

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~

Welcome to worship

Prelude ***God of Fertile Fields***
John Scroggins, organ & Teresa Norris, piano

Words of Gathering **Debora & Mark Biggs**

In worship we tell a story:
A story of an unfettered love that changed the world.
In worship we tell a story:
A story of how we live and how we long to live.
In worship we tell a story:
Because we are forgetful people.
So may we remember who we are.
May we release the narratives that trap us.
May we reimagine this world to see what God sees.
And may we work toward restoration.
It’s all that easy, and it’s all that hard.
Let us worship holy God.

[sanctifiedart]

Gathering Hymn** ***For the Healing of the Nations **#668**

***Lighting the Christ Candle**
Holy God, we want to see what you see.
We want to see what you see,
But we stumble through roadblocks of bias and narrow perspective,
Fear and limited information.
We are too small to imagine the type of love and beauty you can sow.
So in this moment,
we ask that you would clear the roadblocks that keep us from you.
Blow the dust out of our ears.

Thaw out the frozen parts of our hearts.
Tell the logical arguments we form about what will
and will not work to take a backseat.
And as you do, breathe fresh air into our lungs
and fill our minds with endless possibilities.
We want to see what you see.

We want to reimagine this life we’re living.

Clear away the roadblocks. [sanctifiedart]

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**
I wonder if we will know when restoration comes.

Will it feel big and dramatic like a summer rain?
Joyful and overwhelming, like an end-of-war parade?
Maybe.
Or will it be small?
Will it be pocket-sized moments, like wishing on stars,
The sun through the curtains, or lightning bugs in the yard?
Maybe.

I don’t know how God will restore this world,
Just like I don’t know how to make the summer rain.
But I do know how to say I’m sorry.
And I do know how to love with all of me.
And I know how to say, “This cup is for you,”
And I know how to taste grace in grape juice.
So on the off-chance that restoration will be small,
Pocket-sized moments of love for all,
I will bake bread and save a seat for you.
I will say I’m sorry and say I love you too.
I will plant gardens and look for fireflies.
I will say prayers on shooting stars at night.
And when the sun shines through my curtain windows,
Remind me to open them wide.
I would hate to miss God’s parade,
These holy ordinary days. [sarahare]

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 **Ashley Quinn**

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 Stories of the Gospel according to John 21:1-19 and the Hebrew Bible, Genesis

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

Holy God,
To restore is to bring back;
So today we bring our hearts back to you,
our thoughts back to love,
and our prayers back to peace.
We try to stay in this place, but we confess,
it’s never been that easy for us.
We flirt with reconciliation and then back away.

We come face-to-face with an opportunity for justice, but get scared.
We are offered an opportunity to re-write our story, but we lose our way.
Bring us back to this moment.
Bring us back to your story where brothers extend grace to one another
and even the one who denied it was forgiven.
Bring us back. Restore us. Forgive us.
Gratefully we pray,
Amen.

[Pausing to listen to our bodies]

We believe in a restoring God,
Who restores our bodies through the gift of Sabbath.
We believe in a restoring God,
Who restores our souls through the gift of grace and second chances.
We believe in a restoring God,
Who restores this hurting world through the gift of mercy and God’s son Jesus Christ.
And we believe in a restoring God who invites us to join in this restoration work.

As people of faith, we seek to restore creation to God by feeding the hungry, loving our neighbors, forgiving seventy times seven, welcoming the children, seeing all, loving all, and living like we belong to all.

And so we will work until God’s promised day.

This we practice.

Amen. [sanctifiedart]

Song ***Help Us Accept Each Other*** **#487**

Reflection ***The Scars Are Part of Me*** **Ashley Quinn**

Musical ***Rise*** **ABELA**
CHANCEL CHOIR, JONATHAN RANEY, PIANO
With Solomon Anderson on Percussion

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 ***This Land Is Your Land*** **GUTHRIE**
JENNIFER FORNI & JASMINE MARTIN,
JONATHAN RANEY, PIANO

*** 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 **Dr. Robyn Hagerman**

**Sharing the Lord’s Supper
with Ashley Quinn, Elders & Deacons**
Restoring God,
You have always been in the business of beginning again with us,
of restoration and return.
First you breathed life into dust.
Then you guided brother back to brother after years apart.
You sent prophets when the people lost their way.
You fed the hungry and healed the sick.
You let the little children come to you.
You practiced forgiveness over and over again,
and then you returned to remind us of our call.
**You have always been in the work of restoration—
Of seeing us, claiming us, loving us,
and inviting us to return to you.**
Today we come to you in prayer,
asking that once more, you would restore us—
All of all of us.
Restore our narratives about who we are to truth.
Restore our actions toward one another to love.
Restore our dreams for this world to your dream for us.

On the night of his arrest, Jesus had dinner with his friends.
And for a moment, all was right in the world.
Betrayal would come, suffering would come,
grief and death would come,
But for a moment—for that moment—
they were together, and everything was holy.
Bread shared.
An act of remembering.
The cup poured.
Embracing love flowing.
So many years later,
we gather around this table to get a glimpse of that moment.
**For when we gather around this table,
we remember that all are welcome here.**
When we gather around this table,
we release the worldly narrative
that only those with status or wealth deserve to be fed.
When we gather around this table,
we can reimagine what could be—
what a world could look like when all belong.
And so we gather around this table as an act of restoration,
as an act of resistance, as an act of faith.
So, come.
Come with your dreams and your memories.
Come with your full authentic self—scars and all.
Come with your questions, your wonderings,
your hopes, and your prayers.

Come—not because you have to, but because you can.
Come because this is a moment of restoration,
a moment where everything is holy.
So, come.

Prayer at the Table **Dr. Etta Madden**

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 Song ***Let There Be Peace on Earth*** **#677**

Words for the Journey
We are not sure what restoration for this world will look like,
But we’re pretty sure it’ll feel like this—
a meal where all are fed,
a place where all are welcomed,
and a table with a seat saved for each and every one of us.
Remind us of this truth in the coming day,
and continue to restore all of us to you.
May we make it so.

National Avenue Christian Church
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Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor | **Ashley Quinn**, Pastor for Public Theology
Rev. Dr. John White, Theologian in Residence | **Jonathan Raney**, Music Director
Alex Bates, Sound Technician | **Sarah Cybulski**, Finance Coordinator
Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator | **Nicholas & Olivia Villaroel**, Sextons
Greta Allen, Donna Kearney, Ela Stark, Nursery Caregivers
Kylie Robertson & Claudia Brown-Jackson, UNO& Storykeepers Team
John Scroggins, Board Moderator
Debora & Mark Biggs, Dr. Robyn Hagerman, Dr. Etta Madden, Elders
Jimmy Brooks, Justin & Ashley Fleming, Karen Lance, Jill Wait, Deacons

National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

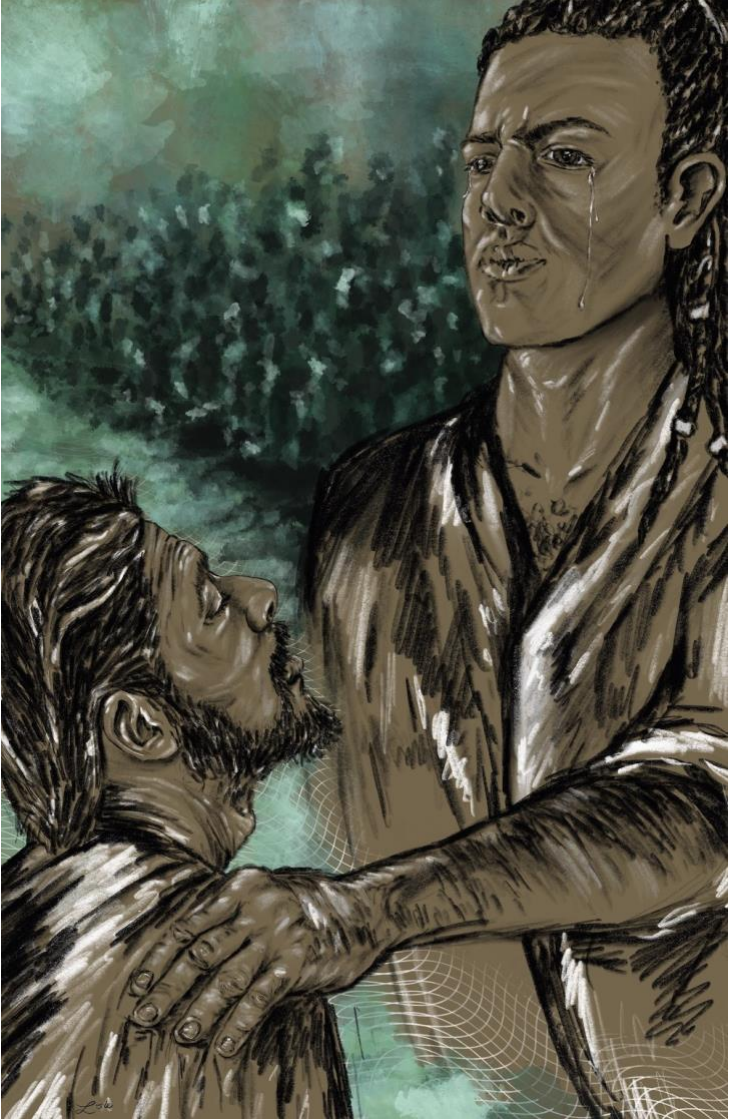


Image by Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Our Money Story
Reimagine
26 October 2025