

# middle church

JUST LOVE

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## Sunday Worship Celebration

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SEPTEMBER 5, 2021 • 11:45 AM • RISING TO FIERCE LOVE

• GATHERING •

**INVITATION TO WORSHIP**

Natalie Perkins

**HYMN**

“What Shall I Render?”

(M. Doroux)

Dionne McClain-Freeney, leader

What shall I render unto God for all His blessings?  
What shall I render, tell me, what shall I give?  
God has everything and everything belongs to Him  
God has everything and everything belongs to Him  
What shall I render, tell me, what shall I give?

All I can render is my body and soul  
All I can render — that is all I can give  
God has everything and everything belongs to Him  
God has everything and everything belongs to Him  
What shall I render, tell me, what shall I give?

• REFLECTING •

**MIDDLE RISING**

Natalie Perkins

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / LORD'S PRAYER**

Natalie Perkins

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.**

Text BULLETIN to 833-786-0733 to receive this week's bulletin to your smart device.

## PASSING OF THE PEACE

Middle Family

Join your Middle family in break-out rooms to pass the peace.

**ANTHEM** "Rich Man's House" (Anne Feeney)  
Madge Dietrich, soloist

**SCRIPTURE** Proverbs 22.1–2, 8–9, 22–23 Ben Perry

**SERMON** "Love Demands a Labor Year" Ben Perry

## • RESPONDING •

### COMMUNION

Ben Perry

Gather for yourself and your household something to eat and something to drink. It can be bread and wine; crackers and grape juice; pancakes and coffee; French toast and mimosas; a piece of fruit and water. Everyone can participate, from the youngest to the oldest.

You will be invited to consecrate those ordinary elements with prayer, and the words of institution. And then we will eat together and drink together, communing with each other and with the Living God. You are welcome, just as you are, to participate in this special ritual of Grace and Love.

**INVITATION TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT** NYS Attorney General Letitia James

**OFFERTORY** "Anthem" (Leonard Cohen)  
Bianca Toscano Michalczak, vocals; Jeff Michalczak, guitar

Donate at [middlechurch.org/donate](https://middlechurch.org/donate) or Venmo @[MiddleCollegiateChurch](https://www.venmo.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch)  
or Text GIVE to 833-786-0733

### DEDICATION PRAYER

Dionne McClain-Freeney

**HYMN** "All Good Gifts" (Stephen Schwartz/John Michael Tebelak)  
Graham Bridgeman, soloist

We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land.  
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand.  
He sends us snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,  
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

All good gifts around us  
Are sent from Heaven above.  
So thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love.

We thank thee then, O Father, for all things bright and good.  
The seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, our food.  
No gifts have we to offer for all thy love imparts  
But that which thou desirest, our humble thankful hearts!

All good gifts around us  
Are sent from Heaven above.  
So thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love.

I really wanna thank you Lord!

**BENEDICTION**

Ben Perry

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**PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION • For all credits, visit [YouTube.com/MiddleNYC](https://www.youtube.com/MiddleNYC).**

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## Sermon in Action

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### THIS WEEK: LOVE DEMANDS A LABOR YEAR

- What would it look like to live in an economy of abundance? How would it feel?
- Our working rights were won through collective action. How can we build that kind of solidarity now?
- Jesus said “put down your nets” as an instruction to abandon predatory economic systems. What nets is God calling you to put down?

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### LAST WEEK: BECKONING US TO LIBERATION

- What are the passions in your life which you might celebrate or honor more than you do? Try writing your own Song of Songs to celebrate what makes the blood pump in your veins!
- Does your way of reading scripture liberate you to “rise to fierce love”? Why or why not?
- How does (or might) loving your whole self (including your body and its needs and desires) help you to do the work of justice in the world?

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

**We are praying for all our Middle family every day.**

Joanna Varghese, Clement Momanyi Ongeta; Ashley, Liz; Gloria Cunningham Burgess Alicia Swain Janna Myers Sheila Robinson Renee Cunningham Marshall Drexel Cunningham Valencia Armijio Brittany Davis Reddick Cunningham Sheila Harding Skip Reid Amanda Ascraft Jacqui Lewis Pam Payne Family Marc Aronson Mia McClain Bridget Kelso Anthony Joe Tigner Robert Cunningham Vallory Leca Devora Jones Louise Tatum Michael Boss Connie Acquah and The Raider Nation.

**To make a prayer request**, request a call from a Middle pastor, or inquire about financial assistance, visit [middlechurch.org/prayer/](https://middlechurch.org/prayer/).

# Welcome to Middle Church

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**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](http://middlechurch.org).

**Text BULLETIN to (833) 786-0733 to receive this week's bulletin to your smart device.**

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**VIDEOS AND PODCASTS** — Worship music and sermon videos: [youtube.com/MiddleNYC](https://youtube.com/MiddleNYC).  
Re-watch the Worship Celebration livestream: [facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch](https://facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch).  
Middle Church Celebrations podcast: [middlechurch.org/podcasts](http://middlechurch.org/podcasts).

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## DEAR MIDDLE FAMILY—

**Giving at Middle** — With summer in full bloom, we have turned the corner into our new fiscal and programming year at Middle Church (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022). Our Consistory has approved our annual budget and we the congregation have a goal to raise \$1,000,000 in contributions this year to fund our ministry programming. This brings us in line with our agreed-upon target of funding 50% of our budget by 2022. We are SO excited about what is in store for this community of love and justice seekers this year as we continue to claim and reframe Christianity from a place of Love. Period.

Please take a moment to let us know how you plan to invest in powering this movement with your gifts this year by using the options below, or feel free to reach out to our Director of Development, Devon Mosley ([stewardship@middlechurch.org](mailto:stewardship@middlechurch.org)) to discuss your giving plans.

### To support our ongoing ministry, programs, and operations:

- Visit [middlechurch.org/donate](http://middlechurch.org/donate)
- Venmo @MiddleCollegiateChurch
- Text **GIVE** to **833-786-0733**

### To support our Middle Rising rebuilding efforts as we continue plans for our future space:

- Visit [middlechurch.org/rising](http://middlechurch.org/rising)
- Venmo @MiddleRising
- Text **GIVE** to **833-786-0733** (select **Middle Rising**)

### To mail contributions to Middle Church, please address them to:

- Middle Collegiate Church, Attn: Stewardship Dept.  
50 East 7th Street, New York, NY 10003

**Charitable Giving** may require use of Middle Collegiate Church's EIN: 13-5564117 (aka "Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of the City of New York")

—In gratitude, Jacqui, Darren Johnston—Consistory Chair, and the Middle Church Consistory

**Middle Mixer!**  
**In-Person Summer Gathering**  
**SEP 21 • 6:00 PM • St. Nicholas Park**  
[CLICK HERE](#) for more information

# Middle Church 2021 9/11 Commemoration



This September marks the 20th anniversary of 9/11. In the immediate aftermath of that tragedy, Middle served as a resting place and organizing hub for first responders, and a refuge for a traumatized city. Some of our members first entered our doors through the smoke rising from those ashes, to find love that preached and continues to preach love amid any flame.

While 9/11 may be named by its date, its trauma extends far beyond that fateful day. We lost friends and family. Others, who responded, have been left with lifelong health impairments. Still others found themselves receiving Islamophobic bigotry no tragedy should engender. Our world still bears scars of that hatred transformed into policy. And our community carries wounds that time can tend but never heal.

This fall, we're offering a few different ways you can commemorate what we lost. We'll honor this ongoing pain by doubling down on the same love that sustained us 20 years ago—the love that connects us now.

## ALL SEPTEMBER:

### Middle's Liberty Bell at the New-York Historical Society

Visit [the New-York Historical Society exhibit](#) on the resiliency of New York City, featuring Middle's own Liberty Bell, salvaged from our sanctuary. This exhibit tells the story of how our city continues to respond from tragedy in fierce love—a story at the very heart of 9/11 and the months and years that followed.

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9:

### 9/11 Interfaith Walk

We invite you to join our interfaith partners for a [9/11 Interfaith Walk](#) to five houses of worship in Midtown East. We will begin our interfaith peace walk at St. Patrick's Cathedral, then we will walk to Central Synagogue. From there, we will walk to The Islamic Society of Mid-Manhattan and then walk to a Hope Church Midtown. Finally, we will end our walk at the Manhattan Sikh Center. Let's embody a love that refuses to be divided.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11:

### Children of Abraham 9/11 Peace Vigil

Join an interfaith peace vigil cohosted by Middle, with speakers from different faith traditions, music and ritual to mark the moment.

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12:

### Special Worship Celebration and 9/11 Commemoration

Join us for [a special worship commemoration](#). Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins will preach "Hard Times Require Furious Dancing," asking how we can process the pain that remains stuck in our bodies. Rev. Ben Perry will talk to the youth about what it was like to be a young person on 9/11 in the shadow of the city. And we invite you to bring two candles to light as we respond to a prayer from Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, embodying a love that can never be extinguished.

# Middle Events Calendar

All events are listed in ET unless noted.

Visit [middlechurch.org](http://middlechurch.org) for details and the latest updates.

**Registration for all programming ends 1 hour before the event begins, so be sure to RSVP!**

**EVERY DAY: Prayer Phone—Call 212-477-0666 and press 4 for English or press 5 for Spanish to hear a weekly prayer, scripture, and reflection from a Middle pastor. Updated Mondays, 8:30 a.m.**

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

- 10:00 a.m.: [Voter Reform Project](#)
- 10:30 a.m.: [Bible in the Middle](#)
- 11:00 a.m.: [Kids Sunday Enrichment](#)
- 11:45 a.m.: [Interactive Worship Celebration](#)
- 12:45 p.m.: [Chat and Chew](#)
- 7:00 p.m.: [Dinner Party](#)

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 MIDDLE STAFF HOLIDAY

- 6:30 p.m.: [Acting Class](#)

## TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

- 5:45 p.m.: [Reparations Task Force](#)

## WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

- 7:00 p.m.: [New Members Gathering](#)
- 7:30 p.m.: [Queer Black Men in the Middle](#)

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

- 1:00 p.m.: [New Adventures](#)
- 5:00 p.m.: [9/11 Interfaith Walk](#)
- 6:00 p.m.: [Young Adults Small Group](#)
- 6:30 p.m.: [Creative Writing Group](#)
- 7:00 p.m.: [Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir](#)

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

- 8:30 p.m.: [Children of Abraham 9/11 Peace Vigil](#)

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

- 10:30 a.m.: [Bible in the Middle](#)
- 11:00 a.m.: [Kids Sunday Enrichment](#)
- 11:30 a.m.: [Rev. Amanda on the Run](#)  
[Worship Watch Party: Gantry Plaza State Park, Queens](#)  
(cancelled in the event of rain)
- 11:45 a.m.: [Interactive Worship Celebration](#)
- 12:45 p.m.: [Chat and Chew](#)

**MCN**  
Muslim Community Network

PRESENTS

# CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM VIRTUAL PEACE VIGIL

Planting the seeds of peace on  
the 20th anniversary of 9/11

SEPTEMBER 11, 2021  
8:30 PM Eastern

REGISTER HERE: <http://tiny.cc/peacewalk>

HOSTED BY  
Dr. Debbie Almontaser, Rabbi Ellen Lippmann,  
Rev. Tom Martinez

CO-SPONSORS

B'NAI B'RITH JESHURUN  
NYDIS  
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United Methodist Women  
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MUSLIM-JEWISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE  
middle church  
JMC  
CBE  
LAB/SHUL  
PARK SLOPE JEWISH CENTER  
SAJ  
CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE  
Rabbi Simkha Weintraub,  
Rabbinic Director, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Retired

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## MIDDLE CHURCH ZOOM COVENANT

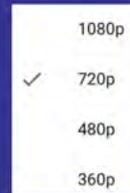
- Please take time before the meeting to download the Zoom app and/or familiarize yourself with zoom.us — it's easy and free to do so. **If you need help troubleshooting, [CLICK HERE](#).**
- Please visit this page at least 5 minutes before your meeting to ensure you are using the correct link for your intended meeting.
- Upon entering, confirm that you are in the right meeting.
- Please change your display name. Enter your Full Name, pronouns, and your city. i.e. "Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft (she/her, NYC)"
- Upon entering the meeting, please hit video, as we'd love to see you.
- Also, hit mute to avoid any audio issues. Unmute yourself when you'd like to weigh in on the conversation.
- Sometimes, the host of the meeting will mute and unmute everyone as the meeting requires.
- If you have a question related to the conversation but would prefer to just type it in, there is a "Chat" section on the Zoom video where you can type in a question. We'll be checking that chat box often to ensure we address all member comments before the meeting ends.
- Zoom participants will adhere to demonstrating Revolutionary Love at all times. If a participant's behavior is deemed inappropriate by the meeting host, they will be removed. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to: harassment, threats, bigotry of any kind, and not identifying themselves.
- For additional troubleshooting, see the sidebar.
- We are thrilled you are here and look forward to a wonderful time together.

### TROUBLESHOOTING FAQ

Having trouble with the livestream or Zoom call? Try one (or all) of these tricks to see if it fixes the problem.



REFRESH THE PAGE



CHANGE THE VIDEO QUALITY IN THE VIDEO SETTINGS



PAUSE THE STREAM AND WATCH ON A DELAY

And, make sure you've powered down your device recently!  
As Anne Lamott says, "Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you."

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### VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- [AA Meetings](#) can be found [here](#).
- **Downtown Meditation** offers online [Wednesday Dharma Talk and Sitting at 7:00 pm](#)

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## MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH IS ON LENAPE LAND ON TURTLE ISLAND.

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### MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

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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.

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### MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH

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

Rev. Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft – *Executive Minister for Justice and Community Development*

Rev. Darrell Hamilton – *Executive Minister for Operations and Resource Development*

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

Rev. Natalie Perkins – *Director of Digital Ministry*

SANCTUARY 112 Second Avenue (at 7th St.)

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Twitter.com/middlechurch

WEBSITE middlechurch.org

Twitter.com/RevJacquiLewis

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### CONSISTORY

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#### ELDERS

Rev. Jacqueline J. Lewis, Ph.D.

Ivan Anderson

Vickie Burns

Pete Grenfell

Darren Johnston CHAIR

Gerald Lazore

Hadaryah Morgan

Claudia Slacik

Shanta Thake

Tom Smucker INTERSECTIONS

#### DEACONS

Edna Benitez

Deborah Berg McCarthy

Thelma Boyiri

Pamela Edgar

Beth Ellor

Kelly Smith

Dennis Barton INTERSECTIONS

#### LOCAL DEACONS

Linda Doria

Johanna Goepel

Vincent Parham

Sandra Santana

Kaede Zaitzu-Helck

- **To support our ongoing ministry, programs, and operations:** Visit [middlechurch.org/donate](http://middlechurch.org/donate) • Venmo @MiddleCollegiateChurch • Text GIVE to 833-786-0733
- **To support our Middle Rising rebuilding efforts:** Visit [middlechurch.org/rising](http://middlechurch.org/rising) • Venmo @MiddleRising • Text GIVE to 833-786-0733 (select Middle Rising)