

THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in the City of New York
Pastoral newsletter for November 2020
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS NOVEMBER 1 – FALL BACK!



Beautiful example of graffiti on the wall across from my early voting site

Dear Friends in Christ,

November 1 is All Saints' Day, and there are many saints to honor and mourn this year. In worship, we will remember Scott Amrhein and Rev. Ted Voelker, and all will be invited to name other saints, of your own lives. Traditionally, Sunday would also be NYC Marathon Day – but there is no "live" marathon in our city this year, and even non-runners will miss that inspiring event. November 3 is Election Day – need I say more? Thanksgiving is coming, but we don't know what that will look like this year – or we do know and it's not what we are used to. Lots of us are feeling anxious, sad, and even fearful.

I might quote an encouraging passage of scripture here. But I recently saw the obituary for Beat poet Diane di Prima, whose work I've loved ever since I was a struggling actor living in the East Village and discovered her stories of being a struggling poet living in the East Village – though she later moved to California. Diane di Prima was named poet laureate of San Francisco in 2009, and her poem called "First Draft: Poet Laureate Oath of Office," ended with these words, which struck me as positively psalm-like.

my vow is:
to remind us all
to celebrate
there is no time
too desperate
no season
that is not
a Season of Song

“There is no time too desperate, no season that is not a Season of Song.” To which I say, Amen! Keep singing, my dears – behind your masks, in the shower, with your very lives. And listen, too – for I believe God sings with us, even in these hard times, of love and beauty and justice and grace.

Seeking Recommendations for Church Officers

Your Church Nominating Committee is charged with preparing a slate of new officers to present to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January. This year the committee has a variety of openings to fill on Session, Deacons and Church Nominating Committee (CNC).

If you feel called to serve your church as an officer or CNC member, or would like to recommend another church member, please contact any CNC member. And even if someone isn't nominated this time around, we will save the name for future consideration. So we look forward to hearing from you (and the sooner the better)!

~ Members of the Committee: Karen Amrhein, Cecilia Blewer, Ed Carpenter, Rev. Lindsay Borden (ex officio)

Faith Communities Taking Action on Social Justice

Advocacy Day, organized by the New York City Presbytery Justice Ministries Committee and First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, revealed ways that faith communities are coming together to address important social justice issues. Two initiatives, highlighted at the virtual event on Oct. 17, address housing discrimination and reentry of individuals released from prison. Both present opportunities for churches like ours to get involved.

Faith Communities for Just Reentry is working to get measures in place when people leave prison, such as providing an official ID and a COVID test. The group is also addressing the problems that arise from restrictions on formerly incarcerated people living in public housing. As speakers on Advocacy Day noted, the group offers guidance, leadership and training for organizing efforts and action. There are many ways to take part. Information can be found at justreentry.org

Building the Beloved Community is an interfaith initiative that advances fair housing in the New York City region. It seeks to further Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a future that is free from discrimination and segregation, particularly in housing. The group provides resources and trainings to educate and equip congregations and others. The effort is organized by the Fair Housing Justice Center, in partnership with Union Theological Seminary and the Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing. Information can be found at bbcfairhousing.org.

One further note -- the Justice Ministries Committee of the Presbytery is making known an important report called Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force Report. Its call to action can be found on the NYC Presbytery's website.

Members of our church's antiracism group have discussed some of these ideas and whether we as a church could play a role. Right now, we are at an idea stage. If you have thoughts on these initiatives or if other ideas come to mind, let's continue the dialogue. In what ways would you like to see us get involved?

~ Elaine Song

A Stewardship Reminder

For details of your 2020 giving, please contact Nancy and she will create a custom report for you of your direct and online gifts from Jan 1-Sept 24. We apologize that it is not currently feasible to send out a mass (e)mailing to everyone with their personal donor reports at this time, although we hope in the future to be able to generate more regular reports. After the end of the year we will, as always, send Donor Reports for tax purposes; for online donations, a separate report will be sent by the Presbyterian Foundation.

If you are able to keep up your regular donations, or to support your church in any way in these difficult times, your church is truly grateful!

Updated SPC Office Information

Church office: (212) 749-1700 (voicemail is checked regularly)
info@secondpresbyteriannyc.org

Virginia Danner, Office Manager: (347) 918-7914
vdanner@secondpresbyteriannyc.org
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 11 AM - 2 PM

Lindsay Borden, Interim Pastor: (347) 920-8120
lborden@secondpresbyteriannyc.org
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday, 11 AM - 5 PM
In Person: Wednesday afternoons, by appointment – see below

Wednesdays Afternoons with Lindsay

The Pastor Is In: For the near future, at least, I plan to continue to be at or near the church on Wednesday afternoons. I'll be sitting out front, weather permitting, from about 3:30 – 4:30, and available before and after for meetings (by appointment is best). So drop by and see me sometime!

NOVEMBER AT SPC

Sunday November 1: DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS. 10 AM Mini Sunday School with Mr. J. 10:15 AM Zoom Worship with Communion and celebration of All Saints' Day.

Sunday November 15: 10:15 AM Zoom worship, when you'll hear about organizations supported by the SPC 2020 Benevolence donations. (Rev. Lindsay will be taking the day off.)

Wednesday November 18: 12 noon, Zoom Prayer Meeting. Contact Vivian, Karen or Lindsay for details.

Sunday November 22: 10:15 AM Zoom worship on Reign of Christ Sunday – the last Sunday of the church year.

Thursday November 26, Thanksgiving Day: We hope to hold a Zoom gathering for any who want to join in and share part of the holiday. Time and details TBA.

Sunday November 29, First Sunday of Advent : 10:15 AM Zoom Worship will be led by the SPC Anti-Racism Group.

*In closing, I share another photo by my friend Kerry Michaels. I know many of you have already voted – I have! But this artwork gives me hope, so I leave you with this:
"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13*



God be with you, until we meet again.

love and light, *Rev. Lindsay*