

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 2, 2018

Prelude *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* Gilbert M. Martin, arr.
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Welcome and Passing of the Peace

Introit *My Soul Gives Glory to My God* Miriam T. Winter,
Charles H. Webb

Call to Worship

*Hymn “Come, O Long-expected Jesus” No. 125

Choral Anthem *Of a Rose* John Rutter
from *Magnificat*

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 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” No. 119

Scripture Isaiah 40:3-5, 43:1-3,16-19

Sermon “Visionaries in the Wilderness”

Offering

Offertory Music *The King of Love* Charles Gounod
Solo: Karen Rich

*Doxology See insert.

Communion Hymn “A Hymn of Joy We Sing” No. 404

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 “Fourfold Amen” No. 313

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

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

TODAY

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

Ushers: Joseph Pilla and Kevin Davis
Coffee Hour: Nancy Rivera
Camera: Travis Dover

Choir: Jenny Lindsey (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!

MABC Christmas Party, This Friday, December 7, 6:30 p.m. - The party will include great food, Christmas treats, caroling, holiday crafts, and a visit from Santa for kids of all ages. All are welcome!

Sunday, Dec. 9

Second Sunday of Advent

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

Holiday Card and Letter Writing, Sunday, December 9 - 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 next Sunday 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.

Save the Date for these Advent Season Events!

- **Thursday, December 13th, 7:30 p.m.** Annual MABC Christmas Extravaganza - A concert featuring Christmas music both sacred and secular.
- **Sunday, December 16th, Pledge Sunday** - As pledge cards are distributed on this Third Sunday of Advent, we ask you to prayerfully consider your stewardship commitment for the coming year.
- **Sunday, December 16th.** Homemade Holiday Coffee Hour, a Sunday event when we invite everyone to share a homemade holiday treat with the congregation.
- **Sunday, December 23rd, Annual BBQ Advent-ure!** - Join us after the service as we visit a local bbq restaurant for food, fellowship, and football, on this final Sunday of the Advent season. Stay tuned for details!
- **Monday, December 24th, Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols** - Join us at 5:00 p.m. for this candlelight service that includes choral music, Christmas carols, and readings. All are welcome!

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

MABC is equipped with a hearing assistance system.
Please ask an usher for a receiver.



The Deacons Board (in charge of worship and hospitality and chaired by Joe Pilla and Jacki Friedmann), the **Christian Education Board** (in charge of Bible Study and educational programs chaired by Kevin Davis) and the **PR/Communications Committee** (in charge of MABC messaging chaired by Rodney Dunlap-Keener) are looking for new members in 2019! If you are interested and are a member of MABC (have joined and gone through the Right Hand of Fellowship), please see the leaders listed above. If you are not a formal member of MABC but are still interested, see Susan or BJ! Join us!

Urgent Need for Winter Clothing!! - As many of you know, through our partnership with Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries (RMM), MABC is again participating in the annual winter coat drive, from now until the Spring of 2019. **They are in dire need of the following items: Men's coats and jackets (larger sizes preferred); Men's sweatshirts and sweaters (larger sizes preferred); Men's long sleeved shirts (larger sizes preferred); Men's pants (larger sizes preferred); Gloves, scarves, and hats underwear; Large-sized practical shoes.** If you are able to donate any of these items, you can bring them to MABC and drop them in the box at the back of the Sanctuary. Or you can bring them to RMM at 410 West 40th Street in Manhattan. For more information, contact either Adom Crew (adom.crew@gmail.com), or RMM directly (212-594-4464 or volunteer@rmmnyc.org).

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
- 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.

If you need assistance signing up, please contact Joseph Pilla, JosephPilla@me.com.



Weekly 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 of 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!

Options for Electronic Giving

Would you like to support MABC's ministries? MABC accepts contributions through the following methods:

Envelope Giving: Cash or Check

Online: www.mabcnyc.org

Mobile*: Text "MABCNYC" to 77977

*When you send 'mabcnyc' to 77977 you will receive a one time reply containing a link to give to Madison Avenue Baptist Church (1msg/request). Please be aware that Msg & Data rates may apply. For full Terms & Conditions please visit <https://pushpay.com/terms>. For the Privacy Policy please visit <https://pushpay.com/privacy>. For help reply HELP or STOP to cancel.

MABC on Social Media

Follow us on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram by visiting our website at www.mabcnyc.org.

Instagram - @Madisonavenuebaptist

Twitter - @madavebaptist

Facebook @madisonavenuebaptist



Pastor: Rev. Susan G. Sparks

Associate Pastor: Rev. Dr. 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

“One Candle Is Lit” (v. 1)

No. 128

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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