

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

February 1, 2026 Epiphany IV Black History Month

Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out” Celebrating 44 Years of Being Out in Northern Virginia!

There is a book at the Sanctuary entry where prayer requests may be entered.

There is also a Square device at the Sanctuary entry if you would like to make your Offering Donation via credit card.

Like Life, The Order of Worship is Subject to Change Without Notice

Gathering Music

Jorge Martinez

Welcome & Announcements

Centering

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

Illumination

Tee

Introduction To Prayer

Choir

Prayers of the Community

Starlene Keppel

Song of Response

Choir

First Reading ~ *Isaiah 8:22 - 9:1-4*

Kurt Jaeger

When they look down they will find only inescapable distress and gloom, and they will be thrust into total darkness. But there will be no more gloom for the land that was in anguish! In the past God humbled the land of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali, but in the future God will bring glory to this Road to the Sea, this Land beyond the Jordan, this Galilee of the Nations. The people walking in darkness are seeing a brilliant light— upon those who dwell in a land of deep shadows light is shining! God, you have made the nation greater—you have brought them abundant joy! They celebrate in your presence as with the harvest celebrations, or people celebrate when dividing plunder. For the yoke that burdened them, the weight on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressors— you have shattered it, just as you did back in the day of Gideon with Midian.

Second Reading

Kat Velkoff

~ adapted from The Rev. Kelly Brown Douglas, Canon Theologian, Washington National Cathedral

“How, really, do you keep hoping?” my son once asked me. “You lived through the 1960s, and here we are again. Aren’t you just tired of it all?” His question, and the despair it reflected, has been asked at every point in the struggle toward Black freedom. It was asked both in the 1860s and the 1960s, and yet Black people kept going. They did not give in to the despair of hopelessness, but rather were buoyed by their trust in God.

“All we have to do is trust God and launch out into the deep,” activist Fannie Lou Hamer proclaimed amidst the violence and racism confronting Black Americans seeking the vote in Mississippi in the 1960’s. And so they did. They trusted in the justice that God promises us all—and thus they “launched” out into the deep fight for freedom.

(continued)

In the end, I answered my son by telling him the story of those who were born into slavery, who died in slavery and who never drew a free breath. Yet, they fought for freedom anyhow. It was a freedom they knew they would never see, yet they trusted in a God who would one day make it a reality. Their trust in God's justice was their hope, and they lived out that hope in their struggle for freedom. Because of their hope, there was a Fannie Lou Hamer who could hope. And because Fannie Lou Hamer could hope, I can hope.

We owe it to all who are oppressed not to grow tired nor to give up hope. Because of them, we are compelled — even in despairing times — to hope and to fight for a time where there will be freedom and justice for all. This isn't just a lesson for Black Americans, but for all Americans. If you find yourself despairing for the country you thought you knew, or would like your children or grandchildren to know, we must cling to hope. We must trust the way that generations past trusted, in the justice of God.

Song of Response When Peace Like a River No. 438

Reflection

EPIPHANY

A Long Journey

In Moments Like These

>Welcome To The Table!

Kurt Jaeger and Ken Williamson

Sung Words of Institution:

"Let Us Be Bread By Thomas J. Porter

The Leader will sing the verses. Please join together on the refrain:

Let us be bread, blessed by our God, broken and shared, life for the world.

Let us be wine, love freely poured. Let us be one in our God.

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Invitation to the Table

Sharing The Open Meal of Christ Community Blessing ~ Kurt Jaeger

Closing Song

Benediction and Sending Forth Ken Williamson

Postlude

Go in Peace