

SUNDAY WORSHIP CELEBRATION

MARCH 15, 2020 • 11:45 AM • WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

~ GATHERING ~

INVITATION TO WORSHIP "My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord"

Wesley Rowell, soloist

(Trad., arr. D. McClain-Freeney)

HYMN "What a Fellowship"

~ REFLECTING ~

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES ++

Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft

"Siyahamba"—We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS ++

Jacqui Lewis

CALL TO PRAYER/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/ LORD'S PRAYER/CONGREGATIONAL AMEN

John Del Cueto

"Anyone"

(D. Lovato, B. Bourelly, D. Alexander, E. Mirzazdeh, J. Moon, S. Roman)

Caelyn Osbern and Ayla Huguenot, singers

Ever-loving and holy God, hallowed be your name. Your reign come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for yours is the reign, and the power, and the glory, forever. **Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

SCRIPTURE Exodus 17.1–7

Gloria Moy

SERMONIC SELECTION "I Love the Lord"

(Richard Smallwood)

SERMON "Wanna Know Where God Is?"

Jacqui Lewis

~ RESPONDING ~

INVITATION TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft



OFFERTORY/OFFERING “Brave”

(Sara Bareilles and Jack Antonoff)

Madge Dietrich, soloist

Place gift in bag • Donate at middlechurch.org/donate • Text [Amount] to 917-924-4666

DOXOLOGY/DEDICATION PRAYER*

Wesley Rowell

From all that dwell below the skies / Let faith and hope with love arise.
Let peace, goodwill on earth be sung / Through every land, by every tongue.

HYMN* “Amen”

BENEDICTION*

Jacqui Lewis

PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION •

Ensemble • John Del Cueto–Music Director, Wesley Rowell, Madge Dietrich, Jacqui Lewis, Dionne McClain-Freeney–Music Director, piano.

PRAYER CORNER *Please pray with us this week for these people and concerns.*

Juliet; Pete, Taina, Jose, Mariah Ramos, Ramos family and friends; Stay safe from the Corona Virus; For myself, my family and friends; Suresh Dianand; Constance V. Halikas and family, Virginia Jinks.

WELCOME TO MIDDLE CHURCH

We are glad you are worshipping with us today. If you are visiting for the first time, we invite you to return often and make Middle Church a home for you, your family, and friends. Sign up for updates or weekly emails at middlechurch.org.

VIDEOS AND PODCASTS — Worship music and sermon videos: youtube.com/MiddleChurch. Re-watch the Worship Celebration livestream: facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch. Middle Church Celebrations podcast: middlechurch.org/podcasts.

DEAR MIDDLE FAMILY— This year we must give \$875,000 by June 30, 2020 in order to fund our ministries and programs. As you know, we are committed to funding 50% of our budget by 2022, and this year’s goal is an important part of getting there.

**As of this printing, we have raised \$516,631.12 in gifts and pledges.
That puts us at 59.04% of our June 30th goal of \$875,000!**

To reach our FY2020 goal by June 30, 2020, can we count on you to give \$20, \$200, \$2,020 or \$20,200 today? Or set up a recurring \$2 weekly or monthly contribution! You can donate in worship, in a dip jar, online at middlechurch.org/donate, or through text message

—In gratitude, Jacqui, Darren, and Middle Consistory Donate at middlechurch.org/donate.



What a Fellowship

Elisha A. Hoffman, 1887; alt.

1 What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, lean-ing on the ev-er -
2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er -
3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er -

last-ing arms. What a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing
last-ing arms. Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing
last-ing arms? I have bless-ed peace with my Sav-ior near, lean-ing

Refrain

on the ev-er - last-ing arms.
on the ev-er - last-ing arms. Lean-ing, lean-ing, safe and se-cure from
on the ev-er - last-ing arms.

all a-larms; lean-ing, lean-ing, lean-ing on the ev-er - last-ing arms.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef staff for each system. The lyrics are placed between the staves. The refrain is marked with a double bar line and the word 'Refrain' centered above the staff.

From *The New Century Hymnal*, Copyright © 1995 The Pilgrim Press. NCH471

Tune: LEANING 5.5.9.D. with refrain
Anthony J. Showalter, 1887

THIS WEEK: WANNA KNOW WHERE GOD IS?

- Have you ever been “thirsty,” “needed a drink,” and God showed up? When? Remember every detail.
- How is this moment—sickness, hatred-gone-viral, and so much we can’t breathe—an opportunity for God to show up? Where? How?



LAST WEEK MARY, MARTHA, YOU AND ME

- In this time of sisterhood, Mary “chooses the better part.” What did you hear in the sermon today that supports or challenges that idea?
- How can we dismantle the way patriarchy casts women in binary?

MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH IS ON LENAPE LAND ON TURTLE ISLAND.

MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

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, xenophobic, 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. 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.

MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH

Rev. Jacqueline J. Lewis, Ph.D. – Senior Minister in Charge

Rev. Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft – *Exec. Minister for Justice, Operations, & Movement Building*

Rev. Benjamin Perry – *Minister for Outreach and Media Strategy*

Rev. Chad Tanaka Pack – *Consulting Minister*

Natalie Perkins – *Digital Minister*

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ELDER – Danita Branam

DEACON – Robert Perry



UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

**ALL WORSHIP WILL BE
ONLINE, AND ALL
IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING
IS CANCELED**

Thursday, March 12

Dear Amazing Middle Family,

I am so sad and worried to hear of the ways the coronavirus is stalking the globe, taking out communities, especially the vulnerable. The news is rapidly changing. Reported cases in New York went from 9 to 62 overnight. I'm praying for a sick globe, those who have lost loved ones, and for all who are afraid. I am praying for you, Middle family, and the ways this thing makes us anxious. Some of you have been sharing emails with us that you are two or three degrees of separation from someone who has tested positive with the virus. Those who have been close to someone who is sick can't be tested unless they have symptoms! This is a dangerous decision, made by people determined to pretend this disease is not lethal.

I've been in conversations all day about what to do next. And it is with a heavy heart that I send you this email, updating you that **we need to cancel programs and in-person worship at Middle Church, effective immediately, for the next few weeks**, so we can keep our most vulnerable people safe. Our worship and our programs keep us connected, grounded and spiritually ready to heal our souls and the world. But connecting closely also puts us in dangerous proximity to the reality that we have NO IDEA WHO IS INFECTED.

And so it is that my Collegiate colleagues and our chair, Darren Johnston, have put together a plan for SOCIAL DISTANCING, PER CDC RECOMMENDATIONS.



Effective this evening, we are cancelling programs as we can reach leaders and service providers. On Sunday, the staff and I will gather to live-stream worship at 11:45 a.m. There will be no scheduled in-person worship at either 9:30 a.m. or 11:45 a.m. on March 15, 22, or 29, while we assess this situation.

HERE IS HOW WE GOT TO THIS HEARTBREAKING DECISION:

For the past few weeks, our staff and leadership have been sending information into the world with this message: **Revolutionary Love means not sharing this virus with each other.**

We've talked about refraining from touch, hugs and handshakes. We've educated ourselves on how thoroughly to wash hands and which kind of hand sanitizer to use. We've been doing the best we can to stay connected to each other while protecting each other.

BUT things are changing rapidly. Last night, reported cases of the corona virus in NYC increased from 9 to 62.

As I write to you, I am listening to the news. Governor Cuomo announced today that all events of 500 people or more are banned, effective Friday at 5:00p EXCEPT, Broadway, in which theaters holding 500 or more will close tonight. While we don't worship with 500 people, I want to humbly suggest that if one of us is sick, 20 people in the room is 19 too many.

The Collegiate Ministries are each making plans for a program of **SOCIAL DISTANCING** per the strong recommendations by the CDC, physicians and health care workers. It is with a heavy heart but a strident determination to keep us well that I share with you these measures. **Effective today, here is how we will seek to be safe for the next few weeks:**

1. Gospel Choir and other Middle programming will be cancelled tonight.
2. Sunday, March 15 there will be no in-person worship gathering at 9:30 a.m. or at 11:45 a.m. BUT some staff and I will gather to livestream worship at 11:45 a.m. Those who come to lead worship on Sunday will NOT take public transportation.
3. There will be no small groups, no food, no programming on Sunday March 15; just staff gathering to send worship and our love to you through the ether.



4. On Sundays, March 22 and 29, we will worship online at 11:45 a.m.; there will be no 9:30 a.m. worship, no small groups, no Sunday programming.
5. Our staff is preparing to work at home, beginning Monday, March 16
6. Today, we begin a program of deep cleaning of all the offices and meeting spaces
7. We will make plans for more virtual gatherings, alongside the ones we already do, for example, virtual choir rehearsals in sections, virtual small groups.
8. We will make plans for staff, elders, and deacons to call Middle members in this season, to reassure and support them.
9. We are cancelling programming through the end of the month, as soon as we are able to notify program leaders, tenants and partners.

We are watching this rapidly changing news, dear team, and we know you are, too. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Our Consistory Chair Darren Johnston and I are sending grace and peace to you and so much gratitude for the ways you are all serving God's people in your everyday walk!! We want YOU to be well, and this is how we are moving to make it be so, as best we can. **Today, these cancellations, though enormously difficult, are what love looks like.**

Love and tears, from my broken heart to yours,

JACQUI

