



**METROPOLITAN  
INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH**



**CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**

**SUNDAY, March 6, 2016**

**FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

**PREPARATION**

*The Pastor's entrance and the beginning of the musical prelude  
are the calls to silent, personal preparation for the worship of God.*

**THE GATHERING**

---

*We are standing on Holy ground, And I know that there are angels all around.*

*Let us praise Jesus now, We are standing in God's presence on Holy ground.*

**LITANY**

---

**Leader:** Who is this, who feasts with sinners?

**Women:** This is the God who loves the world; who kindles the light that will not be extinguished, that all creation might be saved.

**Men:** This is the Christ who loves the peoples; who embodies the life that will not be conquered, that all creation might be saved.

**Women:** This is the parent who loves the child; who fosters the dream that will not be denied, that all creation might be saved.

**Men:** This is the child who loves the parent; who forges the trust that will not be broken, that all creation might be saved.

**Women:** This is the brother who loves the sister; who frees the spirit that will not be bound, that all creation might be saved.

**Men:** This is the sister who loves the brother; who opens the door that will not remain closed, that all creation might be saved.

**Women:** This is the lover who loves the beloved; who reveres the bond that will not be severed, that all creation might be saved.

**Men:** This is the friend who loves the forsaken; who extends the hand that will not be withheld, that all creation might be saved.

**Leader:** O Lord, let us feast while Pharisees whisper! Let the sound of our singing drown the scribes' murmurs!

**ALL:** It is well to make merry and be glad, for the one who was dead is alive; the one who was lost is found!

---

---

## OPENING HYMN

*“’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”*

---

‘Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, Just to take Him at His word,  
Just to rest upon His promise, Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”

**CHORUS:** Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him! How I’ve proved Him o’er and o’er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust Him more!

O how sweet to trust in Jesus, Just to trust His cleansing blood,  
Just in simple faith to plunge me ‘Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Yes, ‘tis sweet to trust in Jesus, Just from sin and self to cease,  
Just from Jesus simply taking Life and rest and joy and peace.

I’m so glad I learned to trust Thee, Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;  
And I know that Thou art with me, Wilt be with me to the end.

---

## WELCOME – *Visitors standing*

---

If you are here for the first time, we are delighted that you came. If you are dropping in for a second or third visit, we are glad you found something you were looking for. We hope you will be challenged by our worship and that you will come back again. If you are looking for a faith community, we would welcome you as a part of our church family. When you are officially welcomed as a visitor, you will receive a Visitor’s Information Card. Please fill it out, and return it to the Pastor, or place it in the offering plate. **WELCOME!**

---

## CONCERNS OF CHURCH AND CITY

*D. Billye Sanders*

---

### **Your tithes and gifts help us:**

- Pay the mortgage, utilities, maintenance, and security for the Metropolitan Meeting House;
- Provide free pastoral counseling (spiritual, marital, grief) services to members of our congregation;
- Fund the programs of the First Response Center, serving >700 people living with HIV/AIDS, and others at-risk;
- Pay for the personnel and operating costs of our ministries;
- Provide educational materials to assist in the spiritual growth & development of our community;
- Maintain meeting space for ministries, including Girl Scouts, various groups, and community events;
- Fund our annual Anniversary and Homecoming celebrations;
- Provide emergency assistance to members of the congregation and community through our benevolence fund.

***Every gift of your time, talent and treasure makes a vital difference  
in the life and ministries of Metropolitan Interdenominational Church. Thank you.***

---

## SONGS OF PRAISE

The Voices of Metropolitan  
*Reginald Green, Minister of Music*

---

## OFFERTORY

*“For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.” 1 Chronicles 29:14*

---

## DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God above ye heavenly host: Creator, Son and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

---

## PROCLAMATION

## THE WORD

*Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32*

---

## CHORAL RESPONSE

*Harry Emerson Fosdick*

Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage, For the living of these days, For the living of these days.

---

## PREPARATORY PERIOD

---

**TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY**

<sup>1</sup> Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. <sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” <sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable:

<sup>11b</sup> “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the youngest son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup> When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup> He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven before you; <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ <sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And get the fatted calf and kill it, let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> he called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> he replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ” *Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32*

**SERMON NOTES**


## **RESPONSE**

*Please do not leave the sanctuary or in any other manner create a distraction during the invitational period. This is a moment of **unparalleled** importance.*

### **MOMENTS OF REFLECTION**

*Voices of Metropolitan*

#### **INVITATION TO LIFE IN CHRIST**

**This church will welcome into its membership any persons who love and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and who promise to live according to His Laws of Love, recognizing all people as brothers and sisters for whom He gave His life.**

#### **THE LORD'S SUPPER**

*Communion Prayer*

We do not presume to come to this, Thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under Thy table. But Thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to partake of this sacrament of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, that we may walk in newness of life and grow to reflect Thy Spirit in all things forevermore. Amen. (*We will eat and drink together after all have been served.*)

#### **FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE**

We've come too far to turn back now; By the grace of God we're gonna make it somehow. Nobody knows the trouble we've seen; We've come too far to turn back now.

*"I got wings, You got wings, All God's children got wings..."*

The setting of this spiritual is very dramatic. The slave had often heard master's minister talk about heaven, the final abode of the righteous. Naturally the master regarded himself as fitting into that category. On the other hand, the slave reasoned, "There must be two separate heavens – no this could not be true, because there is only one God.

The next day, chopping cotton beneath the torrid skies, the slave sang:

*"I got shoes, You got shoes, All God's children got shoes.*

*When we get to Heaven we're goin' to put on our shoes and shout  
all over God's Heaven. Heaven! Heaven!"*

Then, looking up to the big house, sang on: *"Everybody talking 'bout Heaven ain't goin' there..."*

This is one of the authentic songs of protest. It was sung in anticipation of a time that even yet has not fully come. Even at that far-off moment in the past, these early singers put their fingers on the most vulnerable spot in Christianity and democracy. The wide, free range of the slave's spirit sent the slave in their song beyond all barriers. In God's presence at least there would be freedom; slavery is no part of the purpose or the plan of God. People, therefore, are the great enemy of people. This is the mood of that song.

**HOWARD THURMAN**

### **METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH**

2128 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37208

*Mailing Address:* P.O. Box 280779, Nashville, TN 37228

**Phone: (615) 72METRO (726-3876)**

**Fax: (615) 259-9210**

**website: [www.micwhosoever.org](http://www.micwhosoever.org)**

***Rev. Edwin C. Sanders, II, The Senior Servant***

***Pastoral Staff: Rev. John Cross, Rev. Marcella Lockhart, Rev. Clifford Smith,***

***Rev. Christopher Davis, Rev. Terry Terrell, Rev. Mary Jo Smiley, Rev. Regina McCrary,***

***Rev. Neely Williams, Rev. Stephanie Thompson, Rev. Cherie Booker, Rev. Christopher Goodwin***

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**MIDWEEK FELLOWSHIP: Wednesday, March 9, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Dinner by Circle 6; Bible Study 7:00 – 8:00, Classes for Adults and Children**

**Financial Freedom/Entrepreneurship Seminar Series** meets Saturday mornings,  
 9:00–11:00, at the First Response Center, 1219 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Nashville 37208 Call: 615-321-9791

***SAVE THE DATE!*** for a “Metro Coming Together” event  
 Movie Night at Metro starts at 5:30 p.m. on **Friday, March 18, 2016.**  
 Invite your family and friends to enjoy a movie, snacks and fun family fellowship at  
 the Metropolitan Meeting House ~ sponsored by the Retention Task Force.

**Ecclesiastical Council Meeting** Saturday, April 2, 2016 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

**REACH 2020 Nashville – Mobile Market:** Fresh Fruit & Vegetables  
 Fridays, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. at MetroCenter Teachers’ Apartments (Teachers’ Tower)

**Friday evening Dancercise, 7 pm // Voices of Metropolitan Rehearsal, Saturday, 12 – 2 pm**

**Saturday Evening Worship, 6 – 7 pm**

**Photo Directories have arrived! One free for each family photo, then \$10.00 each.**

**United Way Employee Giving Campaign:** Designate #3255 to support the First Response Center. For the  
 Combined Federal Campaign, *Write In* Metropolitan Interdenominational Church First Response Center.

### ***Support Metropolitan while you shop.***

- (1) Register your **Kroger Plus card** online and select Metropolitan as the organization you wish to support. Go to Koger.com/communityrewards or call 1-800-576-4377 option 3. Renew registration annually, in August.
- (2) Register at **Smile.Amazon.com**, select Metropolitan FRC as the charity you support, then *always* shop through Smile.Amazon; 0.5% of the proceeds will support the work of the FRC.

### **~ Giving Summary ~**

Date	Offering - Budgeted	Offering - Actual	Offering – (Un)Realized	Summary (Un)Realized
January, 2016	\$ 28,850.00	\$ 21,668.00	(\$ 7,182.00)	
February 7, 2016	\$ 5,770.00	\$ 4,887.00	(\$ 883.00)	
February 14, 2016	\$ 5,770.00	\$ 3,857.12	(\$ 1,912.88)	
February 21, 2016	\$ 5,770.00	\$ 6,922.88	\$ 1,152.88	
February 28, 2016	\$ 5,770.00	\$ 6,869.10	\$ 1,152.88	
February, 2016	\$ 23,080.00	\$ 22,536.10	(\$ 543.90)	
2016 Year to Date	\$ 51,930.00	\$ 44,204.10	(\$ 7,725.90)	(\$ 7,725.90)

### **SICK, SHUT IN, and RECOVERING MEMBERS**

Leon McKinley Corder	1902 Elliott Avenue; Nashville, TN 37204-2004	Send prayers, <i>not visitors</i> , please.
Ella Louise Gant	908 Cannon Street; Nashville, TN 37210	615-242-0226
Lynda Hodgers	P.O. Box 54; Guys, TN 38339	662-579-5317
Evelyn Martin	3253 Spears Road; Nashville, TN 37207	615-227-0095
Connie Ryans	1703 Pecan Street; Nashville, TN 37208	615-310-7855
Rev. Mary Jo Smiley	Rm #200, Creekside Rehab. Center, 306 West Due West Ave, Madison TN 37115	
Ernestine Williams	2712 Vista Lane; Nashville, TN 37207	615-876-7057
Mary Grace Williams	293 Becklea Drive; Madison, TN 37115	615-868-6810
Emmilye Wilson-Walton	P.O. Box 78795; Nashville, TN 37207	615-262-9375



**METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH**  
**CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**  
**Sunday, March 6, 2016 – FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

*Metropolitan Interdenominational Church is a community of believers inclusive of all and alienating to none, leading the way to spiritual growth by sharing God's love with the world.*

**THE COMPANY YOU KEEP**

THE COMPANY YOU KEEP has often been considered to be a good indicator of the kind of person you are. From my mother, to my teachers and many others concerned about my growth as a youngster I remember hearing them talk about the importance of THE COMPANY YOU KEEP. In Luke 15 the parable of The Prodigal Son is offered by Jesus in direct response to his being challenged regarding the issue of THE COMPANY YOU KEEP. The Pharisees and the scribes could not understand why Jesus was keeping company with “tax collectors and sinners.” Our Lord was clear about whom it was who brought the greatest need, and he was not going to allow any person or group of people get in the way of his ministry to “whosoever.” The church today needs to keep this passage of scripture before us as we develop our congregational agendas and programmatic initiatives. If THE COMPANY YOU KEEP is truly reflective of our effort to follow Jesus, then the people who fill the seats in our sanctuaries and fellowship halls would look very different. To be the church we need to be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must ask ourselves the right questions, individually and collectively, about THE COMPANY YOU KEEP.

*(reprinted from Sunday, March 14, 2010)*

*-Senior Servant*

**MIDWEEK FELLOWSHIP MEAL SCHEDULE**

<b>March 16</b>	<b>Circle 7</b>	<b>April 6</b>	<b>Circle 3</b>
<b>March 23</b>	<b>Circle 1</b>	<b>April 13</b>	<b>Circle 4</b>
<b>March 30</b>	<b>Circle 2</b>	<b>April 20</b>	<b>Circle 5</b>

**BIBLE READINGS**

*Read... Pray... Sacrifice... Fifth Sunday in Lent March 7 - 13, 2016*  
*Isaiah 43:16-21 Psalm 126 Philippians 3:4b-14 John 12:1-8*