

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 3, 2017

Prelude *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* Gilbert Martin, arr.
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Introit *O Day of God, Draw Nigh* Robert Scott,
William Crotch

Call to Worship

*Hymn “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn” No. 138

Choral Anthem *A Gaelic Blessing* John Rutter
Solo: Jennifer Townshend

Advent Wreath Ritual See insert.

Morning Prayers and the Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
And the power,
And the glory, forever.
Amen.

Prayer Response “O Little Town of Bethlehem” No. 144, v. 4
*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our God, Emmanuel.*

*Hymn “Here I Am, Lord” No. 452

Scripture See insert.

Sermon “Global Warming”

Offering

Offertory Music *The Eyes of All* Jean Berger

*Doxology See insert.

Communion Hymn “All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly” No. 419

Silent Preparation

The Bread (unison)
Let us recall that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

The Cup (unison)
In the same way he took the cup after supper saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

Prayer after Communion (unison)
Gracious God, you remain a sacred mystery to us. You have brought Good News for all the people and we will not be afraid. We are hungry for your love which surpasses all our understanding; we are thirsty for your spirit that never runs dry. In this meal nourish our souls, feed our minds, and quench our deepest longings, that we may glorify you every day of our lives. Amen.

*Hymn “Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates” No. 129

Benediction

Benediction Response “Go in Peace” No. 445

Postlude *Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne* Gilbert Martin, arr.

**Please stand as you are able.*

*Please, no food or drinks in the Sanctuary during the service.
Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices before the service.*

TODAY

10:00 a.m. Bible Study
11:00 a.m. Sermon, Rev. Susan Sparks; music by Paul Stephan and the MABC Choir
12:00 p.m. Coffee Hour

Ushers: Jacki Friedmann and Joseph Pilla
Coffee Hour: MABC Board of Deacons
Camera: Travis Dover

Choir: Jennifer Townshend (soprano), Karen Rich (soprano),
Alexandra de Suze (alto), Richard Binder (tenor),
Brian Long (baritone), Doug Shapiro (bass)

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. The liturgical color for the season of Advent is blue. Blue, traditionally the color of the sky, reminds us to watch for the signs of the coming King—choirs of angels, starbursts in the heavens—and to prepare ourselves for his reign. During Advent, we continue to hope for the day when Christ will return from that same blue sky into which he ascended. Come, Lord Jesus, come!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

Save the Date! Thursday, December 7, 7:00 p.m. - Movie Screening: Milwaukee 53206. Join us for a screening of the award-winning documentary film, *Milwaukee 53206*. From the film website: “MILWAUKEE 53206 chronicles the lives of those living in the ZIP code that incarcerates the highest percentage of black men in America, up to 62%. Through the intimate stories of three 53206 residents, we witness the high toll that excessive jail sentencing takes on individuals and families that make up the community. The film examines Milwaukee’s ZIP code 53206 to illuminate the story of people from across the United States who live with the daily effects of unjust and long jail sentences.”

Holiday Card and Letter Writing, Sunday, December 10 - We’ll continue our holiday tradition of sending out holiday cards and letters. These cards and letters will be sent to a variety of individuals, ranging from elderly and sick members of the congregation; incarcerated youth; veterans; and more. We need your help in this process! After the service on Sunday, December 10th we need volunteers to help write these letters in what should be a fun event. Please join us in spreading some holiday love! If interested, please RSVP to Adom Crew at adom.crew@gmail.com. Also, if you or someone you know is in need of a holiday card on the church’s behalf, let us know and we’ll get that out to them.

MABC Christmas Extravaganza, Thursday, December 21, 7:00 p.m. - Don’t miss this fun evening of festive Christmas music, both sacred and secular. The concert is free but donations to benefit MABC church programs are welcome.

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
*MABC is equipped with a hearing assistance system.
Please ask an usher for a receiver.*



Winter Coat Drive - Through our partnership with Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries (RMM) - for which Susan Sparks serves as a board member - MABC will participate in the annual winter coat drive, now until early 2018. We will collect coats, shoes, scarves, gloves, hats, and socks each Sunday in a donation box at the back of the sanctuary. The greatest need is for men's larger sizes and toiletries.

MABC VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We're using SignUp.com to organize our upcoming signups for Coffee Hour and ushering. Here's how it works in three easy steps:

- 1) Go to this page to see our Sign-Up on SignUp.com: [vols.pt/hJCuF2](https://www.signup.com/vols.pt/hJCuF2)
- 2) Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like.
- 3) Sign up! It's easy—you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.

Letter-Writing Volunteers Needed

New Alternatives for LGBT Youth, an organization MABC partnered with earlier in the year for a soup kitchen ministry, has asked for volunteers in writing letters to some of their incarcerated clients. These at-risk individuals often become isolated and vulnerable in jail and this communication helps provide them with support along their journey. If anyone is interested in participating, please email Adom Crew at adom.crew@gmail.com for more information.

Early Morning Volunteer Opportunity

Every Tuesday morning from 6:45 to 8:30 a.m., St. Peter's Church in midtown Manhattan (619 Lexington Ave. @ 54th St.) runs a soup kitchen. They are always looking for volunteers to help out and would welcome members our MABC family with open arms. If anyone is interested in participating, please contact Adom Crew, who participates in this ministry weekly. For additional details, contact adom.crew@gmail.com.

For more information about our Community Ministries efforts, check out the volunteer section of the MABC website.



We welcome you to our service this morning! Our church is committed to being one which is inclusive regardless of race, sexual orientation or socio-economic situation. Jesus gave us the supreme example of inclusiveness. In our human way, we attempt to follow.

If you are a visitor, we're glad you're here! Please make sure to fill out a visitor's card and give it to an usher. This is a community of faith where everyone is welcome. We hope to see you again!

Support MABC Online!

Would you like to support MABC's ministries? MABC accepts contributions through PayPal on the internet. Just follow this link via the QR code below.



MABC on Social Media

Follow us on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram by visiting our website at www.mabcnyc.org or via the QR code below.



Instagram - @Madisonavenuebaptist
Twitter - @madavebaptist
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Pastor: Rev. Susan G. Sparks
Associate Pastor: Rev. B. J. Hutto
Minister of Music: Paul Stephan
Parish Administrator: Brian Crowson
Sexton: Troy Gordon



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MADISON AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

SERVING THIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1848



A DIVERSE FAMILY, BROUGHT TOGETHER BY
FAITH, WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

ADVENT WREATH CANDLELIGHTING

The ceremony we participate in today had its roots in Germanic lands long ago, as a way to celebrate the winter solstice. In fact, throughout history, the long dark days of December have inspired people of many spiritual traditions to hold celebrations of light and hope. This is likely why the early Christians chose December to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and why the ritual of the Advent Wreath was eventually adopted as a way of liturgically celebrating the coming of Christ over the four weeks leading up to Christmas.

The word Advent means “coming.” It is a time to prepare - to think about what God’s gift of Jesus Christ means in our lives. It is a time to prepare ourselves again to receive that gift with open and sincere hearts. We are invited to examine our lives and renew our faith, celebrate our hope, commit acts of love and experience joy.

Each year Christians all over the world celebrate the season of Advent with candlelighting and scripture reading. The candles are placed in a wreath, as a circle reminds us of the unending love of God. The evergreens placed on the wreath represent life and hope. As each week’s candle is lit, we symbolically move closer to the moment when Christ entered the world bringing life and light.

In these weeks we begin the journey of faith once again, one that begins with Jesus’ birth and walks us all the way to Easter, the Resurrection and Pentecost. During this sacred time of waiting and preparation you are invited to consider again what it means to follow Jesus.

THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

LEADER: Hear afresh the words of John’s prologue, “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. We are preparing ourselves for the coming days:

PEOPLE: The days when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

LEADER: Jesus said: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

PEOPLE: Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

LEADER: The first candle of the Advent Wreath represents the Peace that can only be found in Christ.

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