

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

Mark & Debora Biggs

When I Feel Small by Steve Garnaas Holmes

and inconsequential

I look at my hands.

What they have done through the years

is not there,

it is woven into the warp of history.

Generations hold those things now,

hold me.

I am among them.

I am all of them.

I take a breath:

the sky breathes into me

and out of me, I am sky.

My breath leaves me,

as if I am dead and buried,

I am earth.

I am not small,

I am the whole world,

in my part of it.

The heart of Creation beats in me,

the DNA of the universe

furled in the cell of me,

the whole Body present

in the hand I am,

I, the song that contains the world.

Myself is tiny, But I,

I am vast, if I listen, the whole Mystery

in the Word of me

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

***Gathering Hymn** *Holy and Good Is the Gift of Desire* **509**

***Lighting the Epiphany Candle**

Debora Biggs

My enemy is myself: a part of me,

part of the whole of which I am part.

With their evil, I am complicit.

Of their wound, I myself need healing.

They deserve my wholeness.

Even the cruel I will oppose

with love, knowing I live in them.

An enemy vanquished

is not as powerful a victory

as a heart transformed,

for the first enemy is within.

(Oh, so much has to die, for me to come into love!)

Only love will overcome their lack of love.

Because they live in me,

my healing transforms them.

Their fearful hate is weakened

when mine is.

O Love, when I receive your love

I multiply the love

of the whole, and there is a new Creation. [stevegarnassholmes]

The Christ Candle is lit.

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]

***Passing of the Peace**

Mark Biggs

We are made in the likeness of Eternal Creativity.

Another world is possible and on its way.

Its insistence moves us into being

and imagines for us worlds beyond our hopelessness.

Another world is possible and on its way.

We are made to collaborate with those

around us to build deeper connections

and sustainability around new ways of doing life together.

Another world is possible and on its way.

We are making space in our world for doubt

and uncertainty by calling out fear and isolationism.

Another world is possible and on its way.

This is the truth about us.

It always has been and always will be.

A new world is both here and arriving.

We wait for it, usher it,

greet it as a hopeful people. Amen.

[Britney Winn Lee]

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.

Moment of Pause

Breathe

INHALE: **I can listen to my body.**

EXHALE: **I will stay whole.**

INHALE: **My body is good.**

EXHALE: **I will not abandon it.**

INHALE: **This flesh is divine.**

EXHALE: **The physical is the spiritual.**

[colearthurley]

Reflecting on the Sacred Story

From the gospel according to Luke Chapter 8

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

Remember that trauma is all about speed and reflexivity.

Slow yourself down and pay attention to your body.

Be curious about what is going on there.

Lean into your body's experiences and sensations.

Do the same with uncertainty.

Love and trust are not concepts or tactics.

They are ways of being with someone,

ways of being in the world,

and ways of being in your body.

We experience love and trust in our bodies.

For me to love and trust you,

my body needs to sense that you deserve that love and trust.

Yours will need to sense the same thing about me.

This is visceral, not cognitive.

I wish we could all begin with trust and love for each other.

But we can't.

There has been too much damage to too many bodies

for too many generations.

But we all can begin with respect, caring,

and a willingness to help."

— My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem

Invitation to Silence and Breath

God, slow us down.

As we discern how to reach out and ask for help and healing,

as we grow in awareness and take next steps,

help us to listen.

Help us listen to one another and to our bodies.

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]

Song of Lament *When Aimless Violence Takes Those We Love* 512

Reflection Rev. Jenn Simmons

Music to Reflect *Beloved* 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 Gift *The World Needs All of Us* GOOD
CHANCEL CHOIR

* 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 Rev. Candy Adams

Communion Meditation & Sharing the Lord's Supper
with Revs. Jody Furnas-Wright, Jenn Simmons, Elders & Deacons

Maybe you've known what it is to leave your body to survive.
And maybe when the threat has subsided,
you've been unable to find your way back.
This racist, capitalist, ableist world does not want to keep you whole.
It can only stand to benefit from bodies emptied of their protectors.

But hear this:
If you aren't in your body, someone else is.
You will too soon find that the many tyrants of the world
have taken the helm in your absence.

For this reason,
our liberation practice must be tied to a reclamation
of the physical self—
to an embodied homecoming.

Just as our spiritualities draw us into our interior worlds,
they should also be a map back home to our bodies,
a mirror held to our very faces.

Whose mouth is this, whose hands are these?
Hands that trem-ble,

eyes that dart in all directions.
Whose neck is this, tall and un-bowed?
Welcome.
You are safe here.
Welcome.
Your body is good. [colearthurriley]

One way that Jesus and his companions practiced embodiment,
one way they practice goodness,
was around tables.

The table reminds us to slow down.

Take our time.

Look one another in the eye.

See the goodness in the bread broken,
a reminder of a life shared for all.

Share the cup.

Here there is enough.

The lies of our culture melt away.

We practice rest.

We practice the truth of abundance.

We remind one another, our bodies are good.

We live love.

Prayer at the Table

Tina Stillwell

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.

Sending Song *We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky* 684

Words for Our Journey

With the power of the God
who comes in flesh for all flesh,
go in courage to remain in your body,
that you would stay whole in a world content to see you torn apart.
May it be so. [colearthurriley]

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

Rev. Dr. John White, Theologian in Residence

Jonathan Raney, Music Director | Jennifer Forni, Music Assistant

Alex Bates, Sound Technician | 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

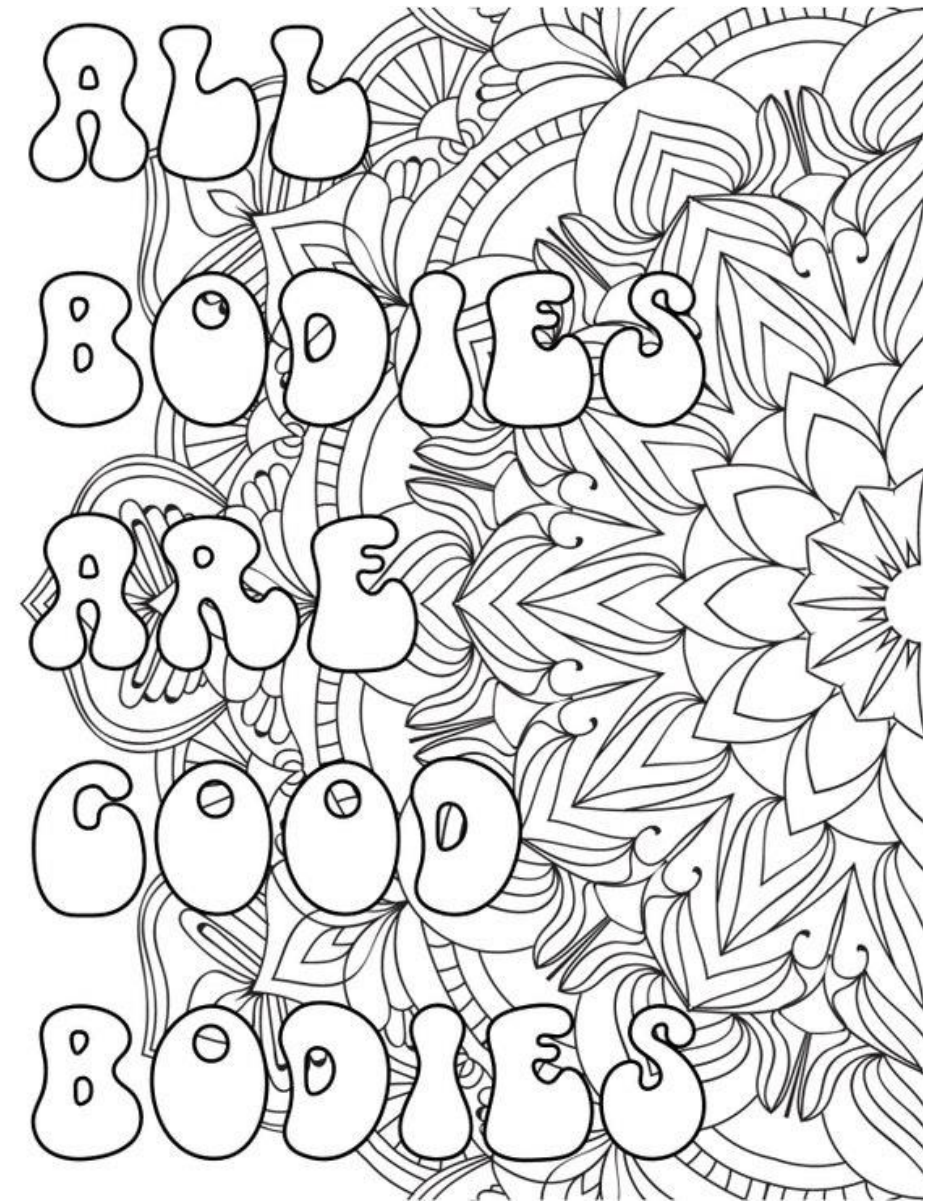
John Scroggins, Board Moderator

Rev. Candy Adams, Debora & Mark Biggs, Tina Stilwell, Elders

Lexi Amos, Miles Pearson, Melisabeth & Arthur Johnston,

Karen Lance, Marcia Morriset, Deacons

National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



Listening to Our Bodies
23 February 2025