

**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA**
Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out”
Celebrating 42 Years
Ascension Sunday Easter VII May 21, 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

Gathering Music

Jorge Martinez

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Emma Chattin

Illumination

Centering

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

Prayers of the Community

Dale Bradshaw

First Reading ~ *Acts 1:6-14*

While meeting together they asked, "Has the time come, Rabbi? Are you going to restore sovereignty to Israel?" Jesus replied, "It's not for you to know the times or dates that Abba God has decided. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; then you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth." Having said this, Jesus was lifted up in a cloud before their eyes and taken out of sight.

They were still gazing up into the heavens when two messengers dressed in white stood beside them. "You Galileans – why are you standing here looking up at the skies?" they asked. "Jesus, who has been taken from you- this same Jesus will return, in the same way you watched him go into heaven."

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they entered the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying, Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James ben-Alphaeus; Simon, a member of the Zealot sect; and Judah ben-Jacob; together with certain women, his mother Mary, and some of Jesus' sisters and brothers. All of these with one accord constantly devoted themselves to prayer.

Second Reading ~from Fr. Richard Rohr in *Everything Belongs*

All spiritual disciplines have one purpose: to get rid of illusions so we can be present. These disciplines exist so that we can see what is, see who we are, and see what is happening. On the contrary, our mass cultural trance is like scales over our eyes. We see only with the material eye.

If we are to believe Jesus, nothing is more dangerous than people who presume they already see. *God can most easily be lost by being thought found.*

Third Reading

~ from John O'Donohue in *Eternal Echoes: Exploring Our Yearning to Belong*

Prayer is the liberation of God from our images of God. It is the purest contact with the wildness of the Divine Imagination. Real prayer has a vigilance that is constantly watching and deconstructing the human tendency toward idolatry. Despite our best sincerity, we still long to control and domesticate the Divine. Meister Eckhart says that the closer we come to God, the more it ceases to be God. In other words, God is only our name for it. ...

It is ironic that every human needs some God on the inner altar of the heart... ... the deity could also be money, power, greed, addiction, or status. The critical vigilance of real prayer endeavors to insure it is the flame of the living God that burns on the altar of our hearts. Such prayer longs for the real warmth of divine belonging. Real prayer helps us to live in the beauty of truth. It is a visitation from outside the frontier of our own limitations.

Song of Response

No.

Reflection

Why Church?

Prayer, Presence, Practice
Out Of Sight

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

No.

Benediction & Sending Forth

Rev. Emma Chattin

Postlude

❖ Go in Peace ❖