



# THE VOICE

## The Exodus Blueprint

*The book of Exodus strikes a resonant chord*

## The Anita & Antonio Gotto Lecture—Online

*Meet Award-winning Journalist Emma Green*

FIFTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fall 2020



# THE VOICE

Informing  
Fifth Avenue  
since 1942

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I think this time has allowed me  
to be more intentional with church.  
I find myself actively seeking  
out ways to stay engaged.

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## Welcome to Autumn 2020 at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

Since 1942 *The Voice* has shared the stories of our community of faith. They are the stories of joy and of resilience as the church moved through seasons of change. Throughout every year, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church has stayed true to its mission: To proclaim, to be shaped by and to live out the Good News of Jesus Christ.

*This autumn 2020 season may find our building closed  
but it finds our hearts wide open like never before.*

## LET'S CONNECT!

### Engage with us

[community@fapc.org](mailto:community@fapc.org) • 212.247.0490 ext 3005

### Pray with us

[congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org) • 212.247.0490 ext 3007

### Serve with us

[volunteer@fapc.org](mailto:volunteer@fapc.org) • 212.247.0490 ext 3005

### Worship with us

Weekly Online Worship available each Sunday at [fapc.org](https://www.fapc.org)  
and our **YouTube Channel** at **FAPCNYC**

We invite you to subscribe to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church  
YouTube Channel. Look for the Subscribe button under any church video.



## Dear FAPC Community

This is my first opportunity to greet many of you as Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church's new Director of Communications & Development. It is a position that I arrive at with deep honor. Appropriate

to the moment, my introduction comes to you through the power of communication instead of sharing a hello in our beautiful Sanctuary.

## There is something special happening at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.

A lifelong Presbyterian, my love for this church began when my husband and kids became members more than 5 years ago. At that time, I was serving a church in New Jersey. Each Sunday we would gather at home for family dinner and they would share stories. I was struck by the same thought each week: There is something special happening at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.

Three years ago I had the opportunity to experience this firsthand as I joined the worship team as a Parish Associate. That is when I knew I was right: There is most definitely something special happening at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.

It is a pleasure to step into the role of my talented predecessor and continue the excellence in our Communications, Development and Online Worship. As a former television producer, I know how media can shape powerful stories of hope through a virtual platform. But just between us—I really can't wait to share a warm hello when we see each other in person.

While this may be a fall like no other, I join the entire church team in sending prayers of health and safety until we can all be together again.

Every Blessing,

*Kellie Picallo*

# The Fall Four

**JOIN US** for these four events that you don't want to miss. As we begin the autumn 2020 season in a virtual way, we invite you to share these events with friends to experience the inspiring worship, diverse fellowship and life-changing outreach that defines Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.



### Homecoming

*Sunday, Sept. 13*

Welcome back from summer. Join us as we kickoff the fall program year and look for Homecoming engagement activities. The senior pastor launches a timely new sermon series (see page 4).

### The Fall Online Worship Sermon Series

*I Have Heard Their Cry: The Exodus Blueprint.* The book of Exodus strikes a resonant chord in this challenging time. Kicking off on Homecoming Sunday, join us as we study these classic texts, listening as God says, "I have heard my people's cry!" and watch as God's blueprint for a new world unfolds. (See page 4)

### The 2021 Pledge Campaign

*Starting Sunday, Oct. 18*

So-Chung Lee and Amelia Vogler lead this year's Online Pledge Campaign which continues for five weeks before Commitment Sunday on November 15. Learn more about our co-chairs and how they selected this year's timely and impactful 2021 Pledge Campaign theme. (See page 10)



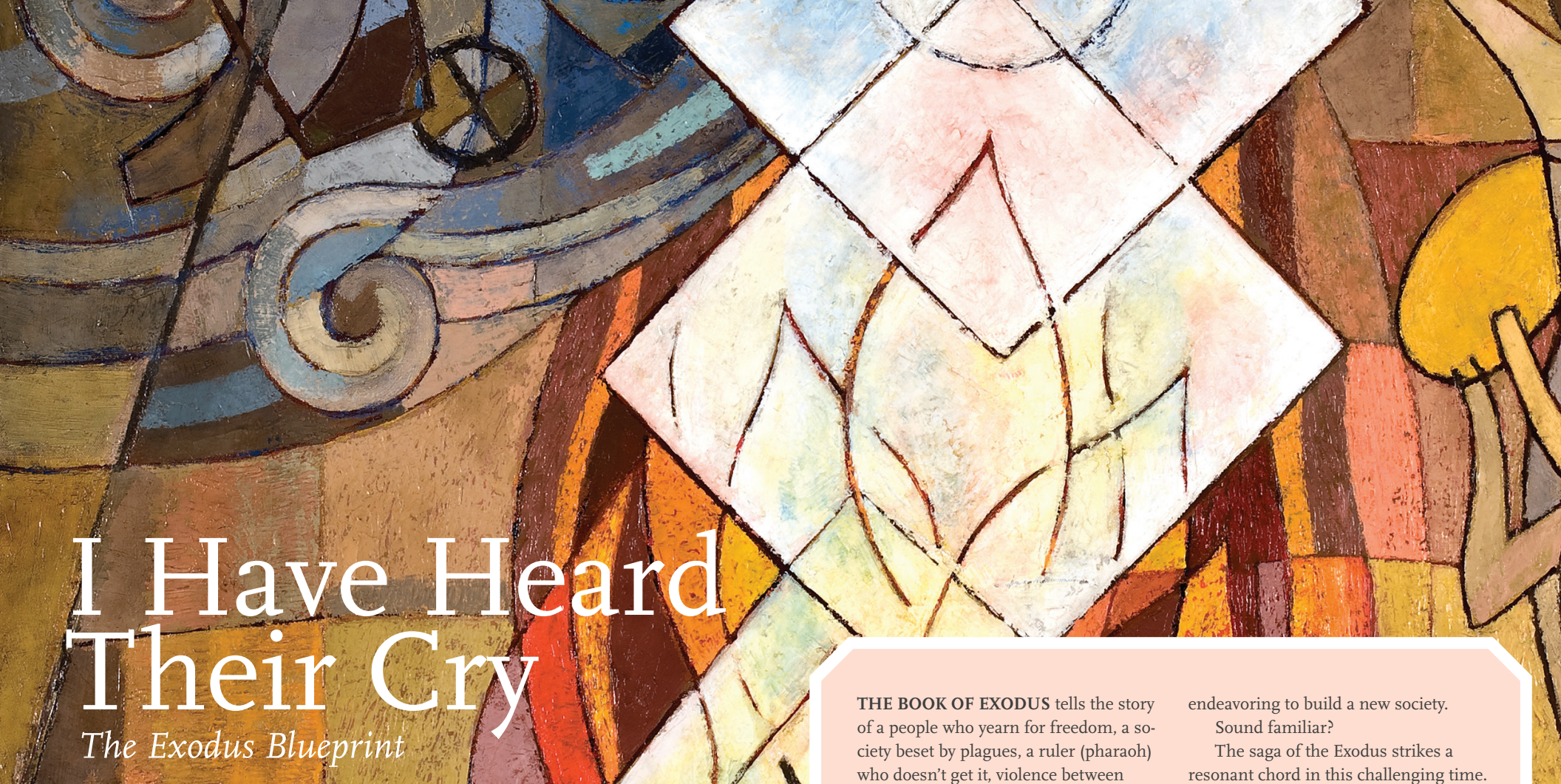
### The Anita and Antonio Gotto Online Lecture

*Wednesday, Oct. 22 • 7 pm*

Who will you invite to watch this year's Gotto Lecture with you online? Award-winning Journalist Emma Green will deliver the Anita and Antonio Gotto Lecture. (See page 6)

\*Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications.





# I Have Heard Their Cry

*The Exodus Blueprint*

**This fall, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church** will study the second book in the Bible, Exodus. Why Exodus? In recent years this congregation worked its way through dozens of core stories in the book of Genesis. So, Exodus seems a natural answer to: “What’s Next?”

Exodus also gets big points for relevance.

**THE BOOK OF EXODUS** tells the story of a people who yearn for freedom, a society beset by plagues, a ruler (pharaoh) who doesn’t get it, violence between races, a terrible night, a fantastic escape, the inscription of new moral codes, rebellion against those codes, the embrace of idols, and a long and difficult, often circuitous journey following God while

endeavoring to build a new society.

Sound familiar?

The saga of the Exodus strikes a resonant chord in this challenging time. Join us as we study these classic texts, listening as God says, “I have heard my people’s cry!” and watch as God’s blueprint for a new world unfolds. ■

## **The Fall Sermon Series Kicks Off Homecoming Sunday**

Sept. 13 • “I Don’t Know You” • Exodus 1:1-14  
The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston, preaching.



The Anita & Antonio Gotto Lecture Series

# Unity & Division

*On Thursday, Oct. 22, Journalist Emma Green will deliver the Anita & Antonio Gotto Lecture. This year the Gotto Lecture will be available online and we are excited to share this compelling event widely with friends across the country.*

An award-winning staff writer for *The Atlantic* and a noted commentator on religious issues in the United States and globally, Emma Green has spent nearly a decade covering religious communities at moments of tension and change. She was recently awarded the 2020 Laureate of the George W. Hunt Prize for outstanding journalism.

Among Green's recent stories is a series on the aftermath of a shooting in a Pittsburgh synagogue in 2018, when a professed white supremacist killed 11 Jews in worship and injured several others. She has also written about the Christians living in Iraq's Nineveh Plain, who have reached a demographic crisis after decades of relentless violence and political persecution, and the diaspora communities of Chaldean Catholics who have settled in cities like Detroit.

Emma shares her excitement about the upcoming conversation with Senior Pastor Scott Black Johnston. "The lecture will focus on themes of unity and division in American politics right



now, and our inability to recognize one another as neighbors," Green says. "I'll look at the way this plays out in religious communities and how religious beliefs and identities can sometimes exacerbate these rifts." ■

.....  
*Look for details this fall for how to reserve your free online ticket for The Anita & Antonio Gotto Lecture on Wednesday, Oct. 22, 7 pm.*





## Orchestrating the Music of Fifth Avenue

# The Virtual Choir

### DEAR FRIENDS,

As I sit to write this message, I'm smiling at the thought of you. It's impossible to believe that nearly six months have passed since we last gathered together at the church. I am deeply grateful for the many ways we've been able to stay close. Through emails, e-cards, text messages, phone calls and Zoom meetings, it's been such a blessing to keep in touch with you.

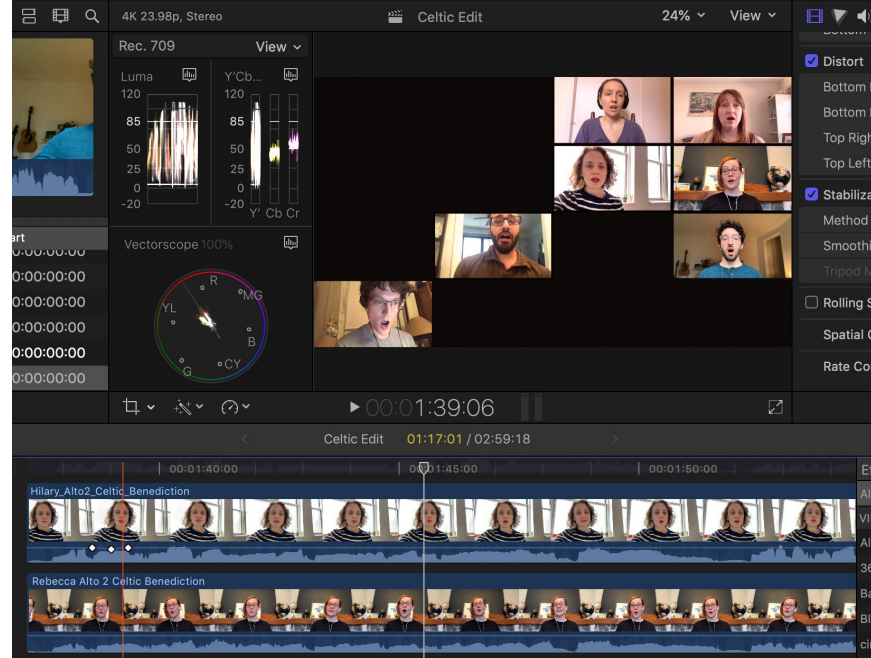
I'm sure you won't be surprised to know that the pandemic has presented a number of challenges in terms of our music ministry. Although the various social media I mention above are excellent for written and spoken communication, there is currently no technology available that allows musicians to make music together remotely in real time.

The next-best thing has turned out to be an elegant pre-recorded solution called "virtual choir." We've produced two such recordings so far, our much-loved Lenten choral benediction and the weekly Doxology. Although simple in appearance, I've discovered that virtual choir videos are surprisingly tricky to make! First, a guide track is recorded by the director, consisting of a conducting video and an audio accompaniment. Next, each singer listens to the guide track on earphones as they record themselves singing their own part alone. Finally, the individual recordings are combined, edited, and mixed to create the beautiful illusion of a choir singing together that we all recognize. For the best results, this process requires roughly four hours of editing time for each minute of music.

It's been an enjoyable challenge to make these videos during the quarantine, and I'm delighted to tell you that more are on the way! Beginning Homecoming Sunday, Sept. 13, we plan to offer brand new virtual renditions of favorite hymns and anthems. Although the choir and I would love to share music together in person, we're so happy to be able to offer our ministry to you in this way. In this time of apparent change and uncertainty, I take ever more comfort in the deep peace of our faith. I know that we are in very good hands. And we'll be singing together again before we know it.

Yours in faith,

Dr. Ryan W. Jackson, William S. Perper Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministries



## Music Ministry Events



### Q + A with Ryan

Thursday, Oct. 29 • 7 – 8 pm on Zoom

Join us for an online Q + A with Dr. Ryan Jackson. This lively conversation will be hosted by Nancy Moore, Chair of the Arts and Our Faith Committee.

### Carols by Candlelight

Friday, Dec. 4 • 7 – 8 pm on YouTube and Facebook

**The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Chamber Choir  
with Patrick Kreeger, Organ  
Directed by Ryan Jackson**

Our beloved annual Christmas concert will be presented virtually this season! Join us for an hour of beautiful choral music and Christmas carols filmed in the candlelit beauty of Kirkland Chapel. Broadway star Jeanne Lehman reads seasonal poetry as the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Chamber Choir performs a blend of new treasures and familiar favorites that illuminate the wonder and majesty of Jesus' birth.



Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications.





The 2021 Pledge Campaign

## Were you *There?*

**SO-CHUNG LEE AND AMELIA VOGLER** lead the 2021 Pledge Campaign. As co-chairs, they reflect on their journey at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and how their faith inspires their financial commitment.

### **So-Chung Lee**

A member for 17 years, So-Chung, her husband Tony and their three children have been active in Family Ministries. They were first drawn to the welcoming spirit of the church. Shares So-Chung, “When Tony and I moved to New York, we attended many services throughout the city to find a home church. After our first visit to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian

to an historic, brownstone, urban church in Richmond, Virginia. The fact that the outside of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church resembled my home church was an instant ‘ahhhh’ moment for me, but I became a member because of the vibrant community.”

A media professional, Amelia has gained greater insight into what it means to be a church during these past



Church, we knew that our search was over. We committed and felt deeply blessed to be able to raise our family in its love and care.”

For So-Chung it was also the power of being part of a caring community that has deepened her love of being a member. “The church actively assists social service organizations that are dedicated to improving the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of so many people in need.”

She shares why making a financial commitment is a matter of faith and trust. “This church is an essential part of our community. Every dollar is put to good use and makes a difference in the collective well-being of God’s creation.”

### **Amelia Vogler**

Since joining in 2014, Amelia has embraced being a member of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. “I grew up going

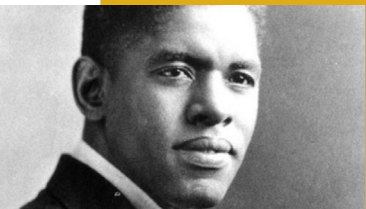
few months. “Who would have thought that having ‘Zoom’ Community Groups or Communion worship through YouTube would be our new normal? I think this time has allowed me to be more intentional and present with church. I find myself actively seeking out ways to stay engaged since I’m further removed physically from church right now.”

She shares how her financial commitment to the church has grown with intention. “In my early days of church commitment, I didn’t really understand the difference between weekly plate offerings versus a consistent pledge. I quickly learned that having a more consistent and reliable flow of financial giving ensures the church is able to complete their commitments. As I’ve progressed in my career, I have evolved my philanthropic processes and consider increasing my donations prayerfully.” ■



# Behind the Scene

The story behind the 2021 Pledge Theme and why this beloved and groundbreaking hymn was So-Chung and Amelia's timely and impactful choice.



## History of a Spiritual

*Were You There (When They Crucified My Lord)* was likely composed by enslaved African-Americans in the 19th century. The hymn gained widespread acclaim in the 1940's through the recording of accomplished tenor and son of former slaves, Roland Hayes (1887-1977).

→ Tell us why you chose this theme of *Were You There*?

**So-Chung:** "The hymn takes us on a journey and reminds us that even through difficult times when the world is seemingly against us, God's will ultimately prevails. Spirituals have a way of crossing racial and cultural boundaries and are beloved by many.

The Roland Hayes's 1940 recording of *Were You There (When They Crucified My Lord)* resides in the National Recording Registry of the Library of Congress. It is a compendium of sound recordings that are preserved as a representative of America's cultural, artistic, and historic treasures. This beloved and moving hymn is timely and impactful not only for its historical significance but also for the story that it tells. By being 'there,' in person, virtually, financially or spiritually, we can make impactful change."

**Amelia:** "The hymn is most famously sung by Roland Hayes who broke racial barriers to perform with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It also felt right to use this moment.

**Being 'there' doesn't limit you to being there physically, it's a state of spiritual action.** Many of us will be asked by our children and grandchildren, 'were you there?' during this momentous Covid-19 season of our lives. That's no different than asking 'were you there?' for Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church during its time of need."

“

By being 'there,' in person, virtually, financially or spiritually, we can make impactful change.

—So-Chung Lee

# MODELING COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

by Jane Soonyoung Hong

This year has been quite the roller coaster. Glued to our screens while sheltering in place, we have seen the unequal effect of the Covid-19 public health challenge on our Black and Brown siblings. We have watched footage of brutality and heard of its unequal effect on this country's communities of color.

In the midst of it all, I can't help but wonder if we will lose interest? I hope not. Because there is no easy answer to the systemic racial realities we are being asked to confront.

This June, Executive Pastor Charlene Han Powell asked our congregation the following questions 3 questions:

- Does America have a race problem?
- Do I have a race problem?
- Does the church have a race problem?

She concluded by challenging us to commit to talking about these questions 3 weeks from now, 3 months from now, 3 years from now, for as long as it takes.

As our Clerk of Session, I took her challenge seriously.

I recognize that this important work does not have a clear, finite timeline. There is work to be done by oneself, but also in community. Most importantly, we must do what we can to make the world more just, more equitable, more in line with the vision Christ set forth for humanity. In light of this, I can think of no better place to have those hard conversations than within our community of faith.

I reached out to our clergy staff to ask how I can help. In response, Senior Pastor Scott Black Johnston encouraged me to do what Presbyterians do best: gather people together to pray about, discuss, and discern a way forward.





Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? —Isaiah 58:1-9

This June, we convened Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church's Anti-Racist Response Team (ARRT). The team members include Salome Noufele, Jeneca Parker-Tongue, Eric Daniels, Jama Tount, the Rev. Werner Ramirez, the Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell and myself.

What will Anti-Racist Response Team (ARRT) do? We agreed that we are not going to solve racism on behalf of the church. Here are a few things we will do: model courageous conversations; listen to and learn from each other; gather and share resources; research and recommend helpful methods of self-reflection and identify areas of the

church we can improve on in this area. We also agreed we would seek out prophetic voices for our Community Groups and our congregation to listen to during this time. Stay tuned!

In his sermon on June 28th, The Rev. Werner Ramirez warned us to avoid the "cheap easy answer" and to "not fall into the trap of Hananiah's easy grace that brings false comfort." I know his journey will not be easy, but it will be worth it. Let us take up the work that God calls us to do and "loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke". ■





**Phillip Ma** 8:40 AM

Hi Everyone,

A quick reminder that Win has event this evening - Tuesday, 6/16 from 6 - 8 PM.  
Today's topic is one-on-one interview



# A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

by Morgan Valencia King



**Phillip Ma** 4:14 PM

Another great one for us. Let's focus on "clarity, confidence and control."

One thing for us to consider doing as homework and we can share/discuss on July 2nd:  
"To start get clear about your skills, values and passions, and align them with what you desire in a position and an organization. Next, focus on your accomplishments and the value you bring to shed self-doubt. And make sure to manage the process and everything that's within your power."

<https://www.nytimes-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/smarter-living/coronavirus-laid-off-career-advice.amp.html>

[www.nytimes-com.cdn...](https://www.nytimes-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/smarter-living/coronavirus-laid-off-career-advice.amp.html)

**How to Manage the Emotional Impact of Getting Laid Off**

Stop spirals before they start.



A profound feature of being Presbyterian is our faithful emphasis of the priesthood of all believers. This means we affirm that God equally calls each and every one of us to the ministries of Christ's church, regardless of our vocation or ordination status. As a family of faith, one of us is never greater than the other and all of us care and provide for our community.

**A FEW** months ago, my inbox pinged, letting me know I had an email from Church Elder, Phil Ma. Phil had an idea: with the many furloughs, layoffs and anxiety surrounding employment at the mercy of a pandemic, could the church start an employment support group?

At first glance, someone reading the email might make the same mistake that I did and overlook a crucial fact. Phil also shared that he himself had just been a victim of the harsh economic realities and had lost his job. In his email message, he moved quickly from "I've been laid off along with the majority of my industry" to "I want to see how we, as a family of faith, can support one another and journey together."

This is how the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Employment Support Group began. Created and coordinated by Phil, it is supported with fellow Church Officers Kathy Murray and Marco Michael. The support group has grown into a weekly meeting and provides prayerful discussion, speakers, and a dedicated Slack channel filled with resources and other forms of assistance.

The trajectory of Phil's idea into a caring and supportive space for those



who are recently unemployed is the very vision of Community Groups. Each Community Group presents the unique venue to walk with your siblings in Christ. In the midst of a pandemic and economic recession, Community Groups are essential to the life of faith.

Here is the additional blessing of this story. Although the primary purpose of the group is mutual support and compassion, at least two of the members have already secured new jobs! One even came directly from a new friendship made in the Employment Support Group. Sometimes the most difficult experiences bring out the best in us, the Christ in us. ■



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

by John Sheehan



**F**ifth Avenue Presbyterian Church is committed to creating safe spaces and this is important in our Outreach work. We use a philosophy called Trauma-Informed Care and this method guides the work of the Ecumenical Outreach Partnership with our partners St. Thomas Episcopal and St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Trauma-Informed Care are practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment and healing. This perspective is used in treatment

modalities, childcare agencies, shelters and social service agencies throughout the world. A Trauma-Informed Care lens doesn't ask, "What is wrong with the individual?" but instead asks, "What Happened?"

The philosophy of Trauma-Informed Care uses 5 guiding principles: Safety; Collaboration; Choice; Trustworthiness and Empowerment. The majority of people living on the streets have experienced significant trauma in their lives. Homelessness itself is a traumatic event to get food, find a bathroom or get warm or cool. On a daily basis they are exposed to the grit, grime and dirt of the city and

are often verbally and physically abused.

Here at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, the Ecumenical Outreach Partnership embraces all the principles of Trauma-Informed Care. Our program must be a place where the people we help feel physically and emotionally safe. We do this by greeting people with respect as soon as they walk in the door. This is accomplished by our front desk team and EOP staff. Regretfully many of our clients are not treated with respect in the various places they go including government agencies. I have witnessed this when I accompany people to appointments. This is the opposite of the

approach we use and can have the effect of re-traumatizing people.

Trauma-Informed Care also creates a framework to establish a relationship. Recently, I saw a man, Ray 58, who is now in a shelter. Ray 58 had been homeless for many years and had no family. He has now made the decision to get off the street and we are helping him get long-term housing. If we had told him to go to a shelter when he appeared at our doors he would not have gone. We would never have a connection with him today. That is Trauma-Informed Care in action. ■



# The Silent Sanctuary

*An update on our building at Fifth Avenue & 55th Street*



by Derek Maddalena,  
Director of Facilities

**DURING THIS TIME** when the building is not hosting our public, we are prioritizing needed improvements now that there is minimal disturbance to worship, events and staff. This includes replacing the sanctuary attic sprinkler piping that is often seen on our tours. We are also at work on our 1925 plumbing systems, including our hot and cold water lines. In the past few years we have worked on these projects in stages; however, an unoccupied building has allowed us to do this work on office floors with minimal interruption. Our team is most proud of the completion of our newly upgraded elevators. We look forward to sharing these improvements with everyone on their return.



## Porter's Take

During the closure of the building due to the Covid-19 public health challenge, Church Elder and photographer Porter Binks has been documenting Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. Look for his photographs on *The Silent Sanctuary* throughout this season at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and our Facebook and Instagram.



# The Listings

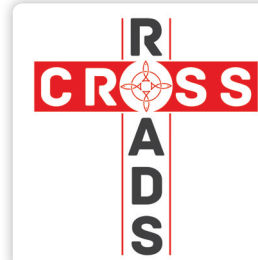
From education to outreach to pastoral care, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church offers a range of ministries to help you engage your faith, get involved in our community, and find support when you need it.

## Adult Education

**ENGAGE** with an array of classes, theological study and contemporary issues in church and society. Learn with us at [education@fapc.org](mailto:education@fapc.org)

This season there are two ways to engage with our Adult Education programming. Our Webinars will explore themes of racism and lament and our *Crossroads* Podcast will dive into a new series, *Do Not Be Afraid: Encountering God in Times of Fear*.

### CROSSROADS



This summer we premiered *Crossroads*, our 30-minute podcast hosted by Director of Christian Education, Jaime Stahle.

Joined by theologians from across the country, this fall *Crossroads* begins a 4-part series that tackles the topic of fear. You don't want to miss *Do Not Be Afraid: Encountering God in Times of Fear*. Listen to *Crossroads* at [fapc.org/crossroads-podcasts](http://fapc.org/crossroads-podcasts).



#### September, Episode 1

##### Faith in our Culture of Fear

Fear is a thread throughout our lives. From the news cycle and politics to marketing and popular culture, we are taught to fear and often in ways that profit others. But what effect does fear have on our moral lives, character and judgment? Dr. Scott Bader-Saye will join us to discuss creating a response to fear that fosters risk and resists an ethic of security. Dr. Bader-Saye is the Academic Dean and Helen and Everett H. Jones Professor of Christian Ethics and Moral Theology at the Seminary of the Southwest.



#### October, Episode 2

##### Singing to our Fears

We will explore the book of Psalms and how lament winds its way through the psalmist's words. How can this give us a voice for the fears we experience? Joining us is Dr. Beth LaNeel Tanner who specializes in Hebrew poetry with a focus on the psalms of lament. Dr. Beth LaNeel Tanner is the Norman and Mary Kansfield Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

## November, Episode 3

### Anxiety: A Faithful Response

The Bible tells us not to worry about tomorrow and not to be anxious. How can we be faithful to what scripture tells us and also care for our mental health? We will explore this question with Spiritual Director Derrick Weston. Derrick Weston holds a certification in Health Ministry from Wesley Theological Seminary.



## December, Episode 4

### Don't Fear the Messenger

Who are God's messengers and why do they always invoke such fear in the people to whom they appear? We'll discuss the role of angels in the Bible with Dr. Susan R. Garrett, author of *No Ordinary Angel: Celestial Spirits and Christian Claims about Jesus*. Dr. Susan R. Garrett is a professor of New Testament at Louisville Theological Seminary.

## ADULT EDUCATION WEBINARS



### Racism and the Church

Sunday, Sept. 20 • 6:30 – 8 pm

Join us as we welcome Jessica Vazquez-Torres, National Program Director of Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training.



### Lamentations: The World Is Not As It Should Be

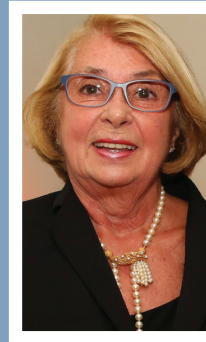
Sunday, Nov. 8 • 7 – 8 pm

Joining us will be Dr. Soong-Chan Rah, the Milton B. Engebretson Associate Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago.

*\*Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications.*

**FORM** intimate bonds of friendship within the global body of Christ.  
Engage with us at [community@fapc.org](mailto:community@fapc.org).

## Women's Association Update



Dear Friends,

The roots of The Women's Association date back to 1810. It is a resilient group that has weathered many challenges and met them all. This year we are putting a pause on all of our Autumn 2020 Women's Association programming. This includes our monthly gatherings, the Tea and our beloved Holiday Bazaar that each year raises tens of thousands of dollars for the church. But look for events like this once we are all back together! Thank you always for your support of The Women's Association.

Rita Arlen

## COMMUNITY GROUPS



New to Community Groups? These small groups are central to life at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. Each week groups of 8-10 people gather and bring their whole selves to learn and grow in relationship with others. Community Groups center around many areas including books, Bible studies and prayer groups.

New to Community Groups? Here are some of this fall's exciting topics and sign up by dropping us a line at [community@fapc.org](mailto:community@fapc.org)

- Fall Congregational Book Read Groups
- 20s+30s Bible Study
- Bible Study
- Prayer Group
- Pray, Trust, Write with Reverend Kate Dunn
- LGBTQ





## MEMBERSHIP

What does it mean to belong to a church? Whether you have worshipped with us at Fifth Avenue and 55th Street or you have met us through our Online Worship, we invite you to consider uniting with our congregation through membership.

Membership means getting more deeply engaged with the diverse ministries of the church and more deeply rooted in a life of faith. Our fall membership process will ask what it means to believe and cultivate a rooted faith in a vibrant and diverse community. These classes are open to all, whether you call New York City or any other city your home.

### Belonging in Community

*Tuesday, Sept. 15 • 5:30 pm*

A conversation about the responsibilities and rewards of being part of a Christian community.

### Believing in the Church

*Tuesday, Sept. 22 • 5:30 pm*

A look at what makes the Presbyterian tradition unique and what lies ahead for this denomination.

### New Member Sunday

*Sunday, Sept. 27 • 5:30 pm*

Once you decide to move forward with membership, we will introduce you to members of the Session and welcome you during worship as a fully fledged member of the congregation.

*\*Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications.*

# Congregational Care

JOIN in prayerful support and care of each other.

Pray with us at [congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org)

## THE CIRCLE

*Online Conversations about Health, Wellness and Spirituality*

### Protect Yourself from Scammers

*Friday, Oct. 16 • 11 am*

**Robin Strashun, Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator, Search and Care**

Learn about the worst phone scams connected to the IRS, Social Security and phishing, and create a strategy to protect yourself.

Sign up at [congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org)



### Solving the Isolation Challenge

*Friday, Nov. 13 • 11 am*

**Cynthia Perthuis and Josie Lawrence, Senior Care Authority**

During the pandemic, the general public have been experiencing challenges that result from isolation and loneliness. Cynthia Perthuis and Josie Lawrence, Elder Care Strategists with Senior Care Authority, will review strategies designed to help. Sign up at [congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org)

## BEREAVEMENT GROUP

**Weekly Gatherings, beginning late September, 2020**

If you or someone you know has experienced a loss we invite them to join this Bereavement Group led by Ellen Theg. Sign up at [congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org)

## HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

Need more information, prayer or help? Contact the Congregational Care Office by emailing Lance Hurst at [congregationalcare@fapc.org](mailto:congregationalcare@fapc.org) to request help from a pastor, a deacon, a Circle of Caregiving volunteer or to submit a prayer request.

# Family Ministries

**GATHER** your family together and explore how to raise a faithful family.  
Grow with us at [familyministries@fapc.org](mailto:familyministries@fapc.org)

This season we will engage with one another in some new ways. Beginning Homecoming Sunday, we will have Little Lambs, Sunday School and Youth Group all online. We are excited to put together meaningful programs in each age group for all of our kids and see their smiling faces in September.

## Welcome Brooke Matejka, our 2020–21 Seminary Intern

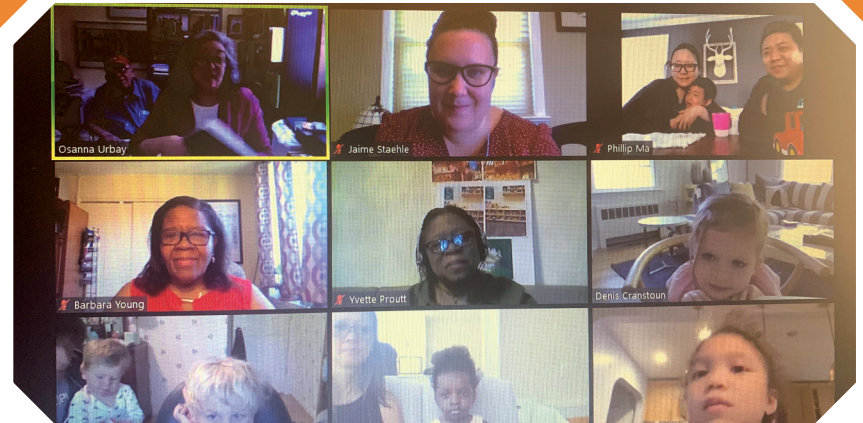


Brooke is currently pursuing a dual Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Education at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Brooke says that she has felt called to ministry from an early age. Raised in a pentecostal church, she was sometimes discouraged from asking questions. She later realized that she could become a leader who encouraged a sense of curiosity. “During college, I began to reconstruct my faith and realized how my loneliness could have been spared if a youth leader had welcomed my questions and journeyed alongside me. After receiving encouragement from pastors and professors, I applied to seminary to be that person my younger self wished was available.”

Brooke sees the challenge of being an intern during this virtual time and is ready. “This moment is showing us how much we treasure gathering together, and how many creative options we have while we must be apart. I also believe this is teaching the church to value millennial and Gen Z leadership for their ability to make authentic digital connections.”

We are excited to welcome Brooke, and we are most excited by her response to our most pressing question: Donuts at youth group, yes or no? Said Brooke, “Of course. Cake donuts of every variety!”



### Toddler Time

*Sundays • 10 am*

Each week we invite toddlers and preschoolers to join us for a special time of music and story with Miss Osanna and Ms. Yau. We understand that attention spans are short so Toddler Time will be just 15 minutes long.

### Sunday School

*Sundays • 10:30 am*

Sunday School will have age-specific classes and Sunday school teachers, engaging videos, meaningful discussion and creative crafts.

## FAMILY MINISTRIES ONLINE EVENTS

In addition to Online Sunday School and Youth Group, we will be hosting some fun virtual events for our kids. You'll find details below on these events and more. As always, contact us with feedback, questions and ideas for enriching our community at [familyministries@fapc.org](mailto:familyministries@fapc.org)

### Grandparents Day

*Saturday, Sept. 26 • 11 am – 12 pm*

Invite a grandparent (or grandparent-like person in your child's life) to join us for a virtual craft and game morning. Using breakout rooms, we will switch between large group activities and activities kids can do one-on-one with their grandparent. The deadline to register for this event is Saturday, Sept. 12 so we can send everyone fun packets!



## Fall Festival

*Saturday, Oct. 24 • 10 – 11 am*

Wear a costume and get ready for a great morning of crafts, games and dancing with friends! Register by Saturday, Oct. 10 to receive a package of fun crafts that you can do on your own or with the group.

## Advent Festival

*Sunday, Nov. 29 • 10:30 – 11:30 am*

We may not be able to meet in person, but we can deck our own halls with the symbols of Advent! We will gather on Zoom to do crafts, hear the Christmas story, and even do a little Christmas caroling. Register by November 10 to receive a package of fun crafts that you can do on your own or with the group.

## YOUTH ONLINE EVENTS

### Overnighter Style Game Night

*Friday, Oct. 2*

### Online Dance Party with Special Guest DJ

*Friday, Nov. 6*

### Christmas Party with Xmas Pajama Contest

*Friday, Dec. 13*

## WEEKLY ONLINE YOUTH GROUP



Beginning Homecoming Sunday, Sept. 13, weekly Online Youth Group resumes. Each week we will gather as one group for our roses, thorns, and buds and then break out into Middle School and High School groups for our lesson.

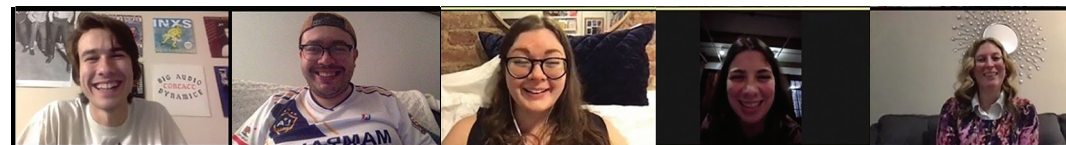
*Sunday Mornings, 10 am.*

**\*Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications.**

**WRESTLE** with big, existential questions—and also laugh a lot!

Be curious with us at [youngadults@fapc.org](mailto:youngadults@fapc.org).

## 20S + 30S EVENTS



### Online Kick-Off Party with Communion and a Scavenger hunt

*Wednesday, Sept. 9 • 7 pm*

### Online Retreat

*Saturday, Oct. 24*

### Online Christmas Party

*Saturday, Dec. 12 • 8 pm*

Join us for 20s + 30s beginning Wednesday, Sept. 16. We will be doing a mixture of spiritual formation studies, social events, and community gatherings.

*Wednesday Nights • 7 pm*

The Embrace Community Group will meet on Sunday, Sept. 27 and Sunday, Nov. 29 at 11:30 am. We will gather virtually to have brunch together and discuss important conversations centered around life and faith.

**\*Look for more details at [fapc.org](http://fapc.org) and in upcoming church communications. Connect with us on Instagram ([FAPC20s30s](#)) and Facebook ([FAPC20s+30s](#)).**

# Outreach

**VOLUNTEER** and be the hands and feet of Christ.  
Serve with us at [volunteer@fapc.org](mailto:volunteer@fapc.org)

We continue our outreach efforts to respond to the current moment and provide critical and caring resources to our homeless, hungry and struggling brothers and sisters.

## ECUMENICAL OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP

The Ecumenical Outreach Partnership is a collaboration among three midtown congregations, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Saint Thomas Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral. By working together, this innovative partnership has increased the level of support to men and women experiencing homelessness and in need of social services.

During the Covid-19 public health challenge, EOP's vital work continues on the streets of New York City. Led by John Sheehan, LMSW, this fall a team will hold regular "office hours" outside the church on weekday afternoons. (See page 18 to learn more about the care approach used by the EOP team.)

## A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Food insecurity resulting from the current health challenge has left 1 in 4 New Yorkers hungry. Following an impactful summer, A Place at the Table will continue to provide two meals a week to our homeless and hungry neighbors. All food is prepared by Rodrigo Rosas and Roxo Catering.

## MEALS ON HEELS

Here are some numbers that Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church is proud of...

Take 25 volunteers a week who serve 50 meals each Saturday and multiply that times 37 years and you get an outreach story of deep impact.

## Meals on Heels: The Past, Present & Future *by John Wyatt*



### The Past

In 1986, three Deacons learned that the Meals on Wheels program only operated weekdays. "What about the weekend and is there something we can do to help our homebound senior citizens?" we wondered. The answer was clear: start a Saturday meal preparation and delivery service at FAPC!

### The Present

Now renamed Meals on Heels, the program has grown to serve more than 50 people each week. Josie Lawrence and I coordinate a core group of dedicated volunteers who come together every Saturday to shop, organize and prepare what has become a restaurant-quality meal. The program is self-funded through donations and an annual fundraiser.

When the Covid-19 public health challenge began, the future of Meals on Heels was uncertain. Our FAPC clergy recognized the need to continue the program and urged us to explore new solutions, including:

- Volunteers are required to sign up in advance.
- Volunteers must wear a mask before entering the room, wash their hands and wear disposable gloves before starting to work.
- Deliverers are greeted in the 55th Street lobby by a Coordinator where they sign in and receive their delivery assignments.

**Can You Volunteer?** We need delivery volunteers. The time commitment is small. MOH Deliverers check in at 11 am and are usually finished by 1 pm. Join us! Email John Wyatt at [moh@fapc.org](mailto:moh@fapc.org).

### The Future

Because we cannot predict the future, we remain focused on the present. Doing so will ensure the continuation of this vital outreach ministry.



# Arts & Our Faith

ENJOY the beauty of art, music and theatre through the lens of faith.  
Celebrate with us at [music@fapc.org](mailto:music@fapc.org) and [theatre@fapc.org](mailto:theatre@fapc.org)

## New Art for Our Walls

By Nancy Moore

The Arts & Our Faith Committee is delighted to announce the donation of a lovely piece of art to the FAPC collection!

Stephen Welker donated the painting, *View of the 5th Avenue Presbyterian Church* by American mid-twentieth century artist, K. Grace. Created in mixed media with oil and watercolor on board, this charming winter scene depicts travelers in a snow squall passing by the church.

Of his decision to donate the painting, Stephen says, “What made this piece stand out is its interpretation of the church’s exterior that is without the well-known brownstone façade. A significant number of works show our corner of Fifth Avenue and 55th Street, but this one is unique. I am delighted to be able to contribute this to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church’s art collection for everyone to enjoy.” A member since 2014, Stephen is on the Board of Trustees and he and his wife Emily were married this May in Kirkland Chapel.

The painting now hangs on the wall opposite the Vestry, in the north entrance to the Sanctuary.

## THE SHOW GOES ON FOR THEATRE FELLOWSHIP

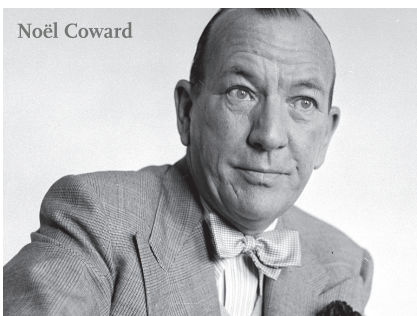


By Matt Roush

Like so many performance spaces in New York City, Jones Auditorium has been dark since early March, shutting down the Theatre Fellowship’s main stage production of Noël Coward’s *Blithe Spirit* one week ahead of schedule. In the best “show must go on” tradition, members of the Theatre Fellowship have continued to share their love of theatre through the ubiquitous new communications technology, Zoom.







Noël Coward

As if to demonstrate that all the world's a stage, now everyone can sit in their living rooms staring into a computer and experiment with live readings. Each actor occupies a square on the home screen, replacing their own name with the character they're playing. The project began with a few scripts of *The Golden Girls* found online, and moved on to a more traditional one-act play.

Most recently, the Theatre Fellowship has been workshopping another Noël Coward property, *Waiting in the Wings*. Broadway veteran Jeanne Lehman has been studying the text and carefully editing it, much as she did for last year's reading of *Shadowlands* that accompanied an Adult Education class on C.S. Lewis. Coward believed that *Wings*, a comedy-drama set in a retirement home for actresses, conveyed "the basic truth that old age needn't be nearly so dreary and sad as it is supposed to be, provided you greet it with humor and live it with courage."

Our Theatre Fellowship hopes to be able to deliver that message someday to the wider congregation, whether in person or remotely.

For more information about Theatre Fellowship contact [theatre@fapc.org](mailto:theatre@fapc.org)





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