

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

Susan & John Mihalevich

Love is.

Neighbors going through their garage to find an extra dog crate to share.

Love is.

Finding our favorite recipes of soup to make for our unsheltered friends.

Love is.

Making plans to hand out cups of hot chocolate and stay awake into the night to keep a space safe.

Love is.

Texting our friends to tell them we will be there. We will show up.

Love is.

Marching with our community.

Love is.

Collecting coats and pants and gloves and making sure our unsheltered friends are warm.

Love is.

Planning and organizing.

Love is.

Resting to be sure we will have the capacity to show up how and when we need and want.

Love is taking the stories of Jesus so seriously,

we mobilize,

we dream,

we imagine,

we inspire one another in how we love.

Love is here.

[jsimmons]

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

***Gathering Hymn**

Come and Find the Quiet Center

575

***Lighting the Epiphany Candle**

We have searched for the light.

Dear ones, we need not search any further.

The Light is here.

The Light is here.

The Light is with us.

The Light is with us.

The Light is in us.

The light is in us.

We are light.

[jsimmons]

The Christ Candle 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**

Which is to say this blessing is always.

Which is to say there is no place this blessing

does not long to cry out in lament,

to weep its words in sorrow,

to scream its lines in sacred rage.

Which is to say there is no day this blessing ceases

to whisper into the ear of the dying, the despairing, the terrified.

Which is to say there is no moment this blessing refuses

to sing itself into the heart of the hated and the hateful,

the victim and the victimizer,

with every last ounce of hope it has.

Which is to say there is none that can stop it,

none that can halt its course,

none that will still its cadence,

none that will delay its rising,

none that can keep it from springing forth

from the mouths of us who hope,

from the hands of us who act,

from the hearts of us who love,

from the feet of us who will not cease our stubborn,

aching marching, marching

until this blessing has spoken its final word,

until this blessing has breathed its benediction

in every place,

in every tongue:

Peace.

Peace.

Peace.

[janrichardson]

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

From the Hebrew Bible, Genesis Chapter 28

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

Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright

Between a president who recently died

and one about to begin

we remember a man who was never president.

(We notice the harmonies, and the dissonances.)

See how our choices matter—

not our position, nor our power, but our character.

We remember Martin, who was famous,

and in his name thousands more who were not,

but just as brave and merciful and mighty.

We remember all those who were peacemakers,

the nonviolent seekers of justice who have gone before,

and those who are now among us, without office.

We give thanks for those who stood against injustice,

who faced violence, hatred and anger with gentle courage,

and we pray for that spirit as well,

that we will not walk with the haughty and the cruel,

that we will be truthful and kind,

that we confront the power to exclude with the power to love.

With blessed leaders showing us the way,

we pray that we will choose love over fear,

generosity over selfishness, service over supremacy.

We give thanks for the saints who have gone before,

link arms with the saints who risk even now,

and with their song in our throats, we carry on.

Invitation to Silence and Breath

We join with the chorus of the saints who have gone before us...

Our Mother, Our Father, author of all life,

holy is your presence.

May your story be a part of our own,

the story of this world becomes

the story of the unfolding of heaven.

Give us this moment, moment by moment.

Forgive us completely

and make us completely forgiving of ourselves and others.

Save us from the weakness of our will,

and keep us from doing injustice.

For all Being is yours; all power is yours; all glory is yours;

In this moment in eternity. Amen.

[stevegarnaasholmes]

Music of Centering

Out of the Depth

510

Reflection

Rest is Resistance: Dream

Rev. Simmons

Music to Reflect

A Million Dreams

PASEK & PAUL

CHANCEL CHOIR

Offering of Ourselves, Our Tithes & Our Gifts

