



SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 • 11:45 AM

• GATHERING •

INTROIT

Karen Coughlin

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

HYMN

Woke Up This Morning

Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind
Stayed on freedom
Hallelu, Hallelu, Halleluia.

- 2) Aint no harm to keep your mind...
- 3) Walkin' and talkin' with my mind'

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Elise Tiralli

SIYAHAMBA

We are marching in the light of God
We are marching in the light of God.
We are marching in the light of God
We are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, we are marching
We are marching, in the light of God.
We are marching, we are marching
We are marching, in the light of God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Macky Alston

LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Macky Alston

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. Macky Alston

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

• REFLECTING •

ANTHEM

I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free

(Nina Simone / Billy Taylor)

Carmi Harris

SCRIPTURE

The Acts of Paul and Thecla 20.4b-21.1 & 43.1-3

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

And when the governor had considered the counsel he was given, he called Thecla, saying, "Why do you not marry Thamyris according to the law of the Iconians?" ⁵ But she stood looking intently at Paul, and when she did not answer, Theocleia, her mother, cried out, saying, "Burn the lawless one! Burn the one who refuses to be a bride in the middle of the theater so that all the women taught by this man will be afraid!" ²¹ ¹ And the governor was greatly moved and had Paul whipped and thrown out of the city; but Thecla he condemned to be burned.

And she found that Thamyris had died, but that her mother was alive. And she called her mother and said to her, "Theocleia, Mother, can you believe that the Lord lives in heaven?" ² For if you desire money, the Lord will give it to you through me, or your child. Look, I am standing before you." ³ And bearing witness to these things, she departed for Seleucia, enlightening many with the word of God.

SERMON

Going Home Anyway

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins

• RESPONDING •

INVITATION TO REFLECT

POWER THIS MOVEMENT

Carol Geu

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

OFFERTORY

Astonishing

(Little Women Music: Jason Howland Lyrics:

Mindi Dickstein Book: Allan Knee)

Caelyn Osbern

Donate at middlechurch.org/donate or Venmo [@MiddleChurch](https://venmo.com/MiddleChurch)

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

Carol Geu



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

HYMN

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Lift ev'ry voice and sing, Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith
that the dark past has taught us;
Sing a song full of the hope
that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun Of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our people sighed?
We have come over a way
that with tears has been watered;
We have come, treading our path
through the blood of the slaughtered;
Out from the gloomy past, Till we now stand at last,
Where the bright gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might, Led us into the light,
Keep us for ever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places,
our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine
of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, May we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.

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BENEDICTION

Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins



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PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION

Director of Music and Choirs • John Del Cueto

Musicians in Worship • Dionne McClain-Freeney (piano), Carmi Harris (soloist), Caelyn Osbern (soloist)

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.

<i>Please pray with us this week for these people:</i>
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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, Hurity 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, Karen Coughlin's friend Michele Raferty, 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](https://www.venmo.com/@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 7 th 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 7 th 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/4cH3nHl.



**middle
church**

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Middle Events Calendar

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

- 9:30 AM [Butterfly Outreach Ministry](#)
- 10:00 AM [Bible in the Middle](#)
- 10:00 AM [Just Love Family Programming](#)
- 10:00 AM [Voter Reform Meeting – Online](#)
- 11:45 AM [Worship Celebration](#)**
- 12:00 PM [Just Love Kids](#)
- 12:45 PM [Chat & Chew – Hybrid](#)
- 1:00 PM [Community Social Hour](#)
- 1:00 PM [Butterfly Distribution](#)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

- 7:00 PM [East Village Group – AA](#)
- 8:30 PM [East Village Group – AA](#)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

- 8:00 AM [Pray to Rise – Online](#)
- 6:00 PM [Sound Healing Sanctuary](#)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

- 1:00 PM [New Adventures – Online](#)
- 6:30 PM [Creative Writing – Online](#)
- 7:00 PM [Jerriese Johnson Gospel Choir – Hybrid](#)

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 [Village Chorus for Children & Youth](#)
- 1:00 PM [Community Social Hour](#)
- 1:00 PM [Butterfly Distribution](#)

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:



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