

***National Avenue Christian Church
Online Worship Guide***



Image by Jan Richardson

Those who Dream...Preserve

January 10, 2021

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~

As you gather for worship...

- *Bring a candle (and lighter) and communion elements (coffee, juice, bread, bagels, whatever you have!).*
- *During the Passing of the Peace you will be invited to wave, share a selfie, and say hi in the comments!*
- *During our time of prayers, you will be invited to share prayers in the comments.*
- *Share a picture of your worshiping space in the NACC group!*
- *Breathe and savor the Spirit gathering in this space.*
- *After worship we will gather on Zoom in our new digital fellowship space! We will share the Zoom link on Facebook during communion and invite you to begin gathering for fellowship after worship*

Words of Gathering

Deb Gallion and Carl Westlund

*Please join in reading aloud the **bold section**:*

In these days we have spoken many words about light.

The light we have seen brings joy, hope, peace, and love
in the midst of the most unlikely places.

We offer our lament when we are in great need of light,
we stare in wonder when the bright twinkles overwhelm us,
we seek the mystery of a star-studded sky.

Today as we share an ancient story of people walking in search of hope-
seeking,
following,
desiring,

discovering,
walking in hope for light-
We too find ourselves gazing in wonder.
Walking a journey
with unexpected companions
uncertain of where our journey may take us,
of where it may end-or begin again.

As we greet this season,
filled with new longings,
new hopes,
new dreams,
may the blaze of the light
fill us with courage and
imagination,
for the journey ahead.

[jsimmons]

Song of Gathering

Epiphany Carol

BEACH SPRING

Every Nation sees the glory of a star that pierced the night.
As we tell the wondrous story we are bathed in radiant light.
Star sent forth from highest heaven, dancing light of God's design,
shines upon the gift that's given: Word of flesh now born in time.

Every tongue shall sing the praises of your birth in deepest night.
You are healing for the ages; you are Christ, our God's delight.
You proclaim within your being all our hopes, our great desires.
You shall live to rise, redeeming all who follow with their lives.

Once again may we discover Word made flesh sent from above.
In our neighbor, sister, brother, in the lonely and unloved.
May we touch you, may we hold you, may we cradle you with care
as we learn to love each other, bringing hope out of despair.

Gather, God, the world together in the brightness of your day.
Fill our hearts with joy forever: help us walk the holy way.
May your justice rule the nations; may all people live as one.
Now we see our true salvation in the glory of this One.

[adpt/ Francis Patrick O'Brien]

Centering in the New Light

Deb Gallion

As of yet I cannot say which I love best about the light:
that it gathers itself
even in what goes hidden,
no stranger to the seed, the stone,
the labyrinth of night,
or that it is wildly generous in where
it lands, glad the same
to touch the face of
the one in laughter,
the one in tears,
the one in trouble,
in fear, in pain.

But it may yet be that this is what woos me most about the light:
that it knows
what to do with distance,
how it arcs
across the space between a heart and a heart,
illuminating that ache
through which the farthest of stars might be seen.

[janrichardson]

The Candle of Christ is lit

Life of the Church

Rev. Jenn Simmons

Reading from our Ancient Texts

From the Gospel according Matthew Chapter 2

These are the stories of new light.

Thanks be to God.

Moment for All

Rev. Furnas-Wright

Prayer of the Church

Rev.

Simmons

*As this community,
we invite you to take a few moments to claim the Spirit,
wherever you are today. We invite you to light your candles as we share
prayers at the end of our silence. As we join in prayer we invite you to
share prayers in the Facebook comments.*

Silence

O God,
searching for a glimpse of change,
seeking liberation from colonizing forces,
the magi journeyed,
crossing foreign lands and borders
with only a star as their guide.
The same glimmer of hope
that guided their way
calls to us today.
Through night skies and morning dew.
Through community and in silent meditation.
Through songs, ancient and new.
Through art and bodies and creation.
Through collectives of people who dare to break rules
in the direction of a better world.
It calls us
to come and share our resources equitably,

to come and delight in love enfleshed,
to come and join in the spirit of deliverance
birthed far from the centers of power.

At the birth-site of God,
the way is revealed.

[rev.mbarclay; enfleshed]

In the midst of our listening and seeking the light,
together we dream...

(Share your prayers in the comments.)

Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayers.

Amen.

Centering In Song

Come and Find the Quiet Center

Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

Reflection

Those Who Dream Preserve

Rev.

Simmons

Music of Response

Star of Wonder

GILPIN

CHANCEL CHOIR QUARTET

Invitation to Offering

Carl Westlund

Thank you for being church and for all the ways you support one another!

To make a financial gift online visit: [here](#)

Music of Response

Be the Light of Christ

CAMERON

CHANCEL CHOIR QUARTET

Sharing at our Tables

Rev. Furnas-Wright and Rev.

Simmons

As we gather at the table this morning,
we acknowledge the presence of God, our Eternal source of wisdom.

**We are grateful this morning for the light,
new hope, and, most of all, new questions.**

Where God's light shines, possibility opens
a way, a word, a child, a gift.

We find paths where before there were only walls.

We hear the call of God's claim on our lives.

We remember a child born with a promise
that will transform hearts forever after.

**We accept the gifts that have been given,
needing and receiving them over and over again.**

**What God brings to us in Epiphany is possibility,
a threshold that we can step over into wholeness.**

What is revealed there may not be what we expected
as surely as what the shepherds and the sages saw
was unexpected and puzzling.

But the revelation of God's word made flesh
is the answer to all of our deepest questions.

**We give thanks to God for the unexpected,
for the light that opens us up, leads us on,
and keeps us always seeking after God's call on our lives.**

And on this morning,
we give thanks for the opportunity
to share this meal together.

So today, in this sacred place, around our table,
we take this bread and we break it,
remembering that you are manna for our souls.

We also take this cup and pour it,

giving thanks that even now,
you surround us with your love.

Prayer of Blessing

Steve Flower

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

During this time, you are invited to eat and drink. We are connected by the tables of our lives. Across distance, we are united by sharing together. Our presence, in person or across digital space, brings the table to life.

Passing of the Peace

As we share peace today, we invite you to comment on this thread or join us in zoom! Give a high-five, a hello or a selfie so we can see and greet one another!

Song of Blessing

Arise, Shine Out, Your Light Has Come

GIFT OF LOVE

Arise, shine out, your light has come,
unfolding city of our dreams.
On distant hills a glory gleams:
the new creation has begun.

Above earth's valleys, thick with night,
high on your walls the dawn appears,
and history shall dry all its tears,
as nations stream towards your light.

From walls surpassing time and space
unnumbered gates, like open hands,
shall gather gifts from all the lands,
and welcome all the human race.

The sounds of violence shall cease
as dwellings of salvation rise
to sparkle in eternal skies
from avenues of praise and peace.

The dancing air shall glow with light,
and sun and moon give up their place,
when love shines out of every face,
our good, our glory, and delight.

Words for the Journey

Rev.

Simmons

God cuts the wild star from the cloth of the night,
letting the light shine through.

The shape of light held by the edges of dark,
the light we did not expect,
risky and saving and wondrous.

God cuts the wild star from the cloth of the night
beckoning us home to our life
by another way.

[marentirabassi]

National Avenue Christian Church 417.869.9176

natlave@sbcglobal.net • www.nationalavenueecc.com

Rev. Jenn Simmons, Lead Pastor,

Rev. Michelle Scott-Huffman, Adjunct Pastor for Preaching

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

Hayley Norton, Communication Coordinator, Ashley Quinn, Justice Coordinator

Sarah Cybulski, Finance Coordinator, Josef Hunt & Zack Tooley, Sextons

Stephanie Scott-Huffman, Director of Digital Ministry

Rev. Dr. John White, Pastoral Care, Jonathan Raney, Music Director

