

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Worship Leaders: Beverly Goines, Steven Moore, and Jane Strotman
Preacher: Stephen Gentle

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Angels We Have Heard on High arr. David Cherwien
Hail! Thou Brightest Day of Days J.S. Bach
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Johannes Brahms

MOMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND WELCOME

Steven Moore

Welcome! National City Christian Church is the national church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and a house of prayer that is open and affirming of all people. We pray that today's worship will please God and edify God's people.

Please sign the Connect With Us card in the bulletin. If you are a first-time guest, please indicate your address, telephone number, and e-mail address. There is a space on the back for prayer concerns and comments. As we prepare for worship, please turn off all cellular telephones, pagers, and watch alarms. The service is approximately one hour and fifteen minutes.

INTROIT

Michael Praetorius

Sing We Clear

Sing we clear! That all men may know. Lying in a manger low.
Savior and Redeemer, tender babe, God's only Son: on him all praise bestow.
Born of a virgin maid in tiny cradle laid.
Angels bright with stars bedight have come to bless the sight, serve and sing all night.
Sing we clear!

✠HYMN OF PRAISE

No. 149
REGENT SQUARE

Angels, From the Realms of Glory

THE COMMUNITY HEARS GOD'S WORD

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Jane Strotman

Liturgist: Today we relight the first three candles of the Advent Wreath -- the candles of HOPE, PEACE, and JOY. Now we light the fourth candle of Advent, the candle of LOVE. In numerous ways Jesus, the Good Shepherd, demonstrated selfless and pure love. Advent is a time for acts of kindness, thinking of others before ourselves, and sharing with others. It is a time to love just as God loved us by giving us his most precious gift. As God is love, let us also be love.

People: In the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter 10: "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. God executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving them food and clothing. Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt." And from the 13th chapter of the Gospel of John: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Liturgist: Let us pray: Teach us to love selflessly, O Lord, with our whole bodies and minds and without reservation. May we always remember to put you first as we follow in your footsteps, that we may know your love every moment of our lives and show it in our actions. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus' birth, fill our hearts with love for the world, that all may know your love and the love of the one whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.

✠CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

A Candle Is Burning
(Sung to the tune: Away in a Manger)

A candle is burning - a flame warm and bright; a candle of Hope in December's dark night.
While angels sing blessings from heaven's bright sky
Our hearts we prepare, for the Christ child is nigh.

A candle is burning, a candle of Peace; a candle to signal that conflict must cease.
The Savior is coming to show us the way; Christ Jesus, our Peace, humbly laid in the hay.

A candle is burning, a candle of Joy; a candle to welcome sweet Mary's small boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow
As Joy warms our hearts just as sunshine on snow.

A candle is burning, a candle of Love; a candle to point us to heaven above.
The holy Christ child, what a wonderful birth;
For Jesus has now brought God's Love down to earth.

SCRIPTURE READING

Jane Strotman
NT p. 1

Matthew 1:18-25

ANTHEM

In Excelsis Gloria
Miriam Gentle, harpist

Christ was born of a maiden fair; Hark, the angels in the air.
Thus adoring hear them there; *In excelsis gloria.*
Shepherds saw those angels bright caroling in glorious light;
God, his Son, is born tonight. *In excelsis gloria.*
Christ is come to save mankind, as in holy page we find.
Therefore sing with reverent mind: *In excelsis gloria.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Elementary school children will be invited by the pastor to leave the Sanctuary just before the sermon to attend a creative arts program in the Music Suite. Children will be dismissed to move to the Atrium to meet their parents at the end of the worship service.

SERMON

Stephen Gentle

A Merry, Little Christmas

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO GOD'S WORD AND CELEBRATES GOD'S GRACE

Those desiring to become members of the community of National City Christian Church, either by transfer of membership, profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or as an associate member, are invited to come forward during the hymn.

✠HYMN OF INVITATION

No. 144 (1, 2, 4)
ST. LOUIS

O Little Town of Bethlehem

GIVING AND RECEIVING OF THE OFFERING

Beverly Goines

OFFERTORY SOLO

The Coventry Carol
Patricia Simmons, mezzo soprano

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child, by, by lully, lullay.
O sisters, too, how may we do for to preserve this day?
This poor youngling for whom we do sing by, by, lully, lullay.
Herod the King, in his raging, charged he hath this day.
his men of might in his own sight all children young to slay.
Then woe is me, poor child, for thee, and ever mourn and say,
for thy parting nor say and sing, by, by, lully, lullay.

✠DOXOLOGY

No. 173 (3)
DIX

As With Gladness

As they offered gifts so rare at the manger, plain and bare,
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Steven Moore

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

Barbara Collins

Elder: God of love and hope, fill us with the joy and peace of believing, that may we respond by seeking to do your will.

People: You bring deliverance to the needy and justice to the oppressed; use our lives as an instrument of your love. You cause your Spirit to rest on the faithful, bestowing wisdom, knowledge, and might; may we use our actions to proclaim your love, so that all may come to rejoice in your new life. We pray the prayer our Lord taught his disciples to pray, saying...

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER AT THE TABLE

Steven Baines

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

This table is for all believers in Jesus Christ. Please eat the bread as it is passed and hold the cup so that we may share it together.

COMMUNION HYMN

No. 146 (1, 3)
VOM HIMMEL HOCH

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

From heaven above to earth I come to bring good news to every one!
Glad tidings of great joy I bring to all the world, and gladly sing.

This is the Christ, the Son most high, who hears your sad and bitter cry;
he will himself your Savior be and from all sin will set you free.

THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH TO SERVE

✠HYMN OF GOING FORTH

No. 143
ANTIOCH

Joy to the World

✠BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Johann Pachelbel

Fugue on *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*

As the organ postlude is played, please feel free to depart the sanctuary and greet those around you. For those who wish to stay and enjoy the postlude, you are invited to come forward, gather near the organ console, and let the full splendor of this instrument and the glorious music played upon it fill your soul.

Following the worship service, our pastors are at the back and side doors of the sanctuary to greet you. All are invited to come down to the Atrium for a time of fellowship.

Worship and preaching resources: Chalice Worship, Colbert S. Cartwright and O.I. Cricket Harrison, ed. (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1999), Seasons of the Spirit, Craig Schaub, et. al., (British Columbia, Canada: Wood Lake Publishing, Inc., 2007), and When We Gather, James G. Kirk, (Philadelphia: The Geneva Press, 2001). The texts for the hymns sung during this morning service are reprinted with permission given under CCLI #2266475.

WELCOME TO NATIONAL CITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Welcome to Worship! Are you ready for Christmas? On this Sunday before Christmas, we celebrate God's Love Incarnate in Christ Jesus. We are so honored that you are in worship with us today. May the love of God be with the whole people of God – wherever people are gathered in worship to praise the Lord for the babe born in Bethlehem.

FOR OUR GUESTS

Connect With Us! – We are so delighted that you have chosen to worship at National City Christian Church. Please take a moment and sign the *Connect With Us* card in the bulletin. Indicate your address, telephone number, and e-mail address. There is a space on the back for prayer concerns and comments. Please place it in the offering tray.

Membership at NCCC – It would be our joy to welcome you into the membership of this congregation. You may join through transfer of membership from another congregation or through a profession of faith and baptism. Full and associate membership are available. Please feel free to talk with any minister or e-mail sgentle@nationalcitycc.org

Sanctuary Tour – Tours of our historic sanctuary are available following the 11 a.m. worship service. If you are interested, please meet at the Garfield Window in the rear of the sanctuary (pulpit side).

Coffee and Fellowship – Come to the Atrium for a warm cup of coffee and meet some of the warm people of National City. The Atrium is located on the first floor of the building through the front, right door.

Nursery – Childcare is available during the morning for children through age four. The nursery is located in Fellers Foyer. Speak with a greeter or any member for directions.

Accessibility – Elevator access to the sanctuary is available via the 14th Street courtyard entrance. If you would like to request a handicapped parking space for Sunday, please call the church office by 12 noon on Friday. In addition, the sanctuary has an assisted listening system; please request a receiver from an usher.

EN ESPAÑOL – Culto en la Capilla Phillips, Domingo 11 a.m.

Audio Recording – Tapes of the sermon from the 11 a.m. worship service are available for \$4. Tapes may be ordered by completing the form at the reception desk in the Atrium or by calling the church office. Please add \$2 per tape for mailing. Messages are also available for download at www.nationalcitycc.org

Pastoral Needs – If you would like to speak with a pastor, please feel free to meet with one of the pastors at the door after the worship service or call during business hours, 202-232-0323.

National City Online – Visit online at www.nationalcitycc.org and Facebook members are encouraged to sign up as fans of National City's Facebook page. Also members and guests are encouraged to sign up for our e-mail list at <http://www.nationalcitycc.org/register.asp>

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

Sunday School – 10 a.m. for children, youth, and adults

Classes for elementary students will meet in the staff lounge on the third floor of the Beasley Building.

Classes for middle and high school students will meet in the 2nd Floor Conference Room.

Christian Pathways – Howland Center.

Children's Time – All elementary students are invited to participate in the children's Creative Arts program that takes place during the 11 a.m. service. Children can meet their parents in the Music Suite or in the Atrium at the end of the worship service.

Fair Trade Gifts, Crafts, and Coffee – Hilda's International Gift Shop is open today from 10 to 11 a.m. and 12 to 1 p.m. near the courtyard entrance in the Atrium.

Deacons' Meeting - After the 11 a.m. service meet Gary Lewis at the LBJ Window.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22

Food Pantry from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Atrium.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE

7 p.m. Festive Prelude, 7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

Combined Worship Service at 10 a.m.

Hispanic Worship Service at 11 a.m.

No Sunday school classes

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Food Pantry Donations – Please donate non-perishable food items for the needy in the area any Sunday this season. You may leave your gift in the marked box found in the Narthex or in the Atrium. Donations of toiletries, socks, hats, and gloves are also needed. Thank you.

Holiday Worship Schedule - Please join us for Sunday worship at 10 a.m. on December 26 and January 2. Regular worship hours of 8:30 and 11 a.m. will resume on January 9. Hispanic worship services will continue through the holidays at 11 a.m. in Phillips Chapel. Sunday school classes will not be meeting December 26 or January 2, but will resume with the regular schedule on January 9, 2011.

Yada D-Space Goes to Happy Hour - Join the Young Adults at happy hour Tuesday, December 28, and Tuesday, January 4. Locations are TBD, so sign up for the Yada Newsletter to learn more. Study will resume January 11. Contact Ann Neeriemer at aneeriemer@gmail.com if you'd like to lead a week of study in 2011.

Join YADA for the MLK Day of Service - The Young Adults are sponsoring a team for the MLK Day of Service, January 17, 2011, with GreaterDCCares. We would like to invite all church members and visitors to join the team. Sign up today.

New Church Directory - In preparation for printing a new church directory in January, there will be a copy at the Atrium desk for you to check the information for its correctness and completeness.

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH FAMILY

Jim Baines; James Green; William C. Howland, Jr.;
Enid Maitland; C. William and Claudine Nichols;
Hilda Reynolds; Martha Thompkins; Al Weaver;
and those in military service.

CAPITAL AREA PRAYER CALENDAR

Christian Family Church, Mt. Rainier, Maryland

PLEASE SEND ANNOUNCEMENTS TO COLLEEN WALSH

AT cwalsh@nationalcitycc.org OR cajwalsh@gmail.com

We need a little Christmas



... right now!

December 19, 2010

11 a.m.



National City Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)