# 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**

Carl Westlund & Dena Lantz

Dear ones,

none among us have all the answers.

No single entity can map a clear path to peace and freedom.

But each time we show up to the questions,

#### God meets us there.

Enabling our creativity.

Opening possibilities.

Lingering in the struggle.

In gratitude for this sustaining accompaniment in the Spirit of Christ we gather.

The Spirit of Christ moves freely through the world

#### She makes herself known wherever She desires

In sources of pain, in the shocking and the scandalous

#### In the hauntings of the past and the promises of the future

No doctrine or institution can contain or confine Her

We rejoice in a God whose Wisdom roams free [enfleshedliturgy]

In our questions, creativity, possibility, and in the struggle.

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

#### \*Gathering Hymn

Restless Weaver

658

#### \*Sharing the Light of Community

Truth is somehow both the work of uncovering

what we didn't know was there

and the work of seeing what we knew was there the whole time.

Truth is taking off the bandage

so the wound can really heal.

Often, it is the most painful possibility,

and yet,

seeing the truth leads us to the good work that waits for us,

for the endless possibilities to create

what we did not know could be created.

We searched.

we found truth,

and now we get to work.

[kaitlincurtice]

#### 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

Divine Love,

you have woven life together so that we depend on each other.

The air we breathe.

The food we eat.

The belonging we seek.

All held together by a larger web of life.

As greed and exploitation stretch thin the resources of our shared lives, you call us to the work of reimagining.

How to contribute.

How to receive.

How to heal and repair.

Teach us how to be faithful in these days.

[enfleshedliturgy]

May the winds 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

#### 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.

# **Reading the Sacred Story**

From the Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 13

A reading to ground us in our tradition

as we learn and relearn our work in creation.

#### Amen.

# **Prayers of the Community**

I left the Church

Not because

I long for sin

Or long for lust

Or long for selfishness

I left because

I long for truth

I long for love

I long for kindness

Without the threat

Of hell

If I do not obey

The way you want me to

I left because

God

Creator/

Divine/

Spirit/

Must be bigger

Than your book

And your building

I left for healing.

I left for me.

I left for those

Who couldn't. [Relentless Indigenous Woman]

#### Silence

We join our voices together:

Loving Presence, luminous in all creation, hallowed be your name.

Thy kin-dom come.

May we reflect on earth

the yielding perfection of the heavens.

Help us to receive an illumed measure from the earth this day.

Forgive us when we trespass against others,

human and other than human,

as we forgive others who trespass against us.

Keep us on the path of wisdom

when we are tempted to take the selfish path.

May it be your rule we follow, your power we exercise,

and your radiance that allures.

May this be the truth that guides our lives,

the ground from which our future will grow,

until we meet again.

[brucesanguin]

**Rev. Simmons** 

**TICHELI** 

**MENZEL** 

Amen.

Reflection *Pay. Attention.* 

Farth Sona

Earth Song
CHANCEL CHOIR

# Offering of Ourselves, Our Tithes and 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

**Music of Reflection** 

**Music of Response** 

At this Table
CHANCEL CHOIR

\*Doxology

Praise God whose breath fills all the earth

Whose love reveals our sacred worth Whose Spirit forms one family

Whose grace brings peace and harmony. Amen. [rogerlyn]

**Prayer of Gratitude** 

Claudia Brown-Jackson

#### **Sharing the Lord's Supper**

Ashley Quinn, Rev. Jenn Simmons with Elders & Deacons

The communion table is a table

that speaks on social issues of oppression.

This means that the communion table is a table set

for those no one else wants to serve.

The communion table is a table for all bodies and all souls and all people seeking to know what it might mean to feel the sacred pulse of Mystery around us and in us.

# If we are to believe that the inclusive love of God is real, we'd better start building a bigger table.

What if communion is also found in the sacred places that have always held room for us:

the trees that have always said,

# "Come, sit in my shade and rest,"

the water that says,

# "Come, bathe and drink and be refreshed,"

the grasses that say,

#### "Come and dance with me,"

and the seasons that say,

# "Come, learn what it means to live a whole life"?

This is what I hear when I go outside.

This is what my ancestors experienced

when they communed by the maple trees [adpt/kaitlincurtice]

and tended to the wild rice stalks rising out of the water.

As we gather together to share and eat food

we also remember the stories around all the meals

in the wisdom tradition of the Galilean sage we call Jesus...

Born of a woman and the Hebrew gene pool,

he was a creature of earth,

a moment in the biological evolution of this planet.

Like all human beings, he carried within himself

the signature of the supernovas

and the geology and life history of the Earth...

For just as the Milky Way is the universe in the form of a galaxy,

and the Wedge-tailed Eagle is the universe in the form of a bird, he was and we are, the universe in the form of a human.

May we care for our planet.

# May we nurture this piece of stardust!

#### May we celebrate with the cosmos!

And so we remember the living tradition...

How, during a meal, bread would be taken

and after thanks given, it would be broken and shared

with both friend and stranger.

This piece of bread is the body of the whole cosmos.

Look deeply and you notice the sunshine in the bread,

the blue sky in the bread,

the clouds and the great earth in the bread.

The whole cosmos has come together

in order to bring to us this piece of bread.

After conversation some Wine would be taken,

thanks for it would be given,

and poured out and shared with all those present.

#### Bread and the cup, elements for life on Earth.

In sharing this banquet, we in our time and place, enter into a new relationship, with sacred wisdom, with the planet, and

with one another, to feel our kinship with all life,

to raise our voice in the service of life,

to love kindness, and to seek justice,

to live in harmony

and awaken to peace.

May we sense the wonder of what might yet be.

We are part of Earth

Earth is part of us.

And as we consider this Earth, our home,

may we continue to walk upon it

gently and with reverence.

[adpt/rexhunt]

#### **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 prepackaged communion, remain seated and we will bring one to you. All are welcome to share at the table set by Jesus. As we share in communion, please join in singing:

**Communion Song** 

Seed, Scattered and Sown

395

689

# **Sending Song**

We Are Not Our Own

**Rev. Simmons** 

[enfleshedliturgy]

# Words for the Journey

The Spirit moves all around us

and also within us.

May we not be afraid

to claim the power God has given us.

To recognize the Wisdom of God in all of creation.

And to practice an authority

that calls us to brave convictions

that our lives may be guided

not by dictations from on high

but by lineages of love and liberation,

out by inicages of love and notial

calling on us to live.

May it be so.

May we make it so.

#### **Postlude**

# **National Avenue Christian Church**

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# National Avenue Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)



Photo by Jenn Simmons

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