

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Celebrating 41 Years

Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out”

December 11, 2022

Third Sunday of Advent

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

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 ~ *adapted from I Corinthians 13*

One: If I speak in the tongues of mortals and angels but do not have love,
I am a noisy gong or clanging cymbal.

Many: And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and knowledge, and if I have faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

One: If I give away all my possessions and hand over my body, but do not have love,
I gain nothing.

Many: Love is patient. love is kind, love is not envious, boastful, arrogant or rude.

One: Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful, it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

Many: Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

One: Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;

ALL: And the greatest of these is love.

Community Prayers

Frank Vance

First Reading ~ *Matthew 1:18-25*

This is how the birth of Jesus came about. His mother, Mary, was engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, Mary realized she was pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her husband, an upright person unwilling to disgrace her publically, decided to break the marriage agreement with her secretly. But after Joseph had considered this, the angel of God appeared to him in a dream, and said, “Joseph, descendant of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife; it is by the Holy Spirit she has conceived this child. She is to have a son, and you are to name him Jesus – ‘Salvation’, ‘God Saves’ –because he will save the people from their sins.” All this happened to fulfill what God has said through the prophet:

“The virgin will be with child and give birth,
and the child shall be named Emmanuel” - a name that means ‘God With Us’.

(over)

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of God had directed, and took Mary into his home as his wife. He had no union with her as her husband until she had given birth; she had a son, and they named the baby Jesus.

Second Reading ~ *Adapted from "The Collected Sermons of Rev. Fred Craddock"*

When Joseph first learned about Mary, what was Joseph going to do? "Just do what the Bible says. You can't go wrong if you do what the Bible says." I have heard that all my life. Well, I will tell you what it says. From Deuteronomy 22: "She is to be taken out and stoned to death in front of the people." That is what the Bible says. I get sick and tired of people always thumping the Bible and saying, "Just do what the Good Book says."

Joseph is a good man, and he rises to a point that is absolutely remarkable for his day and time. He loves his Bible and he knows his Bible and bless his heart for that. But he reads his Bible through a certain kind of lens, the lens of the character and nature of a God who is kind and loving. Therefore, he says with his action, "I will not harm her, abuse her, expose her publically, shame her, ridicule her, or demean her value, her dignity, or her worth. I will protect her. I will save her." Where does it say that in your Bible, Joseph? I'll tell you where it says that. In the very nature and character of God.

Contemporary Witnesses

Patti Sparenberg & Diana Hill

Response

MCC NoVA Choir & Community

No. 116

Verses 1,6,7

Reflection

**Fear Not : LOVE
(Or... "What Does Joseph Say?")**

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 ~ Rev. Emma Chattin

Closing Song

MCC NoVA Choir & Community

Benediction & Sending Forth

Rev. Emma Chattin

Postlude

☞ Go in Peace ☛