



middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church

MAY 2018

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

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

MAY 6
**Asian Pacific American
Heritage Month**
David Kyuman Kim, preacher
John 15.9–17
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Rising Sun
Fan Dance by Kashimi Asai
Communion

MAY 13
Mother's Day
Derrick Harkins, preacher
Psalm 1
Middle Church Choir

MAY 20
Pentecost
“The Pentecost Paradigm”
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Acts 2.1–13
Baptisms
Middle Church Choir
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir
Village Chorus for
Children and Youth

MAY 27
Memorial Day
“I'm Here; Send Me”
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Isaiah 6.1–8
In-the-Middle Choir

Book Launch! *The Pentecost Paradigm*

Sunday, May 20 at 1:15 PM

You are invited to celebrate
the publication of a new
book by Jacqui Lewis and
John Janka

*The Pentecost Paradigm:
Ten Strategies for Becoming
a Multiracial Congregation*

Reading and Q&A
in the Sanctuary

Refreshments to follow
in the Social Hall

Dream. Pray. Act.

If you really look closely, you can see the fatigue around the edges of the staff. Holy Week, Easter, and the Revolutionary Love Conference was quite a bit to do in two weeks' time. But we did it! And though we are tired, we are thrilled with what we all—you, our staff, and our partners—did together. Thank you for your part in it!

Holy Week was tender. Easter was joyful, with some 1,200 people joining us in the building and online, celebrating the power of new life.

And the conference? More than 500 people came to what has been called the best conference ever. More than 400,000 total clicks into the livestream! Why? Because people think Middle Church is doing a special and bold thing in the world. They want to convene around the thing, around Revolutionary Love; and they think we know how to do it!!

Working at Middle Church? Hosting that gathering? Working with our team? Partnering across faiths to heal souls and the world? This is my dream come true. I work hard to support it, and John and I make a significant gift each year to make it happen.

As a young enslaved African, Harriet Tubman, who was known as Minty, survived a head wound that should have killed her. One symptom of the wound was the need for spontaneous deep sleep; in those moments, she would dream routes to freedom. She dreamed of liberation and her dreams came true for 300 souls. She took risks, she spent her capital, and she put her body on the line to make them free.

If we are dreaming of liberating God's people, we'll have to take risks, Middle Family. It takes hard work and we will be tired sometimes.

And liberation—this movement for love and justice—it takes money. I know that these times can make us want to hunker down and turn inward in order to survive. But we are connected. I don't survive without you; they won't survive without us.

Friends, we are behind on our offering goal. If we don't meet our offering goal by June 30,

we are signaling to our Collegiate partners that though we talk of love and justice, we can't fund it. Though we talk of bold, revolutionary love, we don't believe strongly enough to support it. And if we don't make it, we will have to make cuts for next year. We'll have to assume that we can't afford our amazing programming, worship, and justice works and we'll have to let something go.

You've noticed we are talking more about money. We are talking about money because we need some! As you recall, the Collegiate Church did major capital improvement projects at its four churches in recent years. To pay for ours, our Collegiate funding has been reduced by \$30,000 each year. In addition, each ministry has been asked to make funding 50 percent of its budget an urgent goal. This is our way of partnering in the creation of our new safe, accessible buildings.

At the time this was announced, Middle was funding 20 percent of its ministry. We have increased year by year, and currently are funding 37 percent of our budget—that is AMAZING! But we are not on track to make this year's offering goal. It is imperative that we meet the goal of \$625,000 this year as we continue to lean into funding 50 percent by 2022. **As of this writing, we need about \$167,000 to meet the goal.**

So, my question for you is this: Is Middle Church the stuff of your dreams? Do you feel called to liberation? If so, the staff and I need you. We can't afford any bystanders. There is too much work to do and it is not free!

Please join me in prayer about the spiritual gift of generosity, about giving some of what God has given you—maybe a tenth of it—to support God's dream. To complete God's Dream.

In my dream, we're all making it happen. Showing up. Loving. Being generous.

Love you.
Need you. 



Thank you to the 500 participants and dedicated volunteers, and for your financial gifts that fueled this year's annual conference, Revolutionary Love: Complete the Dream, April 6-8.
Top: Jacqui Lewis, Debbie Almontaser, Simran Jeet Singh, and John Janka open the conference. Ani DiFranco inspires at the sold-out Concert for Freedom. Bottom: Middle's Team Puerto Rico presents to a packed house. Van Jones gets beyond the messy truth. Combined Middle choirs wow our guests during two amazing worship celebrations. Photo credit: Béatrice de Géa.



Second Avenue Street Fair

Saturday, May 5 • Noon–5:00 PM

Join us for our annual Second Avenue Street Fair! Children and families can enjoy activities like a bounce-house, bubble station, art projects, and more! Beginning at 1:00 PM, enjoy live music on the Middle Church stage featuring celebrated East Village musicians, including the Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir and Village Chorus for Children & Youth. It's an all-day party with Middle Church, filled with art, justice, and music!

Mosaic: A Celebration of Women

Sunday, May 6 • 2:30 PM • Sanctuary

Middle member Matthew Johnson Harris hosts a concert featuring fierce Broadway and pop singers and actors donating their talents to benefit the Women's March Youth, organizers of the national school walk outs for gun reform. \$20 tickets—reserve now at bit.ly/Mosaic-WMY.

New Adventures

Thursday, May 17 • 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.

Middle Gallery — “Divinity: Queer Icons”

Now through June 30 • Sanctuary

Middle Church is excited to host the installation “Divinity: Queer Icons” by Gabriel Garcia Roman through June 30 in the sanctuary. Visit gabrielgarciaroman.com/queer-icons-home/ to learn more about the artist and installation.

Now Available! Sunday Literary Magazine “Complete the Dream: Finish and Start”

The seventh issue of *Sunday*, Middle's very own literary and arts magazine, is now available for sale. The editors, Carol Wierzbicki and Harold Slazer, thank all the writers and artists who contributed their wonderful work! See Carol for a copy. Also check it out online at bit.ly/MC-Sunday.

Butterfly Meal Program Needs You!

Sundays, 9:30–10:30 AM; 11:45 AM–12:45 PM • Social Hall

Join us as we prepare bag lunches for distribution to the hungry in local parks! More hands and feet are always needed. Distribution begins at 1:00 PM. **For more information about volunteering, email Cheryl at ccochran@middlechurch.org.**

Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir Concert

Sunday, June 3 • 2:30 PM • Sanctuary

It wouldn't be June without a concert celebrating Middle's own Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir. Suggested Admission is \$20 for general seating. Pay what you can or donate generously.

Youth Service-Learning Trip in Philly

Sunday, July 1–Saturday, July 7

Students entering grades 7–12 in Fall 2018 are invited to participate in a week-long service-learning trip in Philadelphia. Broad Street Ministry will serve as our home base as we engage educational and provocative service experiences related to social justice issues surrounding stereotypes of the city, urban poverty, and marginalized communities. Must be registered by May 30. For info, email Marte at msamuelstuen@middlechurch.org.

The Power of Giving

BY DEACON LILA BOYER



I had an unhealthy relationship with Church, God, and money. In that order. Going to church as a child was like a punishment. I had to stay all day, be quite, be still, don't move and if I did any of those things, I got popped. God doesn't like me and I'm going to hell. At this point, I didn't care that much about God either.

I was given money to put in the basket at church. To be honest, the money didn't always make it there. I can't possibly give to the church and have candy, too! I don't have enough to give. I rationalized, "They don't need my money. Don't they have their own? I need my money more than they do!"

By the time I reached Middle Church in 2009, I was a hot mess. I brought all those issues with me. One Sunday, I noticed I had spent my whole Sunday morning and afternoon at Middle. There are small groups, Wee Care, concerts, congregational meetings, social hall gathering, marches, you name it—there's something for everyone. All in the name of seeing God's amazing Love Period. What was striking about this? I didn't want to leave, unlike in my childhood when I always wanted to leave.

Here at Middle the recurring theme is I'm awesomely and wonderfully made. Nothing can stop God from loving me. What a relief! I felt connected to the people and the message of Middle. I wasn't forced to stay. I made a personal decision to stay. Something was shifting; my spirit was being healed. I had a new outlook about Church and God. Do I dare say it? I was being transformed.

At the time, I was laid off from work and receiving unemployment. Spirit started moving and said, "Give." All of the old issues resurfaced. I exclaimed, "God, I'm on unemployment! Are you serious? My bills versus giving?"

We are reminded that there is a time to reap and a time to sow. By sowing into Middle I reaped so much more. I learned to give consistently on a monthly basis. It took some emotional and mental discipline. It was painful. I had to let go of my fear that I wouldn't have enough if I gave. I started small and steady. I began to notice a personal and spiritual shift.

As I began to give, I noticed that my self-esteem started to grow and I started trusting God more for Provision. The reciprocity of trust and faith between me and God is immeasurable. I can't out-give Her.

Our giving to Middle has a ripple effect like a pebble tossed on a body of water. We never know how people are going to be spiritually transformed as the ripples spread.

I'm asking you to take that same walk of faith and trust. Will you give on a recurring basis—monthly or weekly—and watch God's unwavering provision in your life?

Middle needs YOU to help us meet our June 30 offering goal!

Set up your recurring weekly donation now—
visit middlechurch.org/donate.

OR donate by texting "Amount" to 917-924-4666.

May

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
- **Butterfly Meal Prep 1** – 9:30–10:30 AM • Social Hall
- **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
- **Butterfly Meal Prep 2** – 11:45 AM–12:45 PM
- **Family Room** (Grades K–5) – 1:00–2:30 PM • 3rd Floor Studio
- **Butterfly Meal Distribution** – 1:00 PM • Meet in Social Hall
- **Village Chorus for Children & Youth** (Ages 6–17) – 1:15–2:30 PM
- **Moms in the Middle** – **MAY 6** – 1:15–2:30 PM • 5th Floor Parlor
- **Dads in the Middle** – **MAY 6** – 1:15–2:30 PM • Conference Room
- **Young Adults Small Group** – **MAY 6** – 1:15–2:30 PM • 4th Floor
- **MOSAIC Benefit Concert** – **MAY 6** – 2:30–3:30 PM • Sanctuary
- **Book Launch! The Pentecost Paradigm** – **MAY 20** – 1:15–2:30 PM • Sanctuary and Social Hall
- **In-the-Middle Choir Rehearsal** – **MAY 20** – 1:15–1:45 PM • 5th Floor Parlor
- **AA/Big Book Meeting** – 4:00–5:00 PM • 4th Floor Studio

Mondays

- **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
- **NA/Village Spiritual Workshop** – 6:30–7:30 PM • 4th Floor Classroom
- **Meditation on the Lower East Side** – 7:00–8:30 PM • 5th Floor Parlor

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, May 28 for Memorial 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

- **Jammers Street Fair Rehearsal** – **MAY 2** – 7:00–8:30 PM • Social Hall

Thursdays

- **New Adventures** – **MAY 17** – 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

- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services** – **MAY 4, 18** – 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

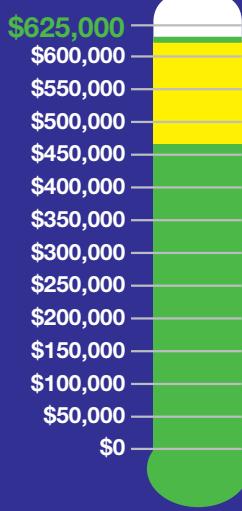
Saturdays

- **Second Avenue Street Fair** – **MAY 5** – 12:00–5:00 PM • Second Ave!
- **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



GOAL
\$167,000
to meet goal

Visit middlechurch.org/donate

Offering Goal

\$625,000
by 6/30/18

*Middle Family,
By June 30, we need
to raise \$625,000.
We have \$167,000 to go.
We can't do it without your
help. Please donate today!
Love,
Shanta and the Consistory*



Middle Collegiate Church

welcoming • artistic • inclusive • bold

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

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youtube.com/MiddleNYC

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 inter-religious 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. Founded prior to this nation, Middle Church affirms the transformative power of moral imagination, reclaiming and reframing Christianity inside our walls, on the street, and in virtual spaces around the globe.

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.