

# METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

July 9, 2023

*Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out”  
Celebrating 42 Years of Pride*

*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

Illumination

Centering

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

Gathering Words ~ *adapted from Theodore Parker*

Jamie Wallace

One: Be ours a religion which, like sunshine, goes everywhere;

**Many: Its temple, all space;**

One: Its shrine, the good heart,

**Many: Its creed, all truth,**

One: Its ritual, works of love,

**Many: Its profession of faith, divine living,**

One: Its gateway and entry, the path of acceptance;

**Many: Its song, the music of unity.**

Prayers of the Community

Dale Bradshaw

First Reading ~ *Acts 16:9-15*

Leigh Anne Arnold

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When Paul had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them. We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.

On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. God opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to God, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

## Second Reading~ *adapted from Rev. Nadia Boltz-Webber in “Pastrix: The Cranky Beautiful Faith or a Sinner and Saint*

I was about twenty years old when my friend Renna (who is as straight as they come) asked if I wanted to go to a Lesbian wedding. I replied, “More than anything in the world.” So we drove the many miles listening to The Indigo Girls just to get in the right womanly groove, and I held a huge bowl of strawberries on my lap; apparently Lesbian weddings are often potluck. “This is a Wiccan Wedding,” Renna informed me. I didn’t entirely know what that meant, but it sounded “non-Christian”, like me, and I suspected my parents would not approve, and that there would likely be hummus involved, so I was all in. I loved the service and had never seen so many strong women. Women with shoulders back and hair shorn tight and with nothing to hide. There was something safe about being there. They let me hang out with a feminine image of God, and I couldn’t help but think she liked me. I spent years with these women, marking the seasons and sharing our lives. And always there were potlucks.

When I tell other Christians of my time with the feminine image of God, I think they expect me to characterize it as a period in my life when I was misguided, and that I have now thankfully come back to both Jesus and my senses. But it’s not like that. I can’t imagine that the God of the universe is limited to our ideas of God. I can’t imagine that God doesn’t reveal God’s self in countless ways outside of the system of Christianity. In a way, I need a God who is bigger and more nimble and mysterious than what I could understand or contrive. Otherwise, it can feel that I am worshipping nothing more than my own ability to understand the Divine.

**Song of Response      Shall We Gather At The River      No. 597**

**Reflection**

**Have You Met Lydia?  
or  
Far Be It For Me**

**Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Community Dialogue**

**Offering Invitation**

**Offertory      We Are An Offering      MCC NoVA Choir**  
by Dwight Liles

**❖ Welcome To The Table! ❖**

**Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Invitation To The Table**

**Consecration & Words of Institution**

**Sharing The Open Meal of Christ**

**Time of Individual Prayer and Blessing**

**Community Blessing ~ Rev. Emma Chattin**

**Closing Song      God Reigns o'er All The Earth      No. 21**

**Benediction and Sending Forth**

**Postlude**

**❖ Go in Peace ❖**