

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~

Prelude

Words of Gathering Don Childers and Claudia Brown-Jackson

Scripture is full of questions...

Where are you?

Am I my brother's keeper?

Whom shall I send?

Who do you say that I am?

Who sinned?

How many times shall I forgive?

If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Scripture is full of questions,
so just like those in our scriptures,
may we bring our full curiosity
and wonder into this space.**

Let us ask and seek after our merciful God.

***Gathering Hymn** *Love Will Be Our Lenten Calling* REGENTS SQUARE

Love will be our Lenten calling,
love to shake and shatter sin,
waking every closed, cold spirit,
stirring new life deep within,
till the quickened heart remembers
what our Easter birth can mean.

Peace will be our Lenten living
as we turn for home again,
longing for the words of pardon,
stripping off old grief and pain.
Till we stand, restored and joyful,
with the Church on Easter day.

Truth will be our Lenten learning:
hear the Crucified One call!
Shadowed by the Savior's passion,
images and idols fall,
and, in Easter's holy splendor,
God alone is all in all.

[ESmith]

***Sharing the Light of Community** **Claudia Brown-Jackson**

So much has been hidden.
To protect narratives.
To disempower.
To confuse.

**Unsatisfied with stories that get us by
but never get us free,
may we be people who look beyond,**

**who listen beneath,
who feel through and through.**
People who uncover. extricate. reveal.

Who pluck up from the roots.
Though we know only in part
And we prophesy only in part
May we not grow weary in our faith
The partial will come to an end.
We will look Justice in the face.
We will know Love in its fullness
the histories
and complicities
and losses
and power
of our entangled lives will be revealed in full. [enfleshed]

The Candle of Christ is lit.

This light centers us.
It is the blending of the memory of saints and dear ones.
**This illumination reminds us that our questions,
our creativity,
our imagination,
will guide us as we strive to live as followers of the way of Jesus.**

***Passing of the Peace** **Don Childers**

Where have we broken relationships?
Where has harm been done, by a nation?
**Telling the truth, or confession,
is a critical first step for every nation
that seeks to address the harm that it has caused.**
But without the other pieces of the puzzle
—the reparations, the apology,
and the work to become different in deep,
systemic ways,
to set up structures that necessarily create a new kind of reality—
it is not enough.
We must also find meaningful ways to deal with the truth
after its telling. [danyarutten]

May the peace of God 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 **Rev. Jenn Simmons**



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.

A reading from our Ancient Texts
From the Gospel According to John Chapter 9

We bring our ideas, identities, and curiosities to the text.
**These words become holy as we bring our presence,
 questions, and whole selves.**

Prayer of the Community

(As this community, we invite you to take a few moments to savor with open hands or quiet minds, the Spirit in this place.)

Silence

Beloved One,
though you are as close as our own breath
still, we treat you as a distant stranger.
**Forgive us for the ways we Other you
because we cannot bear the possibilities
of recognizing you in our own flesh.**
More comfortable with a god we cannot imagine
than one who is queer,
or detained,
falling in love,
or just learning to walk,
we deny the holy of our neighbors.
We bury the Sacred in us.
Forgive us for believing the ones who tell us
there's somewhere you'd rather be than here:
In these bodies.
On this land.
In our neighbors.
Great Liberator,
Mother of Life,
Gentle Spirit,
You dwell within.
You linger around.
You are always within reach.
That Love is so close,
That Justice is so near —
We can hardly believe,
But God, we desire to.
May it be so.

Centering Music *Out of the Depth* **FROST**
KIRSTEN WEISS, VIOLIN, CHANCEL CHOIR

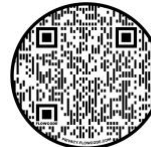
Reflection


Making Things Muddy

Rev. Simmons

Music of Response *For One More Day of Living* **PURIFOY**
KIRSTEN WEISS, VIOLIN, CHANCEL CHOIR

Offering of Ourselves, Our Tithes and Our Gifts Sharing in Ministry



 You are invited to share offering via Paypal (using the QR code on the left) or share your offering in the plate as it is passed. We invite you to share your offerings of time, passion, energy, and resources. Also, we are collecting hot hands today. You are encouraged to put those in the baskets by the communion table during this moment or during communion. Thank you for investing in Spirituality, Justice and Community as it comes to life at NACC!

*Lenten Doxology

Praise God, throughout these forty days.
Praise Christ, who dwells in all things.
Praise Spirit, come and dance with us.
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Prayer of Gratitude

Christie Lancaster

Sharing the Lord’s Supper

Communion Meditation

Communion Song

Sometimes God Begins a Project

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Words of Remembrance and Invitation

Coming into this place, to this table,
from a world that is sometimes confusing and threatening,
we gather to center in God’s presence.
We celebrate this community of faith,
where we listen to the words
inspired by God’s message of love,
where we share our lives with siblings,
where we learn about compassion,
where we live in hope,
where we can be together in peace.
God, all around us
we see growing division between people
because of politics, gender, religion, race, economics.
In so many countries,
we see growing nationalism and populism.
Aggression and violence are becoming
part of our daily lives on social media and in the streets.
We gather here bringing our hopes
that leaders may grow in wisdom,
and that people treat each other with respect.
May we understand that the way to your kin-dom
is paved with peace, justice, and love
for the earth and the people.

We can never undo what we have done.
We can never go back in time.
We write history with our decisions and our actions.
But we also write history with our responses to those actions.
We can leave the pain and the damage in our wake,
unattended, or we can do the work of acknowledging and fixing,
to whatever extent possible, the harm that we have caused.
You can never unbreak what you have broken.
But with the sincere and deep work of transformation,
acts of repair have the potential
to make something new.

[danyaruttenberg]

We gather to create something new.

In these 40 days of Lent,
we remember the love made manifest in the
birth, life, and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.
In his healing acts and radical teachings
we recall the words he spoke
to call forth love,
care and respect for one another.
We are grateful for this assurance of love amidst human betrayal,
care amidst hatred and respect amidst oppression.
In the bread that reminds us of life transformed.
In the cup that reminds us of love poured out.
We gather.
We gather to eat, drink,
and make something new this Lenten season.

Prayer at the Table

Neil Guion

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

This morning we will receive communion by intinction. You are invited to come forward 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

For the Healing of the Nations

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Words for the Journey

The work of repentance demands curiosity, care,
and a willingness to face hard things with bravery and honesty.
While we can’t undo the past,
we can address the present with integrity
and endeavor to create a future
that is much more whole than anything we can imagine from here.
So let us begin.

[danyaruttenberg]

Postlude

National Avenue Christian Church

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Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor,

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

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator,

Ashley Quinn, Justice Coordinator & Technical Director

Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator,

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

Want to connect with NACC this week, use the QR code by the life of the church or fill out this form and the completed program in the offering plate:

Name:

Preferred Method of contact: (email, call, text):

Any other information:

National Avenue Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)



CHANDLER CRUTTEN

On Repentance & Repair
Lenten Invitations & Practices
19 March 2023