



STRETCHING OUR FAITH

METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH

Sunday, December 2, 2018

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ WORLD AIDS SUNDAY

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: O world, watch! Do not sleep—

People: **For the realm of God is near!**

Leader: In the midst of the wilderness lay a garden,

People: **And in the garden stood a tree.**

Leader: In the spring her roots drank the tears of God;

People: **In the summer her leaves basked in the light of God's face;**

Leader: In the autumn her leaves dances on the breath of God;

People: **In the winter her buds slept in the warmth of God's bosom.**

Leader: But the tree grew old, a tired stump: The tears, once sweet, seemed to grow bitter; the face, once bright, to fade away;

People: **The breath, once gentle, seemed to bluster with spite; the bosom, once soft, to harden with cold.**

Leader: But look! The wilderness shall all be changed—

People: **For the tired stump is sprouting again, and a righteous branch shoots forth!**

Leader: The spirit of the Lord has fallen upon it:

People: **The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might!**

Leader: From rotten roots and lifeless stump,

People: **The branch of God stretches toward its blossom—**

Leader: O world, watch! Do not sleep!

People: **The realm of God is near!**

OPENING HYMN

“O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels: O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing all ye bright hosts of heav'n above;
Glory to God, all glory in the highest: O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning, Jesus to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

WELCOME

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

Billye Sanders

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTNG CEREMONY

OFFERTORY

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

(We are now accepting tithes and offerings by credit and debit card in the sanctuary.)

Your tithes and gifts help us:

- Pay the mortgage, utilities, maintenance, and security for the Metropolitan Meeting House;
- Provide free pastoral counseling services to members of our congregation;
- Fund the First Response Center programs, serving over 700 people living with HIV/AIDS, and other at-risk persons;
- Pay for the personnel and operating costs of our ministries;
- Provide educational materials/resources to assist in our community's spiritual growth and development;
- Maintain meeting space for ministries, including Metropolitan Praise Dancers, Girl Scouts, recovery/support groups, & events;
- Fund our annual Anniversary and Homecoming celebrations;

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

CELEBRATION IN SONG

The Voices of Metropolitan
Reginald Green, Minister of Music

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.

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

The 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.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Oscar Wilde says in *De Profundis*, "There is always room in an ignorant person's mind for a great idea." It is profoundly significant to me that the Gospel story in Luke reveals that the announcement of the birth of Jesus came first to simple shepherds, who were about their appointed tasks. After theology has done its work, after the reflective judgment of people from the heights or lonely retreats of privilege and security has wrought its most perfect pattern, the birth of Jesus remains the symbol of dignity and inherent worthfulness of the common person. Stripped bare of art forms and liturgy, the literal substance of the story remains: Jesus Christ was born in a stable! He was born of humble parentage in surroundings that are the common lot of those who earn their living by the sweat of their brow. Nothing can rob the common person of their heritage. When we behold Jesus, we see in him the possibilities of life for even the humblest and a dramatic revelation of the meaning of God.

HOWARD THURMAN

CORE VALUES	Our core values define the framework within which we live out the ideals of Our Calling based upon the word of God as reflected in Jesus Christ.
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Loving, Giving, Serving, Inclusive, Reconciling, Fellowship, Liberating	INCLUSIVE: <i>Embracing, Welcoming, Accepting</i>
LOVING: <i>Worshipping, Comforting, Caring</i>	RECONCILING: <i>Forgiving, Restoring, Affirming</i>
GIVING: <i>Sharing, Supporting, Volunteering</i>	FELLOWSHIP: <i>Celebrating, Belonging, Participating</i>
SERVING: <i>Helping, Ministering, Providing</i>	LIBERATING: <i>Teaching, Nurturing, Advocating</i>

METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH

2128 11th Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37208; *Mailing Address:* P.O. Box 280779, Nashville, TN 37228

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Rev. Edwin C. Sanders, II, Senior Servant

Rev. John Cross, Senior Pastoral Assistant

Pastoral Staff: Rev. Marcella Lockhart, Rev. Clifford Smith, Rev. Christopher Davis,

Rev. Donna Whitney, Rev. Terry Terrell, Rev. Regina McCrary, Rev. Neely Williams,

Rev. Stephanie Thompson, Rev. Cherie Booker, Rev. Christopher Goodwin



STRETCHING OUR FAITH
METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH
Sunday, December 2, 2018
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ WORLD AIDS SUNDAY

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.

GOOD POSTURE

GOOD POSTURE was always preached in our family when I was growing up. Maybe it was because I was unusually tall at an early age, and very prone to stoop or bend to compensate for towering above my friends; or perhaps it was because of my propensity to unconsciously sit with my shoulders turned in and rounded instead of straight. I'll probably never know the full reason for being bombarded with instructions regarding GOOD POSTURE, but I do know that I have benefited from being recognized as standing tall and holding my head up, especially when I was a student of military science or in situations where I was being considered for all kinds of opportunities in life. I have been told that my GOOD POSTURE has been an asset to my advancement. "Sit up straight," "Hold your head up," and "Stand tall" are commands I would be happy to never hear again, yet I have come to appreciate the value of GOOD POSTURE. In our gospel reading for this week, *Luke 21:25-36*, Jesus instructs us to "stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." One of the great blessings of Advent is the rekindling of the spirit of expectation in our hearts. As a community we must posture ourselves to receive all that the Lord has in store. During this season we need to focus our prayers on preparing to be used as instruments of God, to usher in a new era of hope for all people. Be reminded, prayerful posture is always GOOD POSTURE.

(reprinted from Sunday, November 29, 2009)

--Senior Servant

Financial Freedom/Entrepreneurship Seminar Series ~ meets on specific dates TBA.

Support Metropolitan while you shop:

- Enroll in the **Kroger Community Rewards Program**: Login to Kroger.com, enroll your Kroger Plus card, select Community Rewards, then Metropolitan Interdenominational Church FRC; it's that easy!
- When shopping online, register your support for Metropolitan Interdenominational Church FRC with **Smile.Amazon** ...and always shop through the Smile.Amazon site.

BIBLE READINGS	<i>Read... Pray... Sacrifice...</i>		
December 3 – 9, 2018	Second Sunday of Advent		
<i>Malachi 3:1-4</i>	<i>Luke 1:68-79</i>	<i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>	<i>Luke 3:1-6</i>
December 10 – 16, 2018	Third Sunday of Advent		
<i>Zephaniah 3:14-20</i>	<i>Isaiah 12:2-6</i>	<i>Philippians 4:4-7</i>	<i>Luke 3:7-18</i>
December 17 – 23, 2018	Fourth Sunday of Advent		
<i>Micah 5:2-5a</i>	<i>Luke 1:47-55</i>	<i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i>	<i>Luke 1:39-45</i>
December 24 – 30, 2018	First Sunday after Christmas Day		
<i>1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26</i>	<i>Psalms 148</i>	<i>Colossians 3:12-17</i>	<i>Luke 2:41-52</i>
Voices of Metropolitan Rehearsal, Saturday 12–2p.m. // Saturday Worship, 6 – 7 p.m.			
Centering Prayer, Sunday 8:30-8:50 a.m.; Wednesday 6:40-7:00 p.m.			

UPCOMING EVENTS

MIDWEEK FELLOWSHIP: Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
Dinner by Circle 3; **Bible Study** 7:00 – 8:00, Classes for Adults and Children

To view the **World AIDS Day Common Voice Pledge** video visit:
https://vimeo.com/303472628?utm_source=email&utm_medium=vimeo-cliptranscode-201504&utm_campaign=28749
or view it on our Facebook page

Angel Tree: hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, & coats Children 0–12 /Adults 65+
The Angel Tree will be distributed Friday, December 21, 2018, 12 – 4 p.m. at the church

Donations now being accepted for the Children's Holiday Christmas Store 2018.
Store will open Sundays, December 2nd, 9th, 16th & 23rd, immediately following morning worship.
Children up to age 16 may “shop” for parental gifts. Gift wrapping assistants are welcome.

World AIDS Sunday Celebration: December 2nd, 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Annual Church Meeting: December 9th, following morning worship
Christmas Family Fellowship: December 16th, 3:00 - 5:00 pm
Watch Night Worship Service: December 31st, 10:00 pm

~ Sick, Shut In, and Recovering Members ~

Leon McKinley Corder	1902 Elliott Avenue; Nashville, TN 37204-2004	Send prayers. <i>No visitors</i> , please.
John Cross	3441 White Pine Drive; Nashville, TN 37214	Send prayers and cards, only, please.
Martha Hill	c/o Bethany Healthcare Center; 421 Ocala Drive; Nashville, TN 37206	
Etoile Jordan	907 Lawrence Avenue; Nashville, TN 37204	615-385-3969
Jay Lane		615-474-4239
Evelyn Martin	3253 Spears Road; Nashville, TN 37207	615-227-0095
Anna Nickerson	2414 Albion Street; Nashville, TN 37208	615-540-0976
Emmilye Wilson-Walton	P.O. Box 78795; Nashville, TN 37207	615-262-9375

~ Midweek Fellowship Meal Schedule ~

December 12	Circle 4	January 2	Circle 6
December 19	Circle 5	January 9	Circle 7
December 26	<i>No Midweek Fellowship</i>	January 16	Circle 1

~ Giving Summary ~

Date	Offering – Budgeted	Offering – Actual	Offering (Un)Realized	Summary
2017 Year End	\$305,710.00	\$294,948.21		(\$10,761.79)
January, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$19,402.73	(\$3,677.27)	(\$3,677.27)
February, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$22,347.27	(\$732.73)	(\$4,410.00)
March, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$18,651.38	(\$4,428.62)	(\$8,834.62)
April, 2018	\$28,850.00	\$31,119.22	\$2,269.22	(\$6,565.40)
May, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$22,030.32	(\$1,049.68)	(\$7,515.08)
June, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$19,879.80	(\$3,002.20)	(\$10,815.28)
July, 2018	\$28,850.00	\$21,500.93	(\$7,349.07)	(\$18,164.35)
August, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$37,766.18	\$14,686.18	(\$3,478.17)
September, 2018	\$28,850.00	\$22,106.27	(\$6,743.73)	(\$10,226.90)
October, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$19,750.71	(\$3,329.29)	(\$13,556.19)
November 4, 2018	\$5,770.00	\$7,378.50	\$1,608.50	
November 11, 2018	\$5,770.00	\$4,147.00	(\$1,623.00)	
November 18, 2018	\$5,770.00	\$6,253.00	\$483.00	
November 25, 2018	\$5,770.00	\$3,864.00	(\$1,906.00)	
November, 2018	\$23,080.00	\$21,642.50	\$1,437.50	
2018 Year to Date	\$271,190.00	\$256,196.31		(\$14,993.69)