

**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH  
OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA**  
*Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out”*  
*Celebrating 41 Years*  
*Fifth Sunday in Lent March 26, 2023*

*There is a book at the Sanctuary entry where prayer requests may be entered. There is also a Square device at the entry of the Sanctuary if you would like to make your Offering Donation via credit card.*

*Like Life, The Order of Worship is Subject to Change*

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Gathering Music	Jorge Martinez
Welcome & Announcements	Rev. Emma Chattin
Centering	

At the sound of the singing bowl,  
please take a few moments to prepare yourself for our worship together

Gathering Words ~ <i>adapted from Richard S. Gilbert</i>	Terry Luzadder
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One: We bid you welcome, who come with weary spirit seeking rest.

**Many: Who come with troubles that are too much with you,  
who come hurt and afraid.**

One: We bid you welcome, who come with hope in your heart.

**Many: Who come with anticipation in your step,  
who come proud and joyous.**

One: We bid you welcome, who are seekers of a new faith.

**Many: Who come to probe and explore.  
Who come to learn, to think, to share with others.**

One: We bid you welcome, who enter this space as a homecoming.

**Many: Who have found here room for your spirit.  
Who find in this people a family**

One: Whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are on your journey,

**Many: We bid you welcome.**

Opening Song	Enter, Rejoice, and Come In	No. 73
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Prayers of the Community	Dale Bradshaw
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First Reading ~ <i>Hebrews 13:1-3</i>	Denise Carson
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Keep loving each other like family; but don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for in doing so, some people, without knowing it, have entertained angels. Keep in mind those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. And be mindful of those who are being treated badly, since you know what they are enduring.

Second Reading ~ <i>adapted from Nevada Barr in “Seeking Enlightenment Hat By Hat: A Skeptic’s Guide to Religion”</i>	
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Church is for finding and adoring God in community: with others, through others, because of others, in *s spite* of others. Only by finding this place of human interaction, focused around the need for the spiritual, was I able to recognize God in other people, and so... in myself.

Without community, how would I learn to share? Who would I help? How would I learn to accept help? How would I learn grace and forgiveness? Community is God rubbing elbows and passing the tuna casserole, a place where we can snuggle down with the Divine. Though I'd never have suspected it when I began this spiritual journey, God is not separate from people. Sure we're hypocrites, liars, boasters, blasphemers, and cheats, but we are God's hypocrites, liars, boasters, blasphemers, and cheats. The spark is in each of us. When we work together for what we sincerely hope is good, worship together in the belief we will touch God, sing together in the hope God hears our praises, then the spark is fanned, and God becomes as visible in us as God is in new snow, or a sunrise, or in a mountain lake.

**Song of Response**

by Gordon Light

**Draw The Circle**

***Solo ~ Choir***

***Draw the circle, draw the circle wide; Draw the circle, draw the circle wide***

***No one stands alone, We'll stand side by side, Draw the circle, Draw the circle wide (repeat)***

***Chorus ~ People Join As You Are Able***

***Draw the Circle Wide, Draw it Wider Still, Let This be Our Song, No one stands alone***

***Standing side by side, Draw the circle, Draw the Circle Wide (repeat)***

**Reflection**

**Strangers and Angels**

**Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Community Dialogue**

**Offering Invitation**

**Offertory**

**We Are An Offering**  
by Dwight Liles

**MCC NoVA Choir**

**❖ Welcome To The Table! ❖**

**Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Invitation To The Table**

**Consecration & Words of Institution**

**Sharing The Open Meal of Christ**

**Community Blessing ~ Kurt Jaeger**

**Closing Song**

**Called As Partners in Christ's Service**

**No. 495**

**Benediction & Sending Forth**

**Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Postlude**

**❖ Go in Peace ❖**