

**National Avenue Christian Church
Online Worship Guide**



Image by: Hannah Garrity

***Advent:
The Incarnation of Hope
28 November 2021***

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 both enriches us and this time of celebration together~

As you gather for worship...

- *Bring a candle (and lighter) and communion elements (coffee, juice, bread, bagels, whatever you have!).*
- *During the Passing of the Peace you will be invited to wave and say hi in the comments!*
- *Before worship, you are invited to share your prayers here:
<https://forms.gle/G1V6Hh37pmiv5D5q7>*
- *Breathe and savor the Spirit gathering in this space.*
- *After worship we will gather on Zoom in our digital fellowship space! We will share the Zoom link on Facebook during communion and invite you to begin gathering for fellowship after worship.*

Welcome to Worship

Words of Gathering

God,
who is Infinite Love,
incarnates love *as the universe* itself.
Matter and Spirit swirl together.

Love is here and love will come again.

We gather today with expectation,
with openness,
with gratitude,
on the threshold of hope.
May we step into the story,
and find our voice,

Rev. Don Childers and Tina Stillwell

[richardrohr]

as we birth hope into the world together.

Song of Gathering

Come, O Long-expected Jesus

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Advent Light: Hope is Coming

We hope for a world where all are fed.

We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.

We hope for a world with wide open doors.

We hope for a world with contagious laughter.

We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.

We hope for a world where all people feel at home—in their bodies, in the church, in their physical homes.

We hope for that world.

We long for that world.

We long to incarnate that world.

So today we light the candle of hope,

because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.

The Candle of Hope is lit.

May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.

Hope is near.

May we carry hope with us.

Amen.

[santifiedart]

* Music of Response

One Candle is Lit (vs 1)

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Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,

our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.

Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage.

One candle is lit for the hope of the age.

Passing of the Peace

May the light that we celebrate this coming Christmas

help us to see,

to widen our vision to all the ways
God shows up in the daylight...and the darkness.
When you have need of it,
may you find a welcoming light
and shelter in the shadows,
and may you offer those in peace
to all you meet.

[adapt/jrichardson]

This morning, may the peace of God be with you.
And also with you.

As we share peace today, we invite you to share this ancient greeting with those gathered. Share a hello or peace sign in the chat!

Life of the Church

Rev. Jenn Simmons

Please let us know you are with us here by filling out this form. 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 from our Ancient Texts

From Gospel of Luke Chapter 1

Come hope, come dwell with us.
May it be so.

Prayers of the Community

*As this community,
we invite you to take a few moments to claim the Spirit,
wherever you are today. We invite you to light your candles as we share prayers
at the end of our silence. As we join in prayer, we invite you to share prayers
here <https://forms.gle/G1V6Hh37pmiv5D5q7>.*

God of the weary and waiting,
Scripture tells us that where two or more are gathered, you are there.
So we trust that you are here—
listening to these words,
drawing us close,
stirring hope awake in us.
And for that, we are grateful.
We are so grateful.

We gather for a few moments in silence:

Silence

Today, Holy God, we feel hope in our midst when . . .
the choir sings,
when the candles are lit,
when we enter this space and someone knows our name.
When our children are curious,
when we find moments of true connection,
when we are brave enough to be who you call us to be.

However, God, even with gratitude for these moments of hope indwelling,
we also recognize that buried deep within us we have a deep longing for hope.

Holy God, we are longing for more...

We long for a world we have not seen.
We long for a world where oceans are clean, trees are green,
and animals are not endangered.

in the humble birth of a child,
a child of amazing and divine love,
a child of Mary's 'yes' to you,
a child of Joseph's acceptance,
a child of our humanity.

We pledge ourselves to be embodiments
of the dream Jesus dreamed.

Long ago, our tradition says,
Jesus took bread, gave thanks,
broke it and said:

'This bread is broken, as my body will always be.'

And Jesus handed it to his friends,
inviting them to eat:

'Remember all that I have been to you.'

Long ago, our tradition says,
Jesus poured a cup
offered thanks for it,
gave it to his friends, and said,

'This cup is poured out as my life will always be poured out.

As you drink, give thanks for all I have given.'

It is through the goodness and effort of others
that we have this bread and cup to offer;
bread, that was once scattered as grain in a field
and gathered together and baked into a loaf;
juice, that was once grapes grown on a hillside
and gathered together and pressed into juice.

**May the gatherings of this community of faith
be comforted and challenged during this Advent season.
May people see in us the courage and the generosity
that characterized Jesus' life.**

[anonymous]

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

During this time, you are invited to eat and drink. We are connected by the tables of our lives. Across distance, we are united by sharing together. Our presence, in person or across digital space, brings the Table to life.

Song of Blessing

All Earth is Waiting

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Blessing of Hope

So may we know the hope
that is not just for someday
but for this day—
here, now, in this moment
that opens to us:
hope not made of wishes
but of substance,
hope made of sinew
and muscle
and bone,
hope that has breath
and a beating heart,
hope that will not
keep quiet
and be polite,
hope that knows
how to holler
when it is called for,
hope that knows
how to sing
when there seems
little cause,
hope that raises us

from the dead—
not someday
but this day,
every day,
again and
again and
again.

[janrichardson]

Postlude

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Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor,

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Rev. Dr. John White, Pastoral Care, **Jonathan Raney**, Music Director