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 Dena Lantz & Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright

We gather in this space as seekers. Longing to know, to remember,

to believe, deep inside of our bones,

we are good.

We are loved.

God, source of love and hope, creating and generative one, breathed hope, and possibility, and love.

We are a part of this love.

We gather longing to build and be a space of connection. A place that nurtures, challenges, and witnesses these moments together.

May we meet one another's pain with love and kindness, may our pain be met with love and kindness too. And may these moments be part of our and the world's collective

healing.
May you it be so.

[inspired by Dr. Hillary McBride]

*Gathering Hymn God Is Constant When Life Throws Us

BEACH SPRING In this time of endless challenges,

Let God's love guide you to peace.
Though you know not where you're headed,
Love will shelter and relieve.
There's a comfort in the knowledge,
That the saints who've come before,
Faced the darkness and unknowing,
With God's grace and endless love.

May discomfort in our journey.
Not distract from work to do.
We move forward, through the darkness,
Toward the light that's shining through.
God is constant when life throws us,
And we know not what to do.
May the shadows that surround us,
Fade away as life renews.

Let the love of Christ surround us, As we find strength in this space. We are here to love each other, In our valleys and our peaks. May the strength we find together,

Be a light unto our paths.

May we get to where we're headed,

Love will guide us, always has.

[Lyrics by John Scroggins]

*Lighting the Christ Candle

Dena Lantz

Being a light can look like a lot of different things.

What if in the face of pain it looked like...

Letting ourselves feel the pain that comes from knowing,

even with good intentions,

that we hurt someone, or people.

Could we stay curious?

Could we hold on to our goodness,

while exploring the layers of what happened?

Can we feel our feelings?

Can we remember we are not alone in this process?

Can we be places of support for one another? Our ancestors heard this invitation, they saw glimpse of love and care, can we be this for ourselves and one another?

The Christ Candle is lit.

May this light center us and remind us

We are light.

We are meant to shine.

*Passing of the Peace

Rev. Furnas-Wright

As we venture into pathways of peace,

Dr. Hillary McBride offers,

"It's naming the wounds, and allowing them to be felt,

pulling them back out from under the rug

we swept them under, allowing them to see the light of day,

this is actually the most incredibly hopeful thing.

It's the systemic vision of what happens in trauma therapy:

at some point people seek out support

because the task of navigating around all the things that are unprocessed actually pulls tremendous energy from them.

It's life energy being used to shove things down,

and to pretend those hurts don't exist.

And that shoving things down

or sweeping them under the rug is so costly to our systems.

It's costly in an individual and collective way.

It hurts us to ignore the hurt that we've caused

or that we've experienced.

And as painful as the grief is,

it's actually the doorway to healing and hope.

It is a necessary step for mending the damage done,

and it is less costly in the long run than continuing to wear out and cope, pretending the pain isn't there."

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. The QR code/link is in the pews. 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.

Reflecting on the Sacred Story

From the Gospel according to Mark Chapter 11 and Luke Chapter 5

We tell stories to learn, to grow, to spark more questions.

Today we offer the longings of our heart.

We join with the voices rising, from the past and from today. We join the story.

Prayers of the Community

Rev. Jody Furnas-Wright

Listening to our bodies

God, I carry around this incompleteness,

this drive for fulfillment that always seems just around the corner.

If only I could get it together and find my true calling,

my real passion, or the right plan.

God, help me, guide me.

What am I missing?

Blessed are we who strive earnestly to change ourselves and the world around us,

but feel the drag and pull of what won't budge,

the weight of all our limited and frail humanity.

We carry it with us.

Blessed are we,

the hungry, in lives that are both too much and not enough,

willing to tell the truth to ourselves and to each other,

that we languish here...

in what is perhaps the central paradox of our condition—

that "what we hunger for perhaps more than anything else is to be known in our full humanness,

and yet that is often just what we also fear more than anything else."

To be fully known, and fully loved,

in all our humanity.

That is a God-sized project.

Blessed are we,

thankful that we can live our human-sized lives

in the glad company of the vulnerable and the broken,

the imperfect made whole in the love of God,

through Jesus Christ.

Maybe it's right to be hungry. And stay that way.

May it be so.

[Bowler, Kate]

Reflecting in Song Turning Over Tables THE BRILLANCE

Reflection Living in the Tension **Rev. Simmons**

Musical Reflection Wind Upon the Waters #247v. 2.3.4

Offering of Ourselves

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 More Love SARA BAREILLES Jennifer Forni & Jonathan Raney

* Pentecost 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 Debora Biggs**

Sharing the Lord's Supper

with Revs. Jody Furnas-Wright, Jenn Simmons, Elders & Deacons

Throughout history,

O God, we have struggled to claim the power you have given us.

Destructive forces within

and around us make us question your call upon our lives.

We turn ourselves over, in ways ordinary and remarkable, to what is.

To what has been. To the familiar.

But you have created us for so much more.

In Jesus, we saw a life lived in all its potential.

In all its Sacred power.

Life that is abundant.

Love that was creative, and fervent for justice.

We saw, too, the consequences of living as if the Kindom were close.

And so we wonder.

If we live with such courage, what will we lose?

In proclaiming truths that confront unjust power,

do we stand a chance of survival?

How will it go for us, if we are willing to risk everything for love?

You have never promised us safety,

but you have shown us what is possible.

The Spirit brings new life even to places of death.

Jesus, knowing the dangers ahead,

still did not cave to the threats of power

or give in to the temptations of the popular.

There was nothing he would trade for his love of the suffering

and betrayed,

not even his own life.

On the night of his arrest,

he gathered around table with his companions.

His friends.

His beloveds in the struggle.

Even the one who would turn him over to the cross.

He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to all of them and said,

"This is my body which is given for you.

Take, eat, and remember me."

After the supper, he did the same with the cup, saying,

"This is a symbol of the new covenant. Drink in remembrance of me."

In remembering the life of Jesus,

we remember what he taught us about ourselves –

about the power God has given us.

We remember that God enfleshed is Good News that feeds,

that protects, that heals, and delivers.

We remember the words he spoke:

"whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these."

And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup, O God.

Through these gifts,

fill our hearts with courage to believe the Kindom is within us, to live boldly in pursuit of love that liberates,

and to follow the Wisdom that leads from the margins.

Blessed be this meal of hope.

[enfleshedliturgy]

Prayer at the Table

Rev. Dr. Peter Browning

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

When Love is Found

#499 vs 2, 3, 5

Words for Our Journey

Blessing Aydia Lancaster

Postlude

National Avenue Christian Church

417.869.9176 natlave@sbcglobal.net www.nationalavenuecc.com Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor | Ashley Quinn, Pastor for Public Theology 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 | Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator | Nicholas & Olivia Villaroel, Sextons Greta Allen & Aydia Lancaster, Nursery Caregivers

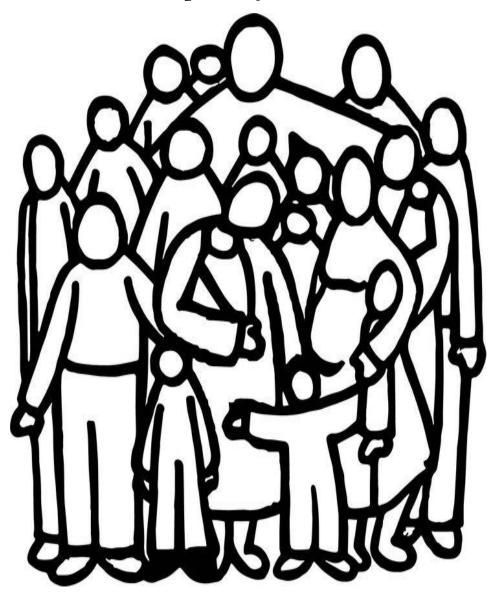
> Kylie Robertson & Claudia Brown-Jackson, UNO Team John Scroggins, Board Moderator

Debora Biggs, Rev. Dr. Peter Browning, Elders

Arthur Johnston, Kathy Pittman, Kim Schultz, Desmond Simmons, Deacons

National Avenue Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)



Pathways of Healing: Unsettling Ourselves 3 August 2025