

The Gathering of a People of God

National Avenue is a brave place for all people. We celebrate our diversity of race, creed, religion, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions. We extend a warm welcome to all this morning, especially those who are worshipping at National Avenue for the first time. Your presence enriches us in this time of celebration together~

Prelude

Words of Gathering

Tina Stillwell & Dave Derosssett

Blessed are you who are raging.

Blessed are you who are mourning.

Blessed are you who feel numb.

Peace comes when we gather.

Blessed are you who feel sick. and tired. and sick and tired.

Blessed are you who refuse to turn away.

Blessed are you who need to turn away.

Love is built by our intentions.

Blessed are you who keep breathing deep.

Blessed are you who are tending to your own needs.

Blessed are you who are tending to the needs of another.

Faith comes to life each time we show up.

Blessed are you who know deep in your bones that you are good.

and beautiful.

and beloved.

and sacred.

and worthy.

and believed.

and held.

and capable of healing beyond your wildest imagination.

Blessed are you who remind others they are good.

and beautiful.

and beloved.

and sacred.

and worthy.

and believed.

and held.

and capable of healing beyond their wildest imagination.

Blessed are we when we dare to dream of a world of love

and show up to make it so.

Blessed are we when we dare to imagine, repair, and transform.

Blessed are we when we labor together to make it so. [adt/enfleshed]

*Please stand as you are able in body or in spirit at the * asterisks.*

***Gathering Hymn**

Gather Us In

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***Lighting the Community Candle**

Dave Derosssett

Just like me.

Buddhist teacher Pema Chödrön has a practice

she often uses when encountering other people.

Quietly within herself she simply says, just like me.

The person may be sad or angry, acting with kindness or behaving badly—

elbowing people through an airport,

speaking harshly to a child,

hoarding pie at the community potluck.

Just like me, Pema says to herself.

They are just like me.

We are much more similar than the political

and media storytellers would have us believe.

For these similarities to be felt and known,

we have to spend more time with one another.

We need to uncover the stories that reveal our connectedness.

We need to gather when the crisis hits.

We need to allow suffering to speak.

We need to move closer to one another,

preferably within earshot,

when we sense the anxiety, hurt, and fear rising.

We need to feel the warmth of one another

if we are to work up any trust,

if we are to discover the new stories,

if we are to create a larger,

more beautiful vision of the world.

[markyachoelli]

The Candle of Christ is lit.

In this light,

we point to this moment burning in our midst to claim

a hope leading us onward.

May we go with courage.

***Passing of the Peace**

Tina Stillwell

Peace comes block by block.

We bring what we have.

Each of us good.

Each of us with different tools and skills.

Each of us eager to learn more.

We bring our curiosity.

Each of us a different perspective.

Each one a new vantage point.

Each brings questions.

We bring our love.

We trust that by coming together

we can build something.

[jsimmons]

May the heart of peace be with you in this work.

And also with you.

You are invited to share this ancient greeting with those seated near you. We are mindful each of us are at different levels of comfort, please honor those around you as you share peace. You are invited to turn to the camera and say hello to all worshipping with us online!

Life of the Church

Ashley Quinn



You are invited to sign in via check-in. If you would like to receive our weekly update by email or would like to schedule a time for coffee with our pastor, please provide that information on the form.

Reading the Sacred Story

Dave Derosssett

From the letters of Paul, from Romans Chapter 14 and The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 5

We tell stories to learn, to grow, to spark more questions.

In the listening and the telling may our hearts and minds

spark our imaginations as co-creators.

Amen.

Prayers of the Community

Tina Stillwell

Silence

God of messy middles.

We long to story our way into a more loving and compelling future because we've never reckoned with our past.

We continually resist acknowledging the slavery,

genocide, racism, misogyny, environmental destruction,

and other atrocities intimately woven throughout our history.

Many of us cling to the old stories because we don't want to lose the privileges and exalted identities that those biased histories provide us.

Whatever the cause,

it is clear we have few visions,

few common stories that describe the world we all long to live in.

The upheaval of this present time provides

an opportunity to tell a new story.

But that new story cannot bring healing

and hope until those who have been silenced

finally have the platform to be heard.

Civil rights activist and Harvard lecturer Marshall Ganz

claims that story is about

“how people make choices when they are confronted with not knowing what to do.”

Maybe we are in the messy middle of the story.

The crux.

The dark unknown.

Maybe we are at the end of the first act,

that moment when the real struggle is brought forth.

Maybe we are at that turning point

where the only way forward is together.

[markyaconelli]

God, you have brought life out of darkness,

where light does not shine in shame,

where light helps to encourage us to write

the next chapter of the story together.

May we be honest and engage the difficult stories.

May it be so.

Reflection Music

The Basin and the Towel

CARD

SOLO

Reflection *Building A Bridge, Wearing Down Walls*

Steve Flower

Music of Response

O God of Vision

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Offering of Ourselves, Our Tithes & Our Gifts



You are invited to share offering via Paypal (using the QR code on the left) or in the plate as it is passed. We invite you to share your offerings of time, passion, energy, and resources. Thank you for investing in Spirituality, Justice, and Community as it comes to life at NACC.

Music of Reflection

Love Can Build a Bridge
SOLO

JUDDS

*Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Gratitude

Debora Biggs

Sharing the Lord's Supper

Elders & Deacons

with Steve Flower and Ashley Quinn

May this be the day we come together.

Mourning, we come to mend,

withered, we come to weather,

torn, we come to tend,

battered, we come to better.

Tethered by this year of yearning,

we are learning that though we weren't ready for this,

we have been readied by it.

We steadily vow that no matter how we are weighed down,

we must always pave a way forward.

We gather at the table to practice loving in Jesus' way.

This hope is our door, our portal.

Even if we never get back to normal, someday we can venture beyond it,
to leave the known and take the first steps.

So let us not return to what was normal, but reach toward what is next.

We gather at the table to practice loving in Jesus' way.

What was cursed, we will cure.

What was plagued, we will prove pure.

Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,

those fortunes we forswore, now the future we foresee,

where we weren't aware, we're now awake;

those moments we missed

are now these moments we make,

the moments we meet,

and our hearts, once all together beaten,

now all together beat.

We gather at the table to practice loving in Jesus' way.

Come, look up with kindness yet,

for even solace can be sourced from sorrow.

We remember, not just for the sake of yesterday,

but to take on tomorrow.

For wherever we come together, we will forever overcome.

[communion words from Amanda Gorman, "New Day's Lyric"]

On the night of his arrest, Jesus shared a meal with his companions.

He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:

"This is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

After the meal, he took the cup, blessed it, and shared it saying:

"This cup that is poured out is the new covenant."

Here we remember his story, his table, his love.

We gather at the table to practice loving in Jesus' way.

Prayer at the Table

Mark Biggs

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

This morning we will receive communion by intinction. You are invited to come forward and to take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, eat, and leave your toothpick in the bowl. The bread is gluten, nut, and dairy free so all may share at the table. If you would prefer a pre-packaged communion, remain seated and we will bring one to you. All are welcome to share at the table set by Jesus.

Communion Music

Sending Song

Fill the World With Love

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Words for Our Journey

As we leave this place,

hear these words from Rumi,

"Today, like every other day,

we wake up empty and frightened.

Don't open the door to the study and begin reading.

Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.

There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground."

Let the beauty we love be what we do-

help us build our way.

May it be so.

Postlude

National Avenue Christian Church

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Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor | Ashley Quinn, Pastoral Apprentice

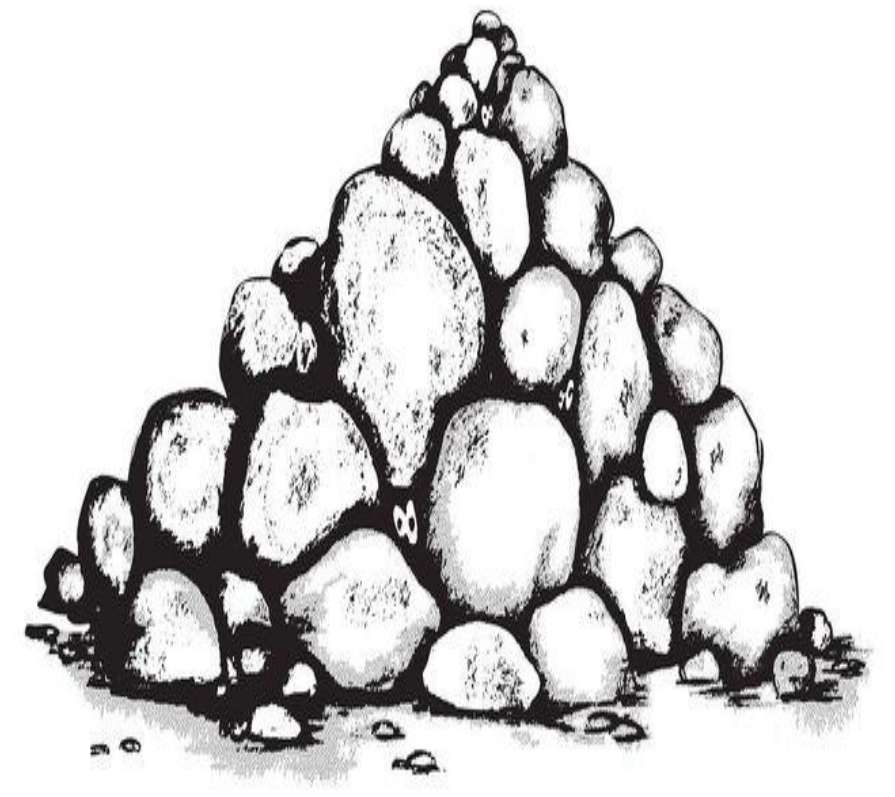
Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright, Adjunct Pastor for Faith Formation with Families

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator, Alex Bates, Sound Technician

Alex Bates, Sound Tech | Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator,

Rev. Dr. John White, Theologian in Residence | Jonathan Raney, Music Director

National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



*Our Storied Lives:
Building a Bridge
28 July 2024*