



RECLAIM REPAIR REBUILD  
**WORSHIP**  
**CELEBRATION**  
REFRAME

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## Sunday Worship Celebration

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AUGUST 3, 2025 • 11:45 AM • JUST LOVE LIBERATES

• GATHERING •

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

**HYMN**

[“Open the Eyes of My Heart”](#)

(Paul Baloche)

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Monique Fortuné

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Monique Fortuné

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.**

**CONGREGATIONAL AMEN**

(Trad.)

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Monique Fortuné

*As you are able, please make your way to the microphone to also greet those worshipping with us online*

• REFLECTING •

**ANTHEM**

“Give Me A Clean Heart”

Soloist – Tanisha Anderson

(Margaret Douroux)

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

**Nehemiah 8** <sup>1</sup>all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup>Accordingly, Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup>He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

<sup>5</sup>And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people, and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup>Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

<sup>8</sup>So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

<sup>9</sup>And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord, and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

**Luke 4** <sup>14</sup>Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. <sup>15</sup>He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

<sup>16</sup>When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup>and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup>"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to set free those who are oppressed,  
<sup>19</sup>to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."



<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. <sup>21</sup> Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

**SERMON** Today

Michael Livingston

• RESPONDING •

**INVITATION TO REFLECT**

**COMMUNION**

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins  
Monique Fortuné

**INVITATION TO JOIN MOVEMENT**

Sandra Santana

*If you'd like to join our movement for love and justice, go to [middlechurch.org/join](http://middlechurch.org/join).*

**OFFERTORY**

"Faithful"

Soloist – Noël Wippler and ensemble

(Wayne Robinson)

*Donate at [middlechurch.org/donate](http://middlechurch.org/donate) or Venmo [@MiddleCollegiateChurch](https://www.venmo.com/@MiddleCollegiateChurch)*

**DOXOLOGY**

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.

(Trad.)

**DEDICATION PRAYER**

Sandra Santana

**HYMN**

["Over My Head"](#)

(Trad.)

**BENEDICTION**

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

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**PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION**

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**Director of Music and Choirs** • John Del Cueto

**Middle Church Band** • Dionne McClain-Freeney (Pianist), Booker King (Bass), and Jonathon Peretz (Drums)



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**July Playlist:** Did you miss anything at Middle last month? Check out our monthly recap for a selection of moving musical performances and a touching sermon. Watch them again or share the playlist with friends.



**PRAYER CORNER** *Please pray with us this week for these people and concerns.*  
**We are praying for all our Middle family every day.**

To make a prayer request, speak to a minister, or inquire about financial assistance, visit [middlechurch.org/prayer/](http://middlechurch.org/prayer/).

## Welcome to Middle Church

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**We are glad you're here today!** If you are visiting for the first time, please fill out the card you were given with the bulletin and drop it in the offering bag when it comes by. We hope you'll come back often to be with us!

To learn more about the history of this church— we call it a movement — or to learn about New Members classes, or to get involved with our community groups, visit us at [www.middlechurch.org](http://www.middlechurch.org).

By entering the Sanctuary, you grant Middle Collegiate Church unrestricted right to use and publish, transmit, or telecast photographs or likenesses that might be taken of you this day for use in communications related to the church. You agree that all such material will be the sole property of Middle Collegiate Church.

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### GIVING AT MIDDLE

Our new sacred space is almost complete! Easter Sunday 2025 is our return to 50 E. 7th Street as we near the end of Phase 1 of rebuilding on our site following our tragic fire in 2020. Thanks to our dedicated members and friends, our three-year Middle Rising "One Fund" Campaign is almost complete as well. It is now time to fund what we put into this building! We've raised \$9.3M of our \$10.5M goal to fund Middle's operations, staff, programming, and some of the construction costs.



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

You can help us complete this campaign to Restore and Renew our Ministry Brick by Brick. Starting Easter Sunday through May 15th, you have the opportunity to purchase a commemorative brick to make your mark on this journey. Every brick you fund becomes part of Middle's story, a testament to the power of collective love and resilience. **A Commitment to Freedom Rising** - \$1,000 per brick placed near our Liberty Bell on the Freedom Wall, symbolizing our quest for justice and liberation. **A Celebration of Middle Rising** - \$250 per brick placed near our elevators, symbolizing our rise from the ashes. To purchase a brick visit <https://www.middlechurch.org/middle-rising>.



Sunday Worship and programs happen thanks to our clergy, staff, musicians, volunteers, and all of you who participate in-person and online. We can't do it without you! Please visit [www.middlechurch.org/donate](http://www.middlechurch.org/donate) to make your gifts to support our ongoing operations and programming of this new building. We are the ones we've been waiting for and together, with you onboard, we will have enough!

Love— *Jacqui, Vickie Burns—Board Chair, and the entire Middle Church Board*

**To support our ongoing ministry, programs, operations, and rebuilding:**

- Visit [middlechurch.org/donate](http://middlechurch.org/donate)
- Venmo @MiddleCollegiateChurch
- To mail contributions to Middle Church, please address them to:

Middle Collegiate Church  
Attn: Stewardship Dept.  
50 E. 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")

Please reach out to our Stewardship Office ([stewardship@middlechurch.org](mailto:stewardship@middlechurch.org)) to discuss any questions about your giving plan.

**DONATE BY PHONE**

To make a donation to Middle Church, scan this code with your smartphone camera.



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

# Middle Events Calendar

All events are listed in ET unless noted.

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

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 3

10:00 a.m.: [Voter Reform Group](#)  
10:00 a.m.: [Bible in the Middle](#)  
11:45 a.m.: [Worship Celebration](#)  
12:45 p.m.: [Virtual Chat & Chew](#)  
1:00 p.m.: Community Social Hour

## MONDAY, AUGUST 4

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

## TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

6:00 p.m.: [Reparations Task Force](#)  
8:00 p.m.: [Middle Book Read: This Thing Of Ours](#)

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

8:00 a.m.: [Pray to Rise](#)  
1:00 p.m.: [Fierce Urgency of Now Cohorts](#)  
7:00 p.m.: [Ukuleliacs](#)

## THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

1:00 p.m.: [New Adventures](#)  
4:00 p.m.: [Middle Church x EVNC x EVLOVESNYC Celebration!](#)  
6:30 p.m.: Creative Writing

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 10

10:00 a.m.: [Bible in the Middle](#)  
11:45 a.m.: [Worship Celebration](#)  
12:45 p.m.: [Virtual Chat & Chew](#)  
1:00 p.m.: Community Social Hour

FOR MORE INFORMATION about Middle Church events, activities, and the latest updates, scan this code with your smartphone camera.

### Want to get more involved?

Please reach out to our Director of Programs, Events, and Community Engagement, **Elise Tiralli**, to learn more about programming –

[etiralli@middlechurch.org](mailto:etiralli@middlechurch.org).



We warmly invite you to join our ushering and hospitality ministries! Every Sunday, we need ushers to offer radical welcome and volunteers to host our Community Social Hour after worship. If you're interested in serving as an usher or sponsoring snacks for the community, please reach out to our Care Minister, **Jillian Langford** – [jlangford@middlechurch.org](mailto:jlangford@middlechurch.org).



The poster features a blue background with a sun icon in the top left and a paper airplane in the top right. The text reads: "middle church JUST LOVE FREEDOM SUMMER CAMP SIGN UP TODAY!". Below this, two callouts specify "Grades K - 3 July 9 - 11" and "Grades 4 - 6 Aug 25 - 29". The bottom half of the poster shows a collage of photos of children and adults engaged in various activities. At the bottom, it says "Email [jlangford@middlechurch.org](mailto:jlangford@middlechurch.org) for more information!"



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## MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH

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Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, Senior Minister  
Macky Alston, M.Div. Executive Minister  
Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins, Executive Minister for Digital Church  
Jillian Langford, MTS ABD, Minister for Care & Congregational Life  
Rev. Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft, Consulting Minister for Justice & Community Organizing  
And Team Middle

**MAILING** Middle Collegiate Church  
PO Box 1400  
New York NY 10276

**WORSHIP** Sundays at 11:45 AM ET online & in-person  
at: Middle Collegiate Church  
50 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street New York, NY 10012

**E-MAIL** [middleinfo@middlechurch.org](mailto:middleinfo@middlechurch.org)

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

Share our message on social media  
and invite others to like, follow, and  
connect with us.

[Facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch](https://Facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch)

[Facebook.com/RevJacquiLewis](https://Facebook.com/RevJacquiLewis)

[YouTube.com/MiddleNYC](https://YouTube.com/MiddleNYC)

[Instagram.com/middlechurch](https://Instagram.com/middlechurch)

[Instagram.com/revjacquilewis](https://Instagram.com/revjacquilewis)

[Twitter.com/middlechurch](https://Twitter.com/middlechurch)

[Twitter.com/RevJacquiLewis](https://Twitter.com/RevJacquiLewis)

[Jacquilewis.substack.com/](https://Jacquilewis.substack.com/)

[Middlechurch.substack.com/](https://Middlechurch.substack.com/)



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THE WORD

# 452 Open the Eyes of My Heart



O-pen the eyes of my heart, Lord. O-pen the eyes of my heart;  
 I want to see you; I want to see you;  
 to see you high and lift - ed up,  
 shin-ing in the light of your glo - ry. Pour out your  
 pow - er and love as we sing "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly."  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly.  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, I want to see you.

BACK



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# OVER MY HEAD

1. O-ver my head I hear mu - sic in the  
 2. O-ver my head I hear sing - ing in the  
 3. O-ver my head I see free - dom in the

air. O-ver my head I hear mu - sic in the  
 air. O-ver my head I hear sing - ing in the  
 air. O-ver my head I see free - dom in the

air. O-ver my head I hear mu - sic in the  
 air. O-ver my head I hear sing - ing in the  
 air. O-ver my head I see free - dom in the

air;  
 air; There must be a God some - where!  
 air;

Text: Traditional  
Tune: OVER MY HEAD, 11 11 11 7; traditional; arr. by Nolan Williams, Jr., b.1969, © 2000, GIA Publications, Inc.

BACK



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