#RevolutionaryLove
Membership at Middle Church
Consistory: Middle Church is a movement of love and justice, and, today, we celebrate with these new members that Middle is their church. They stand before you and before God to say they are partners in this ministry. Friends, just as you are as you come through the door, we welcome you.

Clergy: Membership means signing on for the vision of God's reign. Membership means participating in the life of the congregation. Membership means proclaiming that you belong to God and you will use your gifts generously for God's work. Membership means claiming God's claim on you.

Senior Minister: Today, we welcome to Middle Church these children of God. Friends, do you claim Middle Church as your church? If so, say I do.

New Members: I do.

Senior Minister: Will you give with your heart your gifts to this congregation and to the larger Church? If so, say I will.

New Members: I will.

Senior Minister: Will you love and share with this community in the ministry of Jesus? If so, say I will.

New Members: I will.

Senior Minister: Will you learn and study so as to grow in faith? If so, say I will.

New Members: I will.

Clergy: And to this congregation: Do you promise to love, encourage, and support these people of God by being the gospel of God's love and by giving the strong support of God's people in prayer and in deed? If so, say we will.

Congregation: We will.

Clergy introduces each new member to the congregation.

Clergy: Let us pray.
God of grace and mercy, thank you for the gifts of these new members. Thank you that we are all your children. Make us more like you in all we say and do, and help us to be your hands and feet in this world. We pray in your Holy Name, Amen.

Clergy: And now receive this Middle welcome in song . . .

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, and homophobic systems of oppression.

Because our God is still speaking in many languages, we work in interreligious 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.

Just as You Are as You Come Through the Door
Words by Jacqui Lewis • Music by Mark Rehnstrom

Just as you are as you come through the door, we welcome you
To love and serve the God we adore, we welcome you
Everyone an artist, everyone a friend,
To all God's children, God's love we extend.
Just as you are as you come through the door
We welcome you
We welcome you
We welcome you
Dear New Members,

Welcome! We’re so glad you’ve joined our movement for #RevolutionaryLove. Rooted in God’s radical abundance, we hope this is a place where you’ll find your spirit nurtured, your faith challenged, your connections deepened, and your commitment to justice kicked into high gear!

**Being a member means using your heart for care, your feet to march, your soul for prayer, and your resources to power this amazing movement we call Middle Church.**

Over the next few years, Middle is committed to taking increased responsibility for how our movement is funded. By 2022, we will be funding 50% or more of our overall budget.

**That’s why this year, we are leaning into God’s promise of radical abundance with an offering goal of $900,000.** And as a new member, you are a stakeholder, and your partnership—your vision, time, talent, and your donations—will help make it happen.

For some of us, tithing is the spiritual practice of giving a 10% of our income to support the work and vision of the church. It’s rooted in the idea that all good things come from God, and are on loan to us. One might not give 10%, but choose to give another percentage of income.

Here are some examples of how weekly tithing might look:

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Whatever you give, know that you are part of Middle Church, a movement for love and justice that will heal our souls and the world. We believe in the transformative power of #RevolutionaryLove to transform our world as, together, we live into God’s Reign. We believe God is calling us to move in the world with LOVE.Period.

Welcome home!

Jacqui, the Consistory, and Team Middle

**P.S. It’s easy — Set up your donation or tithe as a recurring gift at middlechurch.org/donate.**
Staffing the Vision

You, Middle family, staff, and consistory have been working this year on Vision 2020. The strategic directions are: Connections, community, and care; Congregational partnership and stewardship; and Public theology and online engagement. Our staff is organized to care for you, our 1,300 members, and to live into the strategic directions. More and more, lay teams and small groups will help us do our ministry. This page will help you see whom to contact for your various needs.

Contact Middle Church at 212.477.0666 or middleinfo@middlechurch.org

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About Middle Church

We are not proud of all of our story, but it is ours. Our church story begins when Dutch settlers came to Manahatta — Island of Hills — and met (not discovered) the Lenape people living here. In 1626, we bought their land for about $24. We were not fair in our dealings with them. Some of our earliest clergy owned slaves.

At the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson’s arrival in Manhattan, the Collegiate (Old English for Collegial) Churches of New York apologized to the descendants of the Lenape:

As the “company church” of the Dutch West Indies Company that made New Amsterdam a “company town,” Collegiate Church, speaking only for itself, wishes to acknowledge publicly the role it played in the cultural marginalization and physical dispersion of the Native Americans living here, slowly degrading them (in European eyes) from a people with their own culture and civilization to merely another resource.

(Read more at Intersections.org.)

Middle Collegiate Church is the oldest congregation of the Collegiate Churches of New York. Organized in 1628, the Collegiate Churches of New York is the oldest continuously-active church and the oldest corporation in the North America, established by royal charter from King William III of England in 1696. Currently, there are five ministries of the Collegiate Church: Fort Washington Church, Marble Church, Middle Church, West End Church, and Intersections International.

We are rooted in our history, which we can’t escape, but stand boldly at the forefront of progressive theological discourse and interfaith dialogue. We are one of the leading multicultural, multiracial congregations in the United States and stand firmly for LGBTIQA+ equality, including marriage equality. We are anti-racist and believe firmly in the power of women to heal our world. We believe everyone should have enough resources to survive and thrive.

The Collegiate Churches of New York are co-affiliated with the United Church of Christ and the Reformed Church in America. For more information about The Collegiate Churches of New York, visit collegiatechurch.org.

About the Building

The first Middle Collegiate Church was built on Nassau Street between Cedar and Liberty streets in 1729. The second church was erected at Lafayette Place and 4th Street in 1839. The current church was erected at Second Avenue and 7th Street in 1891. The cornerstone was laid on May 17, 1891, at the base of the main tower and features the inscription Nisi Dominus Frustra, a summary of Psalm 127:1 from the Latin Vulgate—“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.”

The Sanctuary and Church House were designed by S. B. Reed. The facade on Second Avenue is an example of Gothic architecture built from Indiana limestone with central gable 70 feet high and two towers surmounted by spires 76 and 30 feet high. A bronze tablet giving the historic dates of the Collegiate Church is located between the central entrance and the south tower. Since 1884, an identical tablet has been placed on every Collegiate Church.
The Church was opened for public worship on Sunday, June 26, 1892. The Rev. Talbot W. Chambers, Senior Acting Minister of Consistory, presided at the dedication ceremonies, which opened with the choir offering a *Te Deum* written by L. C. Jacoby, the organist of the Church, and closed with 400 children of the Sunday School and Industrial Schools singing Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” directed by Mr. Jacoby.

Our history has been integrally linked to many key historical events throughout American history. Our bell tower is the home to New York’s Liberty Bell, which rang in the birth of our nation on July 9, 1776. Cast in Amsterdam—it is said from silver coins donated by children—and rigged at the first Middle Church in 1731. The bell was hidden during the British occupation of New York City. After the war, the bell was restored to the belfry. The bell was transferred to St. Nicholas Collegiate Church at Fifth Avenue at 48th Street when the Lafayette Place belfry was destroyed in a storm. In 1949, the bell returned home to Middle Church. It has rung for the inauguration and death of every American President. It also rings during momentous New York City events, including remembering the attacks on 9/11.

**The Sanctuary**

The interior of the church sanctuary is in the Gothic style, with a wood paneled ceiling supported by three longitudinal Howe trusses and five pairs of Gothic spandrels. The height of the ceiling is 23 feet at the sides and 54 feet in the center.

The organ pipes on the east wall are decorative. The present organ was built by Marshall & Ogletree and installed in 2008. This electronic “virtual organ” has 50 native stops, a total of 196 registers, and 44 audio channels.

Besides its beauty, the most novel features of the sanctuary are the stained glass windows located on the side walls which are illuminated artificially—the first time such a system was created and an original feature of the windows as designed by the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company. The subjects of the figure windows are taken from drawings by the German artist, Heinrich Hofmann of Dresden.

Between the illuminated windows, Gothic panels installed in 1900 and 1906 frame glass mosaic memorial tablets honoring ministers and members of the church. Each tablet is crowned with early symbols for the name of Jesus and the Christian church.

**The Church House**

The Church House facade at 50 East 7th Street is of Romanesque composition, with facings of limestone and mottled brick. The Church House features a large Social Hall and a variety of classrooms, meeting rooms, and offices. The height of the ceiling over the Social Hall is 38 feet. A lantern, with 40 side windows and a 10-foot Tiffany glass dome original to the building admit natural light to the room and second-floor gallery. The Social Hall features a pulpit moved to its current location in 2014. The pulpit, made of white statuary marble, was salvaged from the former church on Lafayette Place and placed in the Sanctuary on Second Avenue 1891.

Following an extensive renovation in 2014 by Rosen Johnson Architects, the Church House offers state-of-the-art accessible program space for members and community outreach as well as performance and gathering spaces.
Collegiate Church Information

- **Collegiate Churches of New York** – For details about the history of our church over the years, visit [http://collegiatechurch.org/content/history-collegiate-churches-ny](http://collegiatechurch.org/content/history-collegiate-churches-ny)

- **The Reformed Church in America (RCA)** – At our denominational website—[www.rca.org](http://www.rca.org)—you will find all things RCA. The annual gathering called The General Synod takes place in June on the campus of Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. You are welcome to attend, though, not being a delegate, you will not be able to speak or vote. However, you can follow the entire proceeding at the website. WARNING: Some of the teachings of the denomination are not in line with the Collegiate Churches of New York. Again, take what feeds your soul and discard the rest. Also, feel free to discuss anything you discover with any of the ministers at Middle Church.

- **The United Church of Christ (UCC)** – The United Church of Christ traces its history to the Pilgrims in 1620, who were refugees of the European Reformation. They were champions of freedom and democratic governance, and their values exercised tremendous influence on the course of American history and the development of democratic institutions. They also greatly valued education and began some of the finest educational institutions in America, such as Harvard and Yale. In 1957, a mix of the congregations that originated from this history, which included Congregationalist, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Evangelical and Reformed Churches, created the United Church of Christ. This coming together of denominations created a model for an ecumenical approach to ministry and a movement that has been at the forefront for peace and justice in the world.

- **The Island at the Center of the World** – This wonderful story by Russell Shorto chronicles the history of our church and of Dutch Manhattan.

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Eras of Church History

0000 The Early Church (The Disciples, 35–120 CE)
0500 The Imperial Church (Constantine, 306–337 CE)
1000 The Divided Church (The Great Schism, 1054 CE)
1500 The Reforming Church (Luther’s 95 Theses, 1517 CE)
2000 The Emerging Church (social gospel, liberation/feminist/queer theology, Black Lives Matter)
2500 The Future Church

Selected Timeline of the Collegiate Church

1628 Soon after the establishment of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island, the church is formally organized.
1640 As the colony grows, more churches are established during the next century. Ministers work collegially, preaching in rotation at the various locations.
1664 The Dutch surrender the colony to the British and New Amsterdam becomes New York. The church retains all its original privileges.
1696 The Collegiate Church is incorporated under a charter granted by King William III of England. A triumph for religious liberty, it precludes any union of church and state, recognizing the rights of all Protestant Churches.
1729 The first Middle Collegiate Church is built on Nassau Street between Cedar and Liberty streets.
1772 Independence established from the church in Holland.
1839 The second Middle Collegiate Church is erected at Lafayette Place and 4th Street.
1854 Marble Collegiate Church is built at Fifth Avenue and 29th Street.
1867 The name of the church is changed from “The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in America” to “The Reformed Church in America.”
1871 Collegiate ministers cease preaching in rotation; each has his own congregation.
1892 The current Middle Church is dedicated at Second Avenue and 7th Street.
1892 West End Collegiate Church is dedicated at West End Avenue and 77th Street.
1907 Fort Washington Collegiate Church is established at Fort Washington Avenue and 181st Street.
1986 Deacon Jerriese Johnson founds the East Village Gospel Choir at Middle Church.
2005 The Collegiate Church Installs its first woman and African American as a Senior Collegiate Minister, The Rev. Dr. Jacqueline J. Lewis.
2007 The Collegiate Church founds Intersections International a peace and reconciliation organization.
2017 On May 4, The Collegiate Church of New York officially adds an affiliation with the United Church of Christ.
On earth as it is in heaven. When I was a little girl memorizing the Lord’s Prayer, I struggled with phrases like “hallowed be thy name.” My brain heard “how low wet” and could not understand what that had to do with God! But, on earth as it is in heaven, I got that. Even as my notions of heaven have turned away from streets paved with gold and pearly gates, I am deeply inspired by the idea of a vision of earth to which our aspirations of heaven have come all the way down. I find this passage from John’s Revelation to sum up my hopes and dreams:

“See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”

Revelation 21:3–5

I love the vision of God living among and within human beings, comforting, healing, and making all things new. It inspires me to lean into the world as it can be, and empowers me and my congregation to actively participate in the healing of the world.

Because I serve Middle Church as Senior Minister/Minister for Vision, Worship, and Partnership, planning worship and creating public theology are in my portfolio. Worship generates public theology; it turns people on to imagine the world God desires. With that in mind, everything that happens from the top of worship until it ends helps create God-talk that is transformational.

Our worship is planned a year in advance, with space to drop in details as we move along the year. We ask ourselves, “What is God calling us to ‘story’ this year in worship? What themes will we use, and how will the Lectionary passages help us to support those themes?” At Advent, we focused on “We Are Light,” inspired by the Gospel of John and a piece of wonderful music by singer India.Arie.

We are intentional about themes and we are intentional every Sunday. Who greets at the door? How do they welcome those who are gathering? What do worshippers see first when they arrive? What is the story being told on the bulletin? How do hymns and musical selections offer a radical welcome to a diverse group of people? Who is sitting on the pulpit? How are we responding to the children in our midst? Who reads scripture, offers prayer, and preaches the sermon? How do we ask for the offering and invite people to join us? These are some of the questions we ask when we plan worship because the entire worship celebration tells the story of who God is and how we help God to heal the world.

We are intentional about inclusive language, and about speaking theologically about God’s love shown in Jesus Christ as a wide-open door, not a litmus test that God’s people can fail. Even the language of invitation to join our community is something about which we take care. Recently, we decided that Middle Church is more a “movement” than a “family” and changed the language we use about membership. Thirteen people joined on one Sunday!

We choose music from all eras of traditional Western church music, from the cultures which may be particularly appropriate for this congregation, from cultures which may have interesting and evocative traditions, and according to the specific celebrations member of the congregation may be observing. We also include appropriate selections from the Broadway canon, as well as popular music which may fit a specific theme. In other words, all styles are welcome! The hope is that each person present will find something which particularly appeals to them.

Each Sunday morning, we include a Message for All Ages, when we call the children and “young at heart” to the pulpit for a short lesson about what it means to be people of God in the here and now, and relate it to the theme of that day’s worship celebration. All God’s children—young and old—stay in the worship celebration together. Children frequently serve Communion on first Sundays. The congregation values this inclusion, showing approval with their smiles, hugs, and kind words. Worship incorporates not only words, but visu-
Jacqui Lewis is Senior Minister for Vision, Worship, and Partnership at Middle Collegiate Church.
Get Connected at Middle Church

Middle Church’s virtual gatherings consist of rich and meaningful opportunities for all ages to learn, grow, and lead. Although we have canceled all in-person worship and programming due to the coronavirus outbreak, we are committed to providing ongoing opportunities to gather online. For detailed program descriptions, the current schedule, and to register and receive passwords for virtual gatherings, visit middlechurch.org.

ADULT EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

For more information about adult small groups and classes, contact Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft at ahashcraft@middlechurch.org

Acting Class
Mondays • 6:30–8:00 PM
Work on scenes, monologues, movement, dance, music, and other acting techniques to develop workshop pieces together.

Adult Seasonal Bible Studies and Classes
Watch for meeting dates on middlechurch.org
Throughout the year, bible study series and classes explore faith from a variety of viewpoints. Coming this fall: Intro to the Old Testament, Queer Theology, and The Call Within (Antiracism).

BIBLE in the Middle
Sundays • 10:30–11:30 AM
Lively conversations exploring scripture for deeper meaning in our lives. Contact Amanda to volunteer to lead month-long series on a question or scripture that has been on your mind and heart.

Chat & Chew
Sundays • 1:00–2:00 PM
Join us directly after worship in a virtual meet-up with other online congregants of Middle Church!

Creative Writing
Thursdays • 6:30–8:00 PM
A supportive, creative, and fun environment where ideas move from head to paper. Learn and share your work with one another.

Dinner Party
Sundays • 7:00–8:30 PM
Middle member Gloria Moy hosts a virtual dinner party! If you’re looking for connection and community on Sunday nights, look no further.

¡Hablamos!
Saturdays Biweekly • 2:00–3:15 PM
Our spanish language social club! Through monthly discussion, lectures, food, film and art, we’ll explore our collective voice on the issues facing our Latinx community, ¡Ven como tú eres! (Come as you are!) All levels are welcome.

Heart & Soul
1st Wednesdays • 7:00–8:00 PM
An hour of physical activity, featuring a different style each month from Zumba to Yoga to Hip-Hop. Just come, move with us, and invite friends!

Middle Out Loud
1st Sundays • 1:00–2:00 PM
A monthly small group with queer and LGBTQ+ identified folks and committed allies to have fun, build connections, and discuss pertinent issues to our communities.

MiddlePrays
Prays weekly • Meets periodically
Are you called to pray for Middle Church and her members, our city, country and world? Join our virtual prayer circle to offer prayerful support to our Middle community.

New Adventures
Thursdays • 1:00–2:30 PM
Retired, semi-retired, between jobs, or just have Thursday afternoons free? Join us for rich discussions and activities ranging from voter suppression to chair yoga! Geared toward seniors, but all ages are welcome.

New Members’ Gatherings
2nd Sundays • 10:30–11:30 AM
2nd Wednesdays • 7:00–8:00 PM
So you’ve joined the movement of love and justice. Now what? Meet a minister and others who have joined to get more information on what it means to be a member.

Pub Theology
2nd Mondays • 6:00–7:00 PM
Take God intentionally out of Church walls with us! Gather at a bar near Union Square to talk about life, faith, God, theology, and more. For 20- to 40-year-olds, though all are welcome.

Queer Black Men
2nd and 4th Wednesdays • 7:00–8:30 PM
Through spiritual lenses, the group will examine issues that affect queer black male lives, and all our lives, and respond to these issues.
Racial Justice Listening and Learning  
Watch for meeting dates on middlechurch.org  
Create community through dialogie and doing the internal work necessary to create an anti-racist society, asking hard questions, holding white people accountable, attending equity trainings and book reads together and sharing resources.

Reparations Task Force  
Tuesdays Biweekly • 6:00–7:00 PM  
This group examines Middle’s own history of indigenous exploitation and Black enslavement, to help us think about how we can use the resources generated by white supremacy—from which we still benefit—to create a more just world.

Revolutionary Parenting  
4th Sundays • 10:00–11:00 AM  
Conversations and community at the intersection of parenting, faith, and the belief that we can raise a just, liberated, and ethical generation.

Ukuleliacs  
1st and 3rd Wednesdays • 6:45–8:15 PM  
This is a group of Ukulele beginners who gather monthly for musical fun. Led by Middle member Kaede Helck.

Voter Reform Project  
Sundays Biweekly • 10:00–11:00 AM  
This season’s work focuses on voter registration, Census 2020, and ending voter suppression.

Young Adults Small Group  
4th Sundays • 1:00–2:00 PM  
Join other 20- and 30-somethings to engage connections between faith and justice, sharing stories and asking questions.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION  
For more information about children and youth groups, contact Elise Tiralli at etiralli@middlechurch.org

Wee Care (Age 4 and younger)  
Sundays • on COVID hiatus  
Every Sunday, caregivers provide a safe space for the youngest members of our congregation to begin learning about the Bible through stories, crafts, and activities.

KIDS in the Middle (Grades K–5)  
Sundays • 11:00–11:30 AM  
Elementary students explore the Bible through interactive lessons, creative games, and art projects to learn about faith and justice.

YOUTH in the Middle (Grades 6–12)  
2nd Sundays • 11:00–11:30 AM  
Middle and high school students engage in honest conversations, service-learning projects, and creative responses to connect faith and justice.

MAKE MUSIC WITH MIDDLE  
For more information about choirs and music opportunities, contact John Del Cueto at jdelcueto@middlechurch.org

Village Chorus for Children and Youth (Ages 6–17)  
Sundays • 1:00–2:15 PM  
Though its voices may be small, its message for social justice is mighty. The chorus is featured in worship celebrations throughout the year and presents two annual concerts.

Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir  
Thursdays • 7:00–9:00 PM  
Our Gospel Choir has a powerful and dynamic ministry, both inside and outside the church walls. Their music at rallies for racial, LGBTQ, and economic equality has been featured on The Today Show and All In with Chris Hayes, and Carnegie Hall.

OUTREACH/VOLUNTEER  
For more information about volunteer opportunities, contact Ellen Matlach at ematlach@middlechurch.org

MiddlePrays  
Join our virtual prayer circle to offer prayerful support to our Middle community. Info: middleprays@middlechurch.org

Social Media Ambassadors  
Lend a hand amplifying Middle’s news during big events or share your story with Middle’s online community as a digital ambassador.

Ushers & Greeters  
Sundays and as needed  
Welcome online viewers as a digital usher during streaming worship celebrations and other events.
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YouTube.com/MiddleChurch
Instagram.com/middlechurch
Instagram.com/revjacquilewis
Twitter.com/middlechurch
Twitter.com/RevJacquiLewis
PASTORAL CARE (212) 477-0666 ext 318
PRAYER PORTAL middlechurch.org/prayer
To make a prayer request, request a call from a Middle pastor, or inquire about financial assistance
WEEKLY PRAYER 212-477-0666
Press 4 for English or press 5 for Spanish to hear a weekly prayer, scripture, and reflection.

CONSISTORY
ELDERS Rev. Jacqueline J. Lewis, Ph.D.
Ivan Anderson
Vickie Burns
Pete Grenfell
Darren Johnston CHAIR
Gerald Lazore
Hadaryah Morgan
Jeff Mummert
Claudia Slacik
Shanta Thake
DEACONS Edna Benitez
Lila Boyer
Pamela Edgar
Kelly Smith
Phyllistine Travis
LOCAL DEACONS Dennis Barton
Beth Ellor
Johanna Goepel
Vincent Parham
Kaede Zaitsu-Helck
Representatives to INTERSECTIONS
ELDER – Danita Branam
DEACON – Robert Perry