

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Spirit, Community, Action – Inside & “Out”
Celebrating 42 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.

December 17, 2023 Third Sunday of Advent

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

Illumination

Genevieve Walker

Gathering Words ~ *adapted from Psalm 65*

Starlene Keppel

One: YHWH, you make the outgoings of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

Many: You visit the earth, watering it, making it fertile.

One: The great river flows with water, filling the ridges, blessing the growth of grain.

Many: You crown the year with your abundance.

One: The pastures are perfumed with dew.

Many: The hills deck themselves with joy.

One: The meadows adorn themselves with flocks.

Many: The valleys clothe themselves with grain.

One: They shout for joy!

ALL : They join in joyful song!

Prayers of the Community

Dale Bradshaw

First Reading ~ *Luke 1:39-47*

Leigh Anne Arnold

In those days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and in a loud voice she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why am I so favored that the mother of the Anointed One comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Highest." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies YHWH, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Second Reading ~adapted from “God Breaks In”, by Barbara Holmes, in
“Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church”

We are told that Jesus hung out with publicans, tax collectors, and sinners. Perhaps during these sessions of music, laughter, food and fellowship, there were also moments when the love of God and mutual care and concern became the focus of their time together. Contemplation is not confined to designated and institutional sacred spaces. God breaks into nightclubs and Billie Holiday's sultry torch songs; God tap dances with Bill Robinson and Savion Glover. And when Coltrane blew his horn, the angels paused to consider.

It may seem as if the mysteries of divine-human reunion erupt in our lives when, in fact, the spiritual abiding is integral to the human interior (the heart space). On occasion, we turn our attention to this abiding presence and are startled. But it was (and is) always there.

When you least expect it, during the most mundane daily tasks, a shift of focus occurs. This shift bends us toward the universe, a cosmos of soul and spirit, bone and flesh, which constantly reaches toward divinity, and unspeakable joy.

Song of Response My Heart Sings Out With Joyful Praise No. 106

Reflection Advent III JOY Rev. Emma Ch

Community Dialogue

Offering Invitation

>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 ~ Dale Bradshaw

Closing Song Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You No. 104

Benediction and Sending Forth Rev. Emma Chattin

Postlude

Go in Peace