

The Pastoral Staff Letter

Sunday Worship—December 24, 2017 4th Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve

Worship Schedule

**Worship at 11:15 am (NO 9 am service)
There will be NO child care provided.**

There will be no Children's or Youth Worship. After the Children's Sermon, children will return to their families.

This Sunday, The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted is preaching. His sermon entitled **"Greetings!"** will be based on the texts: II Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:47-55; Romans 16:25-27; and Luke 1:26-38. Preview the latest Sunday bulletin, or listen to sermons and service highlights from previous Sundays on MAPC's website.

Church Choir Rehearsal, 10:20 am, Choir Room

Fellowship Hour, 12:30 pm, Lobby

Christmas Family Tableau Rehearsal, 4 pm, Phillips Lounge, Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Family Service, 5 pm, Sanctuary

Church Choir Rehearsal, 8:30 pm, Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 10:30 pm, Sanctuary

Overnight Shelter, 6:30 pm, Shelter Space

Sunday Worship—December 31, 2017 1st Sunday after Christmas Day / New Year's Eve

Worship Schedule

**Worship at 11:15 am (NO 9 am service)
There will be NO child care provided.**

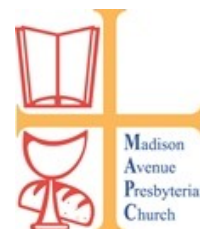
There will be no Children's or Youth Worship. After the Children's Sermon, children will return to their families.

This Sunday, The Rev. Andrew D. Smothers is preaching. His sermon entitled **"Greetings!"** will be based on the texts: Isaiah 61:10—62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; and Luke 2:22-40. Preview the latest Sunday bulletin, or listen to sermons and service highlights from previous Sundays on MAPC's website.

Church Choir Rehearsal, 10:20 am, Choir Room

Fellowship Hour, 12:30 pm, Lobby

Overnight Shelter, 6:30 pm, Shelter Space



**Madison
Avenue
Presbyterian
Church**

Issue #12

**This is a two-week
Pastoral Staff Letter.**

December 21, 2017

To Check out the Church's Calendar:

Go to the website at
[http://www.mapc.com/
calendar/calendar/](http://www.mapc.com/calendar/calendar/)

MAPC is on Facebook!

*See you in church!
The Pastoral Staff*

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Friday

Yoga for Every Body, Friday, December 22 at 9 am on the 5th Floor

Take a break from the holiday busyness and enjoy a relaxing hour of yoga on Friday, December 22, beginning at 9 am. Your body, mind, and spirit will thank you! This class is open to everyone, regardless of experience, level of fitness—or lack thereof. Bring a mat if you have one (we have a few available to borrow, if not). We ask for a \$20 donation to help pay the instructor. Please bring a friend! The 5th Floor is a great space for yoga and there is plenty of room.



This Sunday



JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS ALL ARE WELCOME!

Christmas Eve: Sunday, December 24

11:15 am: Service of Word & Sacrament for 4th Sunday of Advent

5 pm: Family Service with Christmas Tableau

10:30 pm: Candlelight Communion Service - Prelude begins at 10:15 pm

Choral works by Holst, Gjeilo & Willcocks, with guest instrumentalists
The Rev. Dr. Eric O. Springsted preaching

Christmas Day: Monday, December 25 at 11:15 am

Service of Lessons & Carols

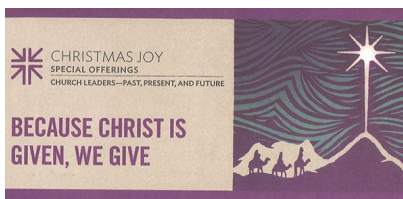
Carols & Anthems sung by the Choir of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

1st Sunday after Christmas: Sunday, December 31 at 11:15 am

Service of Word and Sacrament



Christmas Joy Offering



A Presbyterian tradition for over seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering supports the PCUSA Board of Pensions for assistance programs. Through these Assistance Programs, the Christmas Joy Offering recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers, including pastors and others, by providing funds to help them through difficult times.

In addition, the Christmas Joy Offering helps the Presbyterian Church (USA) support its racial ethnic schools and colleges by providing scholarships to deserving students as well as help with basic operating costs. These institutions develop leaders in the church and in society, and they enable students to discover and pursue their professional goals. Please plan now for your Christmas Joy Offering!

This year's Christmas Joy Offering will be received in worship December 17, 24, and 25. Please consider making a gift to support this offering, using either one of the special offering envelopes that will be in the bulletins later this month, or online at <http://www.mapc.com/giving/donation>, being sure to apply your donation to "Christmas Joy" in the drop-down list.

Welcome to the World



Congratulations to Natalie and Paul Pennington, and big brother, Patrick on the birth of Oliver John Douglas Pennington, December 18, 2017.

Other Events & Announcements

Year-End Giving—Business Office Closing December 29 at 1 pm

This is our annual reminder of the IRS rules concerning year-end contributions of cash and securities. In general, the delivery date determines the year in which a contribution can be claimed as a deduction. Checks mailed with a postmark of December 31, 2017 or earlier, or hand-delivered by December 31, 2017, will be credited as a contribution in 2017. **Please note:** The Church House and Business Office will close at 1 pm on December 29! Please contact our business manager, Richard Frey, by December 29, if you wish to make a contribution or

need assistance in making one. After January 1, 2018, contributions will be credited as contributions for 2018.

For gifts of securities, the date of mailing is the delivery date; if hand-delivered, the date of receipt by the charity is the delivery date. When securities are delivered from a donor's bank or broker, the delivery date is the date the securities are transferred to the charity.

The Church Business Office can assist you in making year-end gifts of securities by using

its account with Merrill Lynch. Please call Richard Frey, the Business Manager, at 212-288-8920 for the Church's account number and **the new Merrill Lynch DTC number**, so the transfer of shares can be made electronically. **Please note that you can also make your year-end gifts online through our website at <http://www.mapc.com/giving>.** Thank you!



Andy Smothers to Bahrain



The Rev. Andy Smothers has accepted a call to serve as a Mission Worker with the Reformed Church in America, serving the National Evangelical Church of Bahrain. Andy has been with MAPC since June, 2014, first as a Global Ministry Fellow, and then for the last two years as Interim Associate Minister for Evangelism and Outreach. We congratulate Andy on this call, and thank him for his service to this church. Andy's last day with us will be Sunday, December 31, when he will preach and lead worship. He will be back on Sunday, January 7, at which time we will celebrate his ministry here with a reception following the 11:15 service. If you cannot be here then, please say thank you to him in the coming two weeks.

Assist Ministries with Alternative Christmas Gifts This Year



On any ordinary day, we might enjoy a breakfast of scrambled eggs, have a ham sandwich for lunch, and maybe some roast chicken for dinner. Many of us drink water throughout the day, straight from the tap, knowing it is safe. If we fall ill, we go to our doctor or emergency room, trusting that we will be seen promptly and receive good care.

Imagine living somewhere where these experiences are impossible or at least very difficult to come by.



Every year at this time, MAPC joins together for an Alternative Gift Fair to support three mission organizations that provide essential services for people in countries where food, medical services, and jobs are badly needed. It is our way of giving Christmas gifts to people around the world that we hope will encourage their independence and sustainability. This year, we will not have a particular day assigned but invite you to continue to purchase gifts from the same ministries.

Through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, you can fund animals like chickens, pigs, or fish; or wells, rainwater catchment systems, bags of seeds and farming tools; or training programs that will help families survive and start a farming business. See presbyteriangifts.org/gifts/ for details and to donate.

Donations to Church World Service can be earmarked to literacy

classes, birthing kits, or disaster emergency relief, among many options. Research or donate at cwsbestgifts.org.

Your contribution to the Medical Benevolence Foundation can be earmarked to provide medical care for people in 19 underdeveloped countries throughout the world. Check mbfoundation.org/donate-now/give-an-alternative-gift/ for more information or to donate.



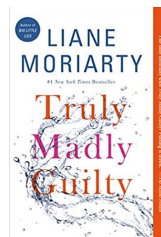
The above are just a few examples of the types of support these three organizations provide.

January Congregational Nurture Events:

Though it is hard to think past Christmas, January is right around the corner! There are several Congregational Nurture events coming up:

Monday, January 8, 7 pm—
Moms' Night Out at an UES
restaurant

Tuesday, January 16, 4 pm—
the MAPC Book Club starts up again, meeting in the Hood Library. The book under discussion for January is *Truly, Madly, Guilty* by Liane Moriarty.



Friday, January 19, 6 pm—
Church Family Night in the

Parish Hall

Friday, January 26, 6 to 9 pm—Friday Night Fireside Jazz

We had so much fun at our first Friday Night Fireside Jazz event last winter that we are doing it again! The Congregational Nurture Committee invites you to

come enjoy an extended cocktail hour with jazz in the Church House Lobby, beginning at 6 pm. If you came last year, you will remember that the food, music, fellowship and overall vibe were fabulous! The suggested donation for the evening is \$40 per person. Where else can you enjoy an evening of beverages, delicious food, engaging conversation and good music in NYC for \$40?

We will offer childcare on the 5th Floor, and ask parents to contribute \$15 per child for the

evening. Come enjoy a fun evening of fellowship with the MAPC community! RSVP to Wendy De Los Santos in the church offices, wlds@mapc.com, or sign up in the Church House Lobby after Sunday worship services in January.



Sunday, January 28, 1 pm—Library Awareness Sunday Author Luncheon *(Please note this is a change from the original date published in MAPC Life. The Senior Fellowship Lunch scheduled for this Sunday will join this event.)*

Highlights of the November Session Meeting

The Session met in regular meeting on November 28, 2017. Click [here](#) for more information.

Update on Harare City Church—New Photos!

Those who watch news related to Zimbabwe are likely aware of the rapid changes that have happened in the last three weeks, as the military took control of the country, long-time President Mugabe resigned, and a new president has been installed. We have continued in contact with our partners there; though, they have not shared very extensively regarding the events—perhaps due to security and safety concerns. Please continue in prayer for our partners in Zimbabwe.

In the midst of these significant events, the synod has continued work on City Church in Harare. We are including a few photos on the status of the church received December 5. They have made significant progress on brickwork and installing window and door frames. Many will remember

that MAPC funded the superstructure for the building.



Christian Education at MAPC

Volunteers Needed in 2018 for Children's Worship

Children's Worship is in need of your help! If you can help assist in Children's Worship in the New Year please sign up for the 9 am worship service, or the 11:15 am worship service here. This ministry is a success thanks to your willingness to volunteer.

If you have any questions or need assistance signing up, please contact Christina Cosby at (212) 288-8920 x8480 or by email at cac@mapc.com.



Children and Family Ministries

Children's Worship

There will be no Children's Worship on December 24th or December 31st. We hope that you will enjoy worship as a family during the Christmas season. We look forward to seeing you in Children's Worship on January 7, 2018!

Youth Worship

There will be no Youth Worship on December 24th or December 31st. We hope that you will enjoy worship as a family during the Christmas season. We look forward to seeing you in Youth Worship on January 7, 2018!

Kids Club

Wednesday afternoons from 3:45-6 pm

Kids Club will resume on January 10, 2018.

Church School

There will be no Church School on December 24th and 31st! We hope you enjoy the Christmas season, and look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Middle and High School Ministries

T(w)een Club

Wednesday afternoons from 4 to 6 pm

We hope that you will enjoy your Christmas holiday, and look forward to seeing you on January 10st!

Sunday Youth Hour

Sunday Morning at 10:10 am

There will be no Youth Hour on December 24th or 31st. We hope that you have a wonderful Christmas break.

Please stay tuned for more winter service opportunities coming up, or go to the [MAPC website](#) for a complete list or click here to find an [easy-to-print calendar](#).

Bible Studies at MAPC

Looking for a place to read Scripture together and get to know people at MAPC? Come to one of our Bible Studies; newcomers are always welcome! For more information, go to <http://www.mapc.com/christian-ed/adultclasses/>.

Reading Through the Bible:

Wednesdays, 12:30 pm-1:30 pm, Phillips Lounge (On Hiatus for the Holiday Season)
January 10th, we will pick up with Psalm 59.

20s/30s Group: (Next Meeting is Thursday, January 11, 2018)

5:30-8 pm, in the 4th Floor Apartment

We will see you at our next twenties and thirties gathering. Enjoy the holidays.

Women's Bible Study: (Next Meeting is Monday, January 8, 2018)

2nd and 4th Mondays, 6:30 pm, Phillips Lounge

Please note that in 2018 we will return to our normal schedule of meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of the month! We will continue our study of Paul's letters. Come join us for our next meeting for an enriching conversation, as we finish reading Colossians!

Men's Bible Study:

The Men's Bible Study is currently on hiatus.

Stay Connected to Worship at MAPC

Did you know that even if you're away or unable to make it to church that you can listen to Sunday worship services at MAPC? Sermons and service highlights (including scripture

lessons, hymns and anthems) are uploaded afterwards, and are permanently accessible. They can be downloaded to your electronic device or listened to directly on MAPC's website: [peruse](#) this val-

uable online resource today! Once ready for print, our Sunday bulletins are also uploaded to our website on Thursday afternoons and are made permanently available for download.

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

921 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10021
Phone: 212-288-8920
Fax: 212-249-1466

**We're on the
web
www.mapc.com**

Flowers for the Sanctuary

Is there someone you would like to honor or remember through a gift of flowers for Sunday worship? If so, please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo at lgp@mapc.com or 212-288-8920. The cost for Sunday flowers is \$110.

Thank You for Filling the New York Common Pantry Grocery Carts

The New York Common Pantry, the city's largest private food pantry and long-time MAPC Outreach partner, is asking for your continued support: canned or dried beans, canned chicken/salmon/tuna, rice, dried pasta, fresh or canned vegetables, and peanut butter. Please—no glass containers. You can drop off items in the grocery carts in the Church House Lobby or the Sanctuary Narthex, or you could even order groceries to be delivered through one of your grocers. (8 East 109th Street, New York, NY 10029, Phone: 917-720-9700). Thank you for taking seriously Christ's command to "feed my sheep!"

Clothing Donations Needed for Women and Men

The Homeless Outreach Program at Jan Hus Presbyterian Church, one of MAPC's long-term outreach partners, continues to see a dramatic increase of homeless persons seeking assistance. Both casual and business clothing for men and women, as well as new undergarments, are among their most urgent needs. If you have clothing items in clean and neat condition, we encourage you to take them to the Jan Hus Clothes Pantry at 351 East 74th Street at 1st Avenue. The clothes pantry is available to take donations Monday through Saturday from 8 am-8pm and on Sunday from 9 am-3:30 pm. NOTE: Please bring all clothing to Jan Hus **directly**—clothing may no longer be left in the coatroom off of the MAPC Church House Lobby.

Hands-on Ministries

Ways to get involved at MAPC with hands and hearts!

"Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." The following opportunities to participate in hands-on ministries are provided by the Outreach Committee. If you are interested in exploring any of these opportunities, e-mail Andy Smothers at ads@mapc.com. Let's put our faith into action!

The Thursday Open Table Needs YOU!

Can you spare 2 hours on a Thursday evening from 6-8 pm? If so, then you can help feed 120 hungry neighbors a hot meal, offering them Christian hospitality. Please contact Kathy Hoffman at

kfhoffman@earthlink.net to volunteer for this opportunity (formerly known as Shelter Dinner)

Host at the Shelter

Hosts are needed for the Shelter! The Shelter is comfortable and the experience of helping these men get their lives back on track is one that will change your heart. Two shifts are offered each evening. Early evening hosts volunteer from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm; overnight hosts volunteer from 8:30 pm to 7 am. Contact Andy Smothers at ads@mapc.com for more information.

Search and Care

Can you spend an afternoon with

an elderly person on the Upper Eastside to walk their pet, go with them to a doctor's appointment, help them shop, balance their checkbook or even just offer them the gift of companionship? If so, contact Robin Strashun at SandC@searchandcare.org.

New York Common Pantry

The New York Common Pantry offers opportunities for volunteers to help pack and distribute food to the working poor on Saturday mornings and other times each week. MAPC has supported this very well-organized and effective organization since its inception 30 years ago. This is a wonderful way to follow Christ's command to "feed my sheep!"