middle notes

The Newsletter of Middle Collegiate Church OCTOBER 2016

Celebration! Worship Sundays at 11:15 AM

***Watch live on* middlechurch.org**

OCTOBER 2
World Communion Sunday
Celebrating Hispanic Heritage
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Middle Church Choir
Welcoming New Members
Communion

OCTOBER 9
Get Out and Vote! Sunday
Rob Stephens, preacher
Middle Church Choir
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir

OCTOBER 16
Children's Sabbath
Jim Kast-Keat, preacher
In-the-Middle Choir
Village Chorus for Children and Youth

OCTOBER 23
Celebrating Hispanic Heritage
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Middle Church Choir
Special Music

OCTOBER 30
Reformation Sunday
All Saints' Day
Jacqui Lewis, preacher
Middle Church Choir
Jerriese Johnson
Gospel Choir

Homecoming Cabaret!

OCTOBER 2 at 2:00 PM
Join us for an afternoon of music featuring vocalists from the In-the-MIddle Choir.

Blessing of the Animals

OCTOBER 2 at 3:30 PM
Once again, Middle Church will give a blessing to the pets that are such a gift to us all. Bring our furry and scaly friends to the church steps. Rev. Jim Kast-Keat will offer a prayer for your pet.

Vote! It's the loving thing to do

My dad and mom met at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. They had both escaped Mississippi, Jim Crow, and what Billie Holiday called strange fruit hanging from the trees. They had walked past the "school" to attend the "Colored School." They had crossed the street at the request of white people to get out of the way; they had sipped from "colored only" water fountains. They knew about anti-lynching campaigns and lunch counter sit-ins. Mom sang in the choir with Fannie Lou Hamer.

They met, they fell in love, they got married, and they had me. Dad was in Morocco when I was born, so my Uncle Gus greeted me and my cousin who was born six days before me.

My first field trip was to Ruleville, Mississippi, where Mom lived with her mother for the first six months of my life. Her Uncle George, a tall thin man with wiry hair and skin the color of the delta clay, loved taking care of me! He rocked me to sleep, played with me in the basinet, and bounced me on his knee. Mom, deeply impacted by Dr. Spock about all things children, would send Uncle George to the grocery store to get more baby food—I was force fed peas, carrots, pears, and rice cereal every meal!

Uncle George, like his 12 brothers, was a sharecropper who eventually prospered and bought his own land. I loved his beautiful ranch house painted red with white trim. He was a gregarious man who was active in the Civil Rights Movement. He went from farm to farm, registering people to vote. The KKK threatened him often, even shooting through the big glass picture window of his house.

He was one of my heroes and died three years ago. As a young person, when I had the chance to vote, I felt like his spirit was hovering. I get to vote, I thought, unlike Uncle George's parents, unlike him and his siblings when they were my age, because of the work he did. Because of the work that John Lewis and all of those people did in Selma, because of people who gave up their lives so I could. I get to vote because women and men worked so hard to make sure I could.



Uncle George understood the value of the vote, the way voting gave voice to the voiceless, and took huge risks to make it be so. I take voting very personally. It is my right and, not only that, I think of it as following the command to love. When the Rabbi Jesus was teaching, he was asked which commandment from God was the most important one. He said, "Love your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." By quoting Hebrew scripture, he reminded those gathered that scripture says to love the stranger 36 times. Love the stranger because you were once strangers. One of my favorite rabbis, Donniel Hartman, says loving the stranger means when the neighbor's cow wanders into your yard, you feed the cow until you can return the cow. Love of neighbor means stewarding the neighbor's stuff. Their cow, their property, their family, their lives.

Voting is a way to use our voices to steward our neighbor's self-interest. Neither the candidate nor the office matter. What *is* on the ballot is clean air and water, food enough, clothing enough and shelter enough for folk to be safe. Schools in which to learn and grow and play—they are on the ballot. City streets described by the prophet Zechariah—clean and hospitable so that old folk and young folk can hang out in them—they are on the ballot. Health care is on the ballot; humanity is on the ballot.

What does your neighbor need? What do you need? That is all on the ballot. So, it is our turn to love God with all we have and love our neighbor as ourselves. It is our turn to think of voting as a holy act, as a *mitzvoth*, as a right and as a calling.

Friends, we need to vote like our lives depend on it, like our love depends on it.

Because, it does.

Please, vote. It is the loving thing to do.

Love, Jacqui

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

Anne Drager's Art Show Benefits Middle

Anne Drager's first solo art show, "#artistathome, 50 Works on Paper" will debut in New York at the CERES Gallery. Middle member Anne Drager is donating all proceeds to Middle Church, The Montauk Community Playhouse Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Connecticut. No matter where Anne has lived, Middle Church has been her home and our celebration of the arts and dedication to social justice has inspired her. Anne led "The Artist Way" classes based on Julia Cameron's book at Middle for years.

Anne Drager's works on paper apply blends of pastel, pencil, and watercolor. She also presents her first portfolio from the printing press: monotype-collages and woodcuts, namely a series of multi-colored animal portraits.

Christina Fleming and our new ministers Lynn Min and Rob Stephens will lead a group to the **opening reception on Thursday, October 6, 5:00–8:00 PM.** There will be a meet and greet with the charities at 5:00 PM, followed by a reception at 6:00 PM. To attend with Middle, contact Lynn at lmin@middlechurch.org. Join us for a great evening with Middle Church peeps!



"#artistathome, 50 Works on Paper" by Anne Drager
The Ceres Gallery
547 West 27th Street, Suite 201 • NYC
October 4–October 29

"Together" Tour

Monday, October 17 • 6:30 pm • Brooklyn Academy of Music

"This moment in time is the moment for the Love Warriors of the world to rise up TOGETHER. We must define love as that which casts out fear of 'other' and then let that kind of revolutionary, healing love flow from us to the hurting world like rain." —New York Times best-selling author Glennon Doyle Melton (*Love Warrior*)

In our 2020 visioning work, many of you dreamed about how to take Middle's radical, revolutionary love to the streets, and into the virtual world. You asked: How can we change the story on what it means to be Christian? To be faithful? To help heal the world? God was listening. This summer, Senior Minister Jacqui Lewis was invited to take Middle's theology of "Love.Period." on a six-city national tour called "Together" with Momastery.com founder Glennon Doyle Melton, internationally celebrated yoga teacher Seane Corn, and activist filmmaker Valarie Kaur. The four will share your love in Portland, Los Angeles, Chicago, Brooklyn, Atlanta, and Denver.

On Monday, October 17, the consistory and staff invite you to attend "Together" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. We have reserved 40 tickets for a group rate of $25 (you save the $7 in handling fees). Reserve your ticket at bit.ly/MiddleTogether to attend with Middle. A Middle staff member will greet you outside the theater at 6:00 PM with your ticket for the 6:30 PM event. Hurry, though. We have already sold 20 of those tickets! When we sell out, use Code 56071 for a special discount when you secure your seats for "Together" at bam.org/talks/2016/togetherlive. To attend in another city, use code LDAY10 .

Though neither Jacqui or Middle Church benefit financially from this tour, Chair Shanta Thake said, "The Consistory had to send Jacqui on this extraordinary adventure in her role as public theologian. How could she not share her gifts and Middle's Revolutionary Love with thousands, who might just join our virtual community or listen to *That'll Preach*?"

This tour is produced by WME Live of William Morris Endeavor Entertainment. WME Live toured "Oprah's The Life You Want Weekend Tour" and Arianna Huffington's "Thrive: A Third Metric Live Event."

How You Feed People

Butterfly: Sundays at 9:00–11:00 AM, 12:30–2:00 PM
Momentum: Mondays at 11:00 AM–1:00 PM, 4:00–6:00 PM

This year we are excited to work with Momentum, our long-time partner, to offer two warm meals and a food pantry to our members and neighborhood. Anyone in our community has access to a warm meal and a food pantry on Mondays in our Social Hall. If you would like to share our meal, enter at 50 East 7th Street.

If you would like to volunteer, please arrive at 11:00 AM or 4:00 PM on Mondays to distribute food. For more info or to volunteer, contact Rob Stephens at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Momentum was the co-host of Middle's Celebrate Life Meal, serving those with HIV/AIDS from 1988–2012.

You continue to make 180 brown-bag lunches each Sunday morning and deliver them to the hungry in local parks because of your devoted volunteering and donations.

Your feedback in volunteer planning meetings this summer was vital to shifting our food pantry from Sunday to partner with Momentum on Mondays. Thank you for all you do!

Associate Minister Rob Stephens has also been in discussions with local public schools and feeding programs to gather an inventory of community needs and resources in our neighborhood. We are excited about these new ways you are feeding our neighbors! Thank you for all the ways you give!

Mosaic: Benefit for Homeless LGBT Youth

Tuesday, October 11 • 6:30–9:00 PM • Sanctuary/Social Hall

You are invited to gather with other dreamers and seekers as we connect with one another to deepen our relationships and nourish our Spirits. Soul-stirring music, grounding meditations, and short inspiring talks will be offered by dynamic leaders including Jacqui Lewis, Matthew Johnson Harris, Darren Major, Alex Bertrand, and Pastor Elyse Ambrose of Church of the Village. They named this gathering *Mosaic* because the world and our lives can sometimes feel fractured or broken. But as we come together and center ourselves in Spirit, our beauty and light is fierce.

This event is sponsored by Middle Church and the Coalition of Clergy and Allies for Homeless Gay Youth. Proceeds from the $20 suggested donation will support a non-profit for homeless LGBT youth in New York City, New Alternatives. To register, visit bit.ly/MosaicLGBT

Small Groups at Middle Church

Sundays at 1:30–2:30 PM

Are you interested in erasing racism? Praying dangerously? Are you looking to connect with other moms? A network where you can learn about finances and business? Small groups at Middle Church meet once a month to explore these areas (and more). Join us on the first and third Sunday of each month to connect with old and new friends in a space that will heal your soul and transform your mind. Watch for two new groups later this year!

October 2: Praying Dangerously and Erasing Racism

October 16: Money Talks and Mothers & Spirituality

Patrick Mulcahy



On Sunday September 11, we honored those in our congregation who were first responders at Ground Zero, Joey Morelli and Gloria Moy, and all those who lost loved ones on September 11, 2001.

Brianna Scolaro



Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir singing "Glory" at The Forrest Church Award honoring the founders of #BlackLivesMatter: Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi

October

Check **middlechurch.org** for full details of all events.

Sundays

- **Butterfly Meal Preparation** – 9:00–11:00 AM • *Social Hall*
- **Wee Care** (under age 4) – 9:30 AM–2:30 PM • *3rd Floor Wee Care*
- **In-the-Middle Choir – OCT 16** – 9:45–10:45 AM • *3rd Floor Studio*
- **Freedom School Youth Leadership Lab – OCT 2** – 10:00–11:00 AM
- **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 OCT 2
- **Chat & Chew** – 12:30 PM • *Social Hall*
- **Butterfly Meal Distribution** – 12:30 PM • *Meet at Social Hall*
- **Village Chorus** (Ages 6–14) – 1:00–2:30 PM • *Community Room*
- **Adult Ed: Reading the Bible from the Middle** – 1:30–2:30 PM • *Sanctuary*
- **Erasing Racism – OCT 2** – 1:30–2:30 PM • *4th Floor Studio*
- **Praying Dangerously – OCT 2** – 1:30–2:30 PM • *4th Floor Classroom*
- **Money Talks – OCT 16** – 1:30–2:30 PM • *4th Floor Studio*
- **Mothers & Spirituality – OCT 16** – 1:30–2:30 PM • *4th Floor Classroom*
- **HOMECOMING CABARET — OCT 2** – 2:00–3:30 PM • *Sanctuary*
- **Blessing of the Animals — OCT 2** – 3:30–4:00 PM • *Sanctuary steps*
- **Voter Registration Outreach — OCT 6** – 2:00–6:00 PM • *Meet at Middle Church*
- **AA/Big Book Meeting** – 7:00–8:00 PM • *4th Floor Studio*

Mondays

Church Office closed on October 10 for Holiday

- **Momentum Meals** – 11:00 AM–1:00 PM • Lunch and Food Pantry / 4:00–6:30 PM • Dinner and Food Pantry • *Social Hall*
- **Together Live! with Jacqui Lewis – OCT 17** – 6:30–9:30 PM • *Offsite*
- **Acting Class** – 6:30–8:00 PM • *3rd Floor Studio*
- **NA/Village Spiritual Workshop** – 6:30–7:30 PM • *4th Floor Classroom*

Tuesdays

- **Mosaic – OCT 11** – 6:30–9:30 PM • *Sanctuary* • $20 donation
- **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

- **Meditation on the Lower East Side** – 7:00–8:30 PM • *Parlor*
- **Pub Theology – OCT 26** – 7:00–8:30 PM • *Jimmy's No. 43, 43 E. 7th*
- **Marianne Williamson Lectures** – 7:30–9:00 PM • *Sanctuary* • $20
- **NA/Our Whole Lives Ahead of Us** — 7:30–8:45 PM • *4th Floor*

Thursdays

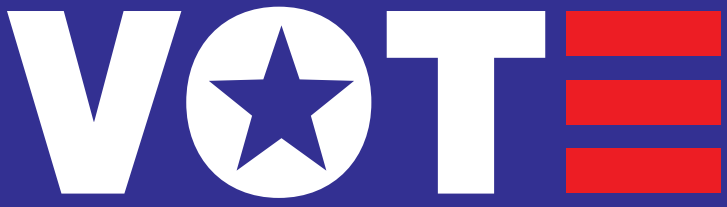
- **Debtors Anonymous** – 12:30–1:30 PM • *4th Floor Classroom*
- **Creative Writing** – 6:30–8:00 PM • *4th Floor Studio*
- **JJ Gospel Choir Rehearsal** – 7:00–8:30 PM • *Community Room*
- **Al-Anon** – 7:30–9:00 PM • *3rd Floor Studio*

Fridays

- **Shul of NY Shabbat Services – OCT 7, 21** – 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

- **Freedom School Youth Leadership Lab – OCT 1** – 10:00 AM–4:00 PM
- **NA/Meat and Potatoes** – 6:30–8:00 PM • *Community Room*
- **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*



VOTER REGISTRATION OUTREACH

Sunday, October 9 • 2:00–6:00 PM
Meet at Middle

We invite you to the second of two scheduled "outings" for voter registration.

Please register at http://bit.ly/2cfTx0O and we will send you any updates.

For more information, please contact Rob Stephens at rstephens@middlechurch.org.

Thank you for joining us in this important effort!

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 **917-439-9268** 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.