JUST LOVE LIBERATES

middle church

WORSHIP CELEBRATION

SEP 20, 2026 • 11:45 AM • HOMECOMING • HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

• GATHERING •

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

HYMN What the World Needs Now Is Love (Burt Bacharach/Hal David)

[Chorus] What the world needs now is love, sweet love
It's the only thing that there's just too little of
What the world needs now is love, sweet love
No, not just for some but for everyone

[Verse 1] Lord, we don't need another mountain
There are mountains and hillsides enough to climb
There are oceans and rivers enough to cross
Enough to last till the end of time

[Chorus]

[Verse 2] Lord, we don't need another meadow
There are cornfields and wheat fields enough to grow
There are sunbeams and moonbeams enough to shine
Oh, listen Lord, if You want to know

[Chorus]

What the world needs now is love, sweet love
What the world needs now is love, sweet love
What the world needs now is love, sweet love

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES Rev. Amanda Hambrick

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

SIYAHAMBA

We are marching in the light of God
We are marching in the light of God.
Marcharemos en la luz de Dios
Marcharemos en la luz de Dios

We are marching, marching
We are marching, marching
We are marching in the light of God.
Marcharemos, siempre marcharemos
Marcharemos en la luz de Dios
Marcharemos, siempre machairs
Marcharemos en la luz de Dios

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Seasons of Love (Jonathan Larson)
Ensemble - Soloists - Natalie Renee Perkins/Riqi Velez

LORD'S PRAYER Rev. Natalie Renee 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.**

CHORAL AMEN (Trad.)

PASSING OF THE PEACE Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

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

• REFLECTING •

ANTHEM You're All I Need to Get By (Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell)
Sam Waite/Ivan Anderson

SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 13 Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis

[1]If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. [2]And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. [3]If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

[4]Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant [5]or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; [6]it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. [7]It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

[8]Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. [9]For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; [10]but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. [11]When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

[12]For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. [13]And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

SERMON A Love Letter to Paul and All Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis

• RESPONDING •

RENEWAL OF VOWS Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

POWER THIS MOVEMENT Adam Paasch & Seb Ventura

*If you'd like to join our movement for love and justice, go to **middlechurch.org/join**.*

OFFERTORY Love Train (Kenneth Gamble & Leon Huff)
Ensemble

Donate at middlechurch.org/donate or Venmo @MiddleChurch

DOXOLOGY (Trad.)

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.

DEDICATION PRAYER Adam Paasch & Seb Ventura

HYMN All You Need Is Love (John Lennon & Paul McCartney)

Chorus:
Love, love, love
Love, love, love
Love, love, love

There's nothin' you can do that can't be done
Nothin' you can sing that can't be sung
Nothin' you can say, but you can learn how to play the game
It's easy (Chorus)

Nothin' you can make that can't be made
No one you can save that can't be saved
Nothin' you can do, but you can learn how to be you in time
It's easy (Chorus)

There's nothin' you can know that isn't known
Nothin' you can see that isn't shown
There's nowhere you can be that isn't where you're meant to be
It's easy (Chorus)

BENEDICTION Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis

PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION

Director of Music and Choirs • John Del Cueto
Musicians in Worship • Dionne McClain-Freeney (Piano), Bernice Brooks (Drums), Booker King (Bass)

August 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

We are praying for all our Middle family every day.
Please pray with us this week for these people:

Allan Dabrio Marrero & Matthew, Donna and Elizabeth Johnson, Eddie Russo, Gene Smith, Patrice Stone, Sandy Hardwick-Pettis, Tina Cernero's sister Renee, the family of Nolan Wells, the family of Ralph Robertson, Hirity Tedla Afley, the Slazer family, Laci Beckett, Arthur Beckett, Daniel Bracken, Betty Jeanne Rueters-Ward, Claudia Slazik, Steve, Briana, Cody, Luke and Faye, Hannah & Lane Serota, Lisa Rogers, the family of Lynn Harris, Paul & Nancie Carlson, and for all of those whom Melvin Cunningham holds in his heart.

To make a prayer request, speak to a minister, or inquire about financial assistance, visit middlechurch.org/prayer.

Welcome to Middle Church

We are glad you're here today! If you are visiting for the first time, we invite you to head to middlechurch.org/welcome to learn more about Middle and to get connected. 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 middlechurch.org.

By entering the Sanctuary, you grant Middle 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 Church.

HERE ARE ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT MIDDLE CHURCH

Back by Popular Demand! You can still leave a lasting mark on Middle Church's future in the very foundation of our renewed home. Bricks are a powerful way to honor loved ones, celebrate milestones, and show your commitment to love, justice, and joy. Each engraved brick will be placed on our Rising Wall or Freedom Wall, symbols of our collective story and our bold vision for the future.

Your gift not only secures your place in Middle's history, it fuels the fierce love that flows through our worship, justice work, art, and care for one another.

Give a brick today: bit.ly/4su4wHr Middle has always been more than a building—it's the love, justice, music, art, and community that flow within and beyond our sacred space. To keep that spirit thriving, we need your continued support for all the vital things that make Middle, Middle: our staff, programs, worship, justice work, and care for one another.

Please give at middlechurch.org/donate. 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! 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*

MAKE A DONATION TO MIDDLE CHURCH

Charitable Giving will require a search by EIN 90-0458939 Congregational Collegiate Collective in order to select Middle Church. Congregational Collegiate Collective is a nonprofit organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our new legal name is Middle Ministry, LLC, as a wholly owned subsidiary, but we are authorized to do business and be known as Middle Church. All donations should be written to Middle Church.

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

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

- Visit middlechurch.org/donate
- Venmo @MiddleChurch

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

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

DONATE BY PHONE
To make a donation to Middle Church, scan this QR code.

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MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, Senior Minister, Public Theology and Partnerships
Rev. Macky Alston, Executive Minister, Operations and Development
Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins, Executive Minister, Hybrid Church
Rev. Amanda Hambrick, Community Minister for Justice & Organizing
Making it Happen: Middle Church Staff, and YOU!

MAILING	Middle Church 50 E 7th Street New York NY 10003	Share our message on social media and invite others to like, follow, and connect with us.
WORSHIP	Sundays at 11:45 AM ET online & in-person at: Middle Church 50 East 7th Street New York, NY 10003	Facebook.com/MiddleCollegiateChurch Facebook.com/Rev.Jacqui.Lewis YouTube.com/MiddleNYC Instagram.com/middlechurch Instagram.com/revjacquilewis Twitter.com/middlechurch Twitter.com/RevJacquiLewis Jacquilewis.substack.com/ Middlechurch.substack.com/
E-MAIL	middleinfo@middlechurch.org	
WEBSITE	middlechurch.org	
PHONE	(212) 477-0667	

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

Middle Church is part of New York's Reformed Association of the United Church of Christ (UCC) denomination. For more information about the UCC please visit ucc.org.

You can sign up for Happenings–the weekly newsletter–to stay abreast of what the New York Conference Association is doing. If you have signed up for Happenings, the eblast from the New York Conference, and you aren't receiving it, please check your spam folders. If you would like to sign up to receive Happenings every Wednesday, visit bit.ly/4cH3nHI.

Middle Events Calendar

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
9:30 AM Butterfly Outreach Ministry
10:00 AM Bible in the Middle
10:00 AM Just Love Family Programming
11:45 AM Worship Celebration: Homecoming and Vow Renewal Ceremony
12:00 PM Just Love Kids
12:45 PM Chat & Chew – Hybrid
1:00 PM Vow Renewal Reception
1:00 PM Butterfly Distribution
1:15 PM Village Chorus for Children & Youth

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
6:30 PM Acting Class – Hybrid
7:00 PM Queer Connections

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
7:00 PM East Village Group – AA
8:30 PM East Village Group – AA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
8:00 AM Pray to Rise – Online
6:00 PM Sound Healing Sanctuary
7:30 PM Queer Black Men

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
1:00 PM New Adventures – Online
6:30 PM Creative Writing – Online
7:00 PM Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir – Hybrid

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
9:30 AM Butterfly Outreach Ministry
10:00 AM Bible in the Middle
10:00 AM Just Love Family Programming
11:45 AM Worship Celebration: Homecoming & JJGC 40th Anniversary
12:00 PM Just Love Kids
12:45 PM Chat & Chew – Hybrid
1:00 PM Sermon Talkback with Author Robert P. Jones. Backslide: Reclaiming a Faith and a Nation After the Christian Turn Against Democracy
1:00 PM Community Social Hour
1:00 PM Butterfly Distribution
1:15 PM Village Chorus for Children & Youth
1:30 PM Leadership Lab Reunion

All events are listed in ET unless noted.

Visit middlechurch.org for details and updates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about Middle Church events, activities, and the latest updates, visit middlechurch.org/events or scan this QR code.

Want to get more involved? To learn more about programs, regular volunteer opportunities, and community groups, please reach out to our Director, Events and Community Center,
Elise Tiralli - etiralli@middlechurch.org.

Want to host your next event at Middle?
Visit middlechurch.org/rentals or scan this QR code to find our rates and inquiry form here: