

## 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

As those who love,  
cherish,  
tell and retell your stories,  
those longing to practice living love,  
**we gather.**  
God of our heartbeats,  
of our wit,  
God of our imagination,  
of our longing to be re-membered to creation and one another,  
**we long to live your message of love.**

We have heard too many messages spoken in your name,  
messages that exclude,  
that encourage disrespect,  
that seek to divide rather than to connect.

**We long to live your message of love.**

When corruption drives the narrative,  
**we seek courage to speak truth in love.**

When misinformation captures the story,  
**we seek courage to speak truth in love.**

We long to live a way inspired by Jesus' life and practices.

**May we be so bold.**

May we support one another  
as we engage in challenging conversation.

**We share this work together.**

**May it be so.**

[jsimmons]

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

**\*Gathering Hymn**                      *We Are Not Our Own*                      **689**

**\*Lighting the Community Candle**                      **Lucinda Wadle**

The courage of love.

That is what got my ancestors through times of turmoil and conflict.

It was not that we all thought alike;

just the opposite:

our people always think for themselves.

But when the chips are down,

we unite with a common commitment to our people –

a love from which we will never retreat.

We have the courage of love.

**We gather in this courage.**

[stevenchareston]

*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 This Morning I Pray for My Enemies**

By Joy Harjo

And whom do I call my enemy?

An enemy must be worthy of engagement.

I turn in the direction of the sun and keep walking.

It's the heart that asks the question, not my furious mind.

The heart is the smaller cousin of the sun.

It sees and knows everything.

It hears the gnashing even as it hears the blessing.

The door to the mind should only open from the heart.

An enemy who gets in, risks the danger of becoming a friend.

**“We cannot own anyone else, people, the lands, or resources.**

**We are here to care for each other.”**

Joy Harjo,

An American Sunrise

May the heart of peace be with you.

**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



*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.*

### Reflecting on the Sacred Story through Music

*From the Hebrew Bible Genesis 2:18-24*

*and the New Testament Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12*

### Prayers of the Community

Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright

If you need to be reminded:

(as we all do from time to time)

you are beloved.

Your flesh bears Sacred worth.

Neither prejudice nor power should keep you

from safety nor community nor a place to learn nor a place to work

nor a place to practice your faith.

Neither should it keep your neighbor from the same.

In a world and time where systems of violence

entice us to compromise our values, use us as pawns, tokenize us,

ban us, exploit us, and teach us to turn on one another

may we be reminded of our collective power,

of the possibilities we bear, of our divine calling...

not to settle for dreams of access to what is corrupt

but to seek, and create, and imagine and protest our way

to something altogether better.

**Feeding each other until we get there,**

**clothing one another until we get there,**

**protecting one another until we get there,**

**hiring one another until we get there,**

**building community with one another until we get there,**

**creating sacred space with one another until we get there,**

**sharing all that we have with one another until we get there,**

**trusting that these practices,**

**in small and ordinary and extravagant ways,**

**will in and of themselves**

**enflesh that which we dream of.**

*Silence*

We join our voices:

**Mother of us all, who dwells within and beyond,**

**Sacred is your name.**

**May your holy vision for collective flourishing**

**come to fruition among us.**

**May your dreams of justice, love, compassion,**

**and connection be enfolded on earth.**

**Provide us today with what we need to be nourished**

**in body, soul, and heart.**

**Forgive us for the harm we cause**

**as we seek to forgive those who have harmed us.**

**Lead us away from everything that destroys**

**and liberate us from the hands of evil.**

**For you are the ultimate source of hope.**

**Your power-with exceeds all power-over.**

**Your presence incites eternal wonder.**

**All praise to you, our comfort and strength.**

**Amen.**

[Rev. M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed]

Music of Centering

*O, Love*

Elaine Hegenberg

CHANCEL CHOIR

Reflection

*Navigating the Path of Love*

Dr. Diana Butler Bass

Music of Response

*I Choose Love*

Mark Miller

CHANCEL CHOIR

### 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.*

Musical Invitation

*The Gift of Love*

526

### \*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

Dena Lantz

### Communion Meditation & Sharing the Lord's Supper

with Revs. Jenn Simmons, Jody Furnas-Wright, Elders & Deacons

God, you never promised us that way would be clear.

You have, however, created us in your image –

the image of One who is Wisdom,

who is Love,

who is Courage.

You breathed your life into us with the assurance that we have,

within and around us,

everything we need to be your faithful people.

Though we sometimes act in disregard

for your call on our collective life,

still you show up with and for us,

relentlessly.

And so we join with all the saints who have gone before

in gratitude for your abiding presence:

**Holy, holy, holy One, God of power and presence**

**all that is, is full of your glory**

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of Love**

Sacred is your presence and blessed is Christ with us.

Through the life of Jesus we saw an example of what it means to

navigate an uncertain path,

practice creative ministry,

and face with courage and compassion

all the barriers that work against your Spirit on the move.

Jesus lived and breathed a ministry

rooted in your Love for all people.

He prioritized the lives of those who are suffering

and showed us what it looks like to be with

and for one another,

even under great distress.

Though evil attempted to silence

this proclamation of an all inclusive Kindom of God,

not even death could keep Love from growing.

On the night in which he was arrested,

he gathered among friends for a meal.

He took bread,

gave thanks to you,

broke the bread and shared it with his disciples saying,

**“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.**

**Do this in remembrance of me.”**

When the supper was over,

he took the cup,

gave thanks to you,

gave it to his disciples, and said:

**“Drink from this, all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant.**

**Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”**

And so, in remembrance of Christ with us,

and in the assurance of your Love persistent,

we offer our lives, our ministries,

and our church in the service of your healing work

as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Love endures always.**

Pour out your Spirit on this community and these gifts.

Make them a taste of your Kindom through Christ with us,

that we might leave the Table both nourished by your Love

and still hungry for justice for all your people. [adapt/M Jade Kaiser]

### Prayer at the Table

Steve Flower

### 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

*Eat This Bread*

414

### Sending Song

*O, For a World*

683

### Words for Our Journey

Love is more than an emotion.

**Love makes a way to live in solidarity.**

Love reminds us we are responsible for one another.

**Love helps us find our way across barriers.**

My work is to care for you.

**Our work is to care for one another.**

It will be messy.

**It will be hard.**

It will challenge us.

**Love, love is the only way.**

**May it guide, sustain, and carry us onward.**

[jsimmons]

### Postlude

#### National Avenue Christian Church

417.869.9176 natlave@sbcglobal.net www.nationalavenuecc.com

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

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

Rev. Dr. John White, Theologian in Residence

Jonathan Raney, Music Director | Jennifer Forni, Music Assistant

Alex Bates, Sound Technician | Rohit Choudhary, Technical Assistant

Andrew Myers & Tabitha Carroll Myers, Tech Support

Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator | Nicholas & Olivia Villaroel, Sextons

Greta Allen & Aydia Lancaster, Nursery Caregivers

Kylie Robertson & Claudia Brown-Jackson, UNO Team

John Scroggins, Board Moderator

Dena Lantz, Steve Flower, Lucinda & Brad Wadle, Elders

Sylvia Clark, Marica Morriset, Doug Steere, & Jill Wait, Deacons

# National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



Image generated on Canva

## Navigating the Path of Love 6 October 2024