

# Rev. Emily Brewer

BROOKLYN, NY

October 29, 2024

Grace and peace to the congregation of Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church.

It is such an honor to be the candidate to be your installed pastor. Although we already know each other a bit, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself a bit more to you, both as a person and as your candidate and share a bit about my sense of call to LAPC.

I moved to New York in 2012 to attend seminary, thinking I would only be in the city for the three years it took me to get my degree. I wasn't sure where I'd go after that, but I couldn't imagine myself as a big-city-person. However, I found myself in a strong community that made me feel called to stay, then I met and married my partner, Eric, and here we still are. It turns out that I love living in a city where I have found community that challenges and supports me, where there are beautiful parks that satisfy my need to be around trees, where I have been part of social movements and direct actions in our city and world that bend the arc toward justice, and where my Jewish-Christian family can exist in the nuance of being a multi-faith family that honors both our traditions fully.

I have also experienced many of those things at LAPC. I first got to know LAPC through a network of faith communities in support of the Migrant Caravans in 2018. I then got to know several LAPC members when we traveled to a Poor People's Campaign rally in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 2021. It is fitting that my first real connections with LAPC were through faith-rooted justice movements.

I have now been serving as your interim pastor for ten months. I felt called to interim ministry because I am drawn to the sense of possibility in times of great change and transition. I did not apply to be the interim intending to apply for the installed position, and it was only after several months that I realized I kept thinking about the longer-term at LAPC and how we could shape this next era of LAPC's life together, building on the legacy of justice-seeking, prophetic action and word to respond to current needs in this city and world. In conversation with the PNC and the presbytery's Commission on Ministry, I applied and began the process of discernment with the PNC.

It's clear to me now that the sense of possibility that I feel drawn to isn't unique to interim ministry, at least not at LAPC. We live in a world where change is one of the only constants, and congregations must be flexible in order to be resilient and responsive to the needs of their members and communities as they follow Jesus. LAPC embraces possibility in its character, not just in a time of pastoral transition. When I'm with LAPC, whether it's in preaching, teaching, pastoral care, action, partnerships, or other pieces of LAPC's ministry, I feel the Spirit at work building connection and calling us all to care for one another and extend that care to the wider community as well.

I am writing this letter just a few days before the US presidential election, and in many ways this time of uncertainty and even anxiety clarifies for me: it is communities like LAPC, where people of different backgrounds, ages, and experiences can come together and work together toward the Kingdom of God, that will help us navigate the coming years with courage, compassion, and commitment to continue working for justice at the systemic scale and in our interpersonal relationships. Because no matter who wins this election, no matter what comes in the future, our call remains the same: to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

I am grateful and humbled to continue in this process with LAPC and look forward to creating a shared vision of what doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God looks like for LAPC in this chapter of its life and history.

With peace and gratitude,

Emily