

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 Neil Guion and Robyn Hagerman

We celebrate the hope of a new day and a fresh start.

We give thanks for the reminder that “it’s ok to not be ok”

and that it’s better to tell the truth about what’s really going on for us, and get support and help,

than to suffer in silence and alone.

We celebrate a love, a presence,

a reminder that God does not give up on us

even when we feel like giving up on ourselves.

We give thanks that we can hold onto hope one day at a time.

We are grateful for this faith community

where we can experience sacred welcome,

inclusion, support, and engagement for mental health.

We share a Spirit that is holy

as we share love with others in our mission to end the stigma

and shame of mental illness.

In the name of the Disabled and Neurodiverse God, we gather.

[adapt/Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund]

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

***Gathering Hymn Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth 83**

***Lighting the Community Candle Neil Guion**

God Our Mother,

we thank you for grounding your character in the tenderness, protection, and even the sorrow of a mother.

To know that no human experience- mother or child-

is far from you gives us permission to uncover the particularities of how we were made to love and be loved.

On this day, we’re reminded that we do not begin with ourselves.

Our beauty, our pain, does not exist in a vacuum

but is tethered to those who've come before us.

We pray for the mothers who have protected us,

who are weary, who have stayed, who have left,

who are grieving, who are proud

-understanding that the story

of what it means to be a mother is not singular.

And as children, would you remind us that it is okay

to lament the ways we have not been loved well,

while also celebrating the miracle

and mystery of those who loved us fiercely.

We are made of more than us.

Help us to behold it.

[colearthurriley]

The Candle of Christ 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**

Robyn Hagerman

“Come to me,

All you who are feeling anxious and depressed,

And I will give you rest for your minds.

Take my blessing and follow me,

For I am gentle and humble in heart,

And you will find rest for your souls.

For my way is easy and healing

for mental health.” [matthew 11:28-30/adapted Sarah Griffith Lund]

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

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 Luke Chapter 14 verses 15-24

A reading to ground us in our tradition

and spark our imaginations as co-creators.

Amen.

Prayer of the Community

Silence

O Sustaining One,

as a congregation, we are glad to lift up our voices

and our spirits to break the silence that often happens when we are confronted with mental illness.

As a faith community,

we name the gifts and the often unnamed experiences which come to those who live with a mental illness such as major depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, and eating disorder.

The Hope which upholds our spirit through honest sharing;

The Pain when people turn away because of fear;

The Courage to speak in a safe place

the way that Jesus spoke truth with love;

The Strength from being with others who listen compassionately;

The Isolation that comes when no one knows what to say;

The Realization that mental illnesses and brain disorders can be managed;

The Exhaustion that comes with living with a mental illness as well as for those who are caregivers;

The Welcome of mental health as part of our church’s ministry and outreach;

The Wisdom that comes

when we become educated about mental health;

The Spirituality that comes

when we walk alongside those who show both resilience and vulnerability in their lives affected by mental illness;

We receive these gifts that we have named,

those which are welcomed.

And those that are challenges.

We come before you,

our God, knowing we are not alone

and that You will show us a way to be and live.

In the name of Jesus, we pray,

Amen.

[Rev. Alan Johnson]

Music of Slowing Down

She Lingers On

ROBLES

CHANCEL WOMEN CHOIR

Reflection

Lowering Expectations

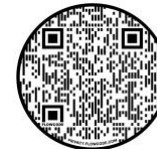
Rev. Simmons

Music of Response

Sister, Let me Be Your Servant

490

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.

Music of Reflection

Journey On

FOX

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

Lucinda Wadle

Sharing the Lord’s Supper with Rev. Jenn Simmons

Elders & Deacons

Creator, we come together in community, as one heart and body.

The table calls us together.

Let us be bound in love to one another.

We recognize in community when one of us struggles,

all of us struggle.

The table invites us to listen together.

Let us be bound in love to one another.

We gather at the table with a deep desire for understanding those in our midst.

The table slows our rhythms.

Let us be bound in love to one another.

We come to sing a song of hope.

We come to dance a dance of peace.

We come speaking the words of scripture that inspire.

The table reminds us we are not alone.

Let us be bound in love to one another.

We are here.

In this place.

At this table.

Let us be moved to understand the journey of others a little bit better today.

And let us be ever mindful of the opportunities that will present themselves to us.

The table is a place of welcome.

May we make it real, alive and true.

Let us be bound in love to one another. [adapt/Jeffrey Dale]

We take this bread made from the elements of the earth.

We break it, we bless it, and we share it,

remembering Jesus' way,

an expansive way calling for the care of ourselves, our beautifully created whole selves.

We take this cup filled with the fruit of the vine.

We pour it, we bless it, and we share it,

remembering Jesus' way,

an expansive way calling for the care of ourselves, our beautifully created whole selves.

As we seek to embrace this invitation in our lives, may it nurture us so we can extend this way to all we meet and be a part of building the kin-dom of love here and now.

Prayer at the Table

Brad Wadle

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.

Communion Music

Musical Meditation

Sending Song

Sacred the Body

DUCK

Sacred the body God has created,
temple of Spirit that dwells deep inside.
Cherish each person; nurture creation.
Treat flesh as holy, that love may abide.

Bodies are varied, made in all sizes,
pale, full of color, both fragile and strong.
Holy the difference, gift of the Maker,
so let us honor each story and song.

Love respects person, bodies, and boundaries.
Love does not batter, neglect or abuse.
Love touches gently, never coercing.
Love leaves the other with power to choose.

Holy of holies, God ever loving,
make us your temples; indwell all we do.
May we be careful, tender, and caring,
so may our bodies give honor to you.

Words for the Journey

The One who created all that is calls us by name and invites us into a life of abundant Love.

We go out into the world as God's beloved people, bringing Holy Love to all whom we meet.

Jesus taught us to love one another as fiercely and freely as God loves each of us, with the power that binds us together as the Body of Christ.

We will embody Christ by shattering stigma and welcoming all, leaving no one outside.

The Spirit fills us with the Breath of Life and urges us to imagine anew how to be Church in the world today.

We will breathe deeply and move beyond what has been and what is.

We will follow the Spirit and bring hope and healing to all who live in despair and brokenness.

We will be the Church!

[Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe]

Postlude

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

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator,

Rohit Choudhary, Technical Director | **Sarah Cybulski**, Finance Coordinator,

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

Give us your feedback! Community Care Survey!



National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

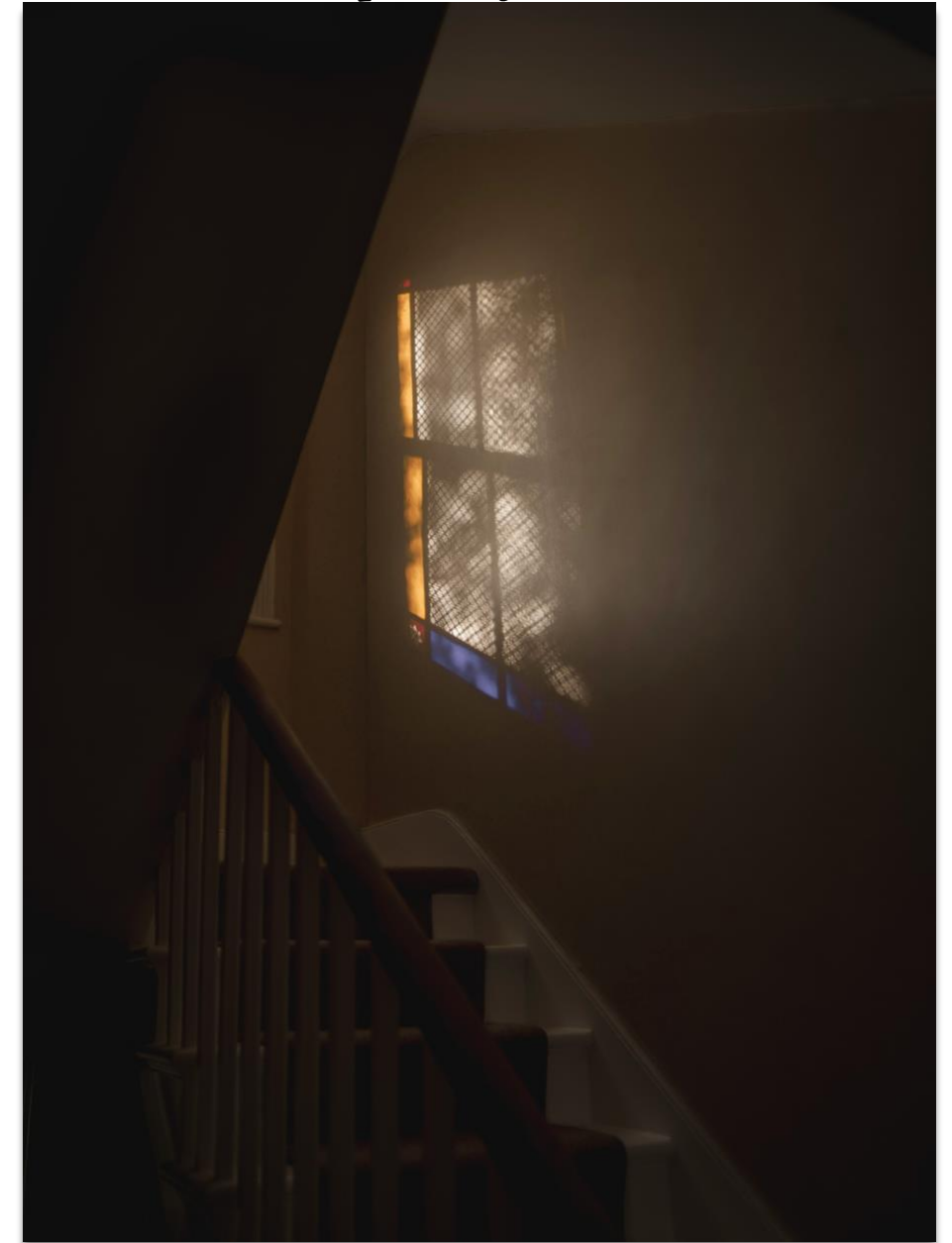


Image by Ylona Maria Rybka on UnSplash

**Being Church: Caring for
our Mental Health
12 May 2024**