February 5 at 2:30 PM, I look forward to a party with you and our little people.

These three and a half years at Middle have been the most exhilarating and innovative of my ministry. It has been my honor and privilege to be a pastor in this amazing community. There is no place like Middle. And I will take Middle's love and justice and infectious energy with me wherever I go.

Warmly,
Jim

Middle Church Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 5 • 12:30 PM • Sanctuary

Thanks be to God on January 15, The Rev. Chad William Tanaka Pack was ordained as Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Reformed Church in America (RCA). Thank you for your prayers, support, and activism. It was a joyful, powerful, historic moment in our history and in the history of the Collegiate Church.

Getting Chad ordained was not without conflict. In the end, the majority of the Classis of New York was supportive of Chad's ordination, as were many in the denomination. "The New York Classis is actually very diverse in its views, especially around LGBTQ people in ministry. To be able to walk into that room and be affirmed by this diverse body of people was very humbling, awe-inspiring and beautiful," Chad shared. But denominational leadership—some of those who were in power to bless his ordination—simply could not and did not. In fact, they resisted.

For its affirmation of the ordination of openly LGBTQ candidates and other areas of aligned ministry, the Collegiate Church is ready now to add an affiliation—with the United Church of Christ (UCC). We will keep our relationship with the RCA at this time (we founded this denomination) but this step will allow us to move quickly into a space to celebrate our LGBTQ family, even as we look to the long term.

Join us Sunday, February 5, immediately after worship for a Congregational Meeting to share more about where we are on denominational affiliation with the UCC and to officially vote to make this decision. We want to hear from you, so please plan to come!



Béatrice de Géa



Angie Dykshorn

On January 21, 2017, Middle Church congregants marched both in the Women's March in Washington, D.C. and in New York City. As people of faith we are called to love, justice, and compassion. We stand with our women, refugee, Muslim, LGBTQ, Black Lives, and immigrant sisters and brothers. Your offerings subsidized the cost of our bus to DC—you make justice happen!





Kelly Smith

February

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** – FEB 19 – 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
- **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** – FEB 5 – 12:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **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
- **Reading the Bible from the Middle** – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Erasing Racism** – FEB 5 – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Praying Dangerously** – FEB 5 – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Children and Youth Party: Celebrating Jim** – FEB 5 – 2:30–4:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Money Talks** – FEB 19 – 1:30–2:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **Mothers & Spirituality** – FEB 19 – 1:30–2:30 PM • Parlor
- **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** – JAN 23 – 6:30–8:30 PM • Parlor

**Church Office and Building closed
on February 20 for President's Day.**

Tuesdays

- **AA/Artists in Recovery** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **AA/Step Meeting** – 7:00–8:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Mardi Gras ZUMBA Fundraiser with Allison Mickelson and Matthew Johnson Harris** – FEB 28 – 6:30–7:30 PM • Social Hall
- **AI-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • Community Room
- **AA/Closed Discussion** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Wednesdays

- **Pub Theology** – FEB 22 – 7:00–8:30 PM • Jimmy's No. 43, 43 E. 7th
- **ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP** – MAR 1 – 7:00–8:00 PM • Sanctuary
- **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

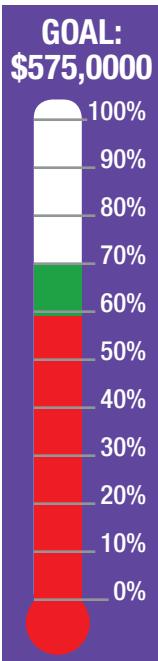
- **Creative Writing** – 6:30–8:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio
- **JJ Gospel Choir Rehearsal** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Community Room
- **AI-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • 3rd Floor Studio

Fridays

- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services** – FEB 3, 17 – 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** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Saturdays

- **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/Young and Wise Group** – 8:00–9:00 PM • Community Room
- **AA/Closed Discussion** – 8:30–9:30 PM • 4th Floor Studio



On January 8, 2017, Middle children and staff attended an interfaith play date at the Madina Masjid on East 11th Street.

Our children played and learned with children from the mosque, joined by children from Sixth Street Community Synagogue, St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, Town and Village Synagogue, Islamic Council of America, and Catholic Worker. Middle children will continue to attend interfaith play dates in the months ahead, learning about one another and making connections across differences—Revolutionary Love in action!

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.

Middle Singles Mingle

Watch for the date on a Saturday in March • 3:00–6:00 PM

Gay, Straight, Bi, whatever—are all welcome to this fun-filled afternoon of activities that provide opportunities for new friendships and love! Singles from the whole Collegiate Church family are invited. Be sure to invite your single friends. Elizabeth Ziff of the band, BETTY, will be our DJ for dancing. Beverages and munchies will be provided. \$10 donation.

Partnership Update

WE DID IT! We made our December 31 offering goal and raised 55% of our goal for the year. **YOU** powered #RevolutionaryLove! You made it happen. Thank you.

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 \$337,020**—58% of our goal—and **we have pledges for 12% more**.

- **Donate now—visit bit.ly/power-love**
- **Make your pledge by February 14—visit bit.ly/RevLovePledge**

Your may also make your pledge on the form enclosed and return it in the envelope provided. Please consider a pledge today.



Middle Collegiate Church

50 East 7th Street • New York, NY 10003

REVOLUTIONARY LOVE



Jacqui Lewis



Brian McLaren



Valarie Kaur



William Barber

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.