



STRETCHING OUR VISION
METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH
THIRTY-EIGHTH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

Sunday, February 3, 2019

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

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

"The City"

- Leader:** O God, the City, for people to live and to know one another.
People: **Help us to love the City.**
Leader: O God, who was laid off last week and can't pay the rent nor feed the kids.
People: **Help us to be with you.**
Leader: O God, who hangs on street corners, who tastes the grace of cheap wine and the sting of the needle.
People: **Help us to touch you.**
Leader: O God, who is pregnant without *partner*, who is child without parent, who has no place to play.
People: **Help us to know you.**
Leader: O God, who can't read nor write, who is on welfare and who is treated like garbage.
People: **Help us to know you.**
Leader: O God, who lives and no one knows their name and who thinks that they are nobody.
People: **Help us to know you.**
Leader: O God, who is cold in the slums of winter, and whose playmates are rats.
People: **Help us to touch you.**
Leader: O God, who is chased by the cops, who sits in jail for seven months with no charges brought, waiting for the Grand Jury, and no money for bail.
People: **Help us to know you.**
Leader: O God, who is old and lives on forty dollars a month in one crummy room and can't go outside.
People: **Help us to know you.**
Leader: O God, who lives in the projects of federal, state, and city indifference.
People: **Help us to see you.**
Leader: O God, who is fifteen and in the sixth grade.
People: **Help us to touch you.**
Leader: O God, who works all day, who feeds and cares for her children at night and dreams of better days, and is alone.

Continued...

People: **Help us to know you.**

Leader: O God, whose toys are broken bottles, tin cans, whose play yard is garbage and debris, and whose house is the floors of the condemned buildings.

People: **Help us to touch you.**

Leader: O God, who holds tight the hem of her mother's dress, whose eyes are empty, whose tears are large and whose face is dirty.

People: **Help us to touch you.**

Leader: *O God, who is HIV-positive and consumed by fear.*

People: **Help us to touch you.**

Leader: O God, who is uneducated, unskilled, unwanted and unemployed.

People: **Help us to know you.**

Leader: O God, who is all people.

ALL: **Help us to love you.**

From a litany written by Father Robert Castle, Episcopal Church, Jersey City, New Jersey

SONG OF LIBERATION

"LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"

Lift every voice and sing, 'til earth and heaven ring, Ring with the harmonies of liberty; Let our rejoicing rise, high as the list'ning skies, Let it resound loud as the rolling sea. Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us, Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod, Felt in the days when hope unborn had died; Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet come to the place for which our fathers sighed? We have come over the way that with tears has been watered, We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered, Out of the gloomy past, 'til now we stand at last, Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; Thou who hast by Thy might led us into the light, Keep us forever in the path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places our God where we met Thee, Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee; Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, True to our God, true to our native land.

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

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.

PROCLAMATION

Luke 4:14-30

THE WORD

CHORAL RESPONSE

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

PREPARATORY PERIOD

OUR CALLING: *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 MESSAGE

SENIOR SERVANT

STRETCHING OUR VISION

¹⁴Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³ He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" ²⁴ And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way. *Luke 4:14-30*

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

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 INWARDNESS OF RELIGION

... Religious experience is interpreted to mean the conscious and direct exposure of the individual to God. Such an experience seems to the individual to be inclusive of all the meaning of life – there is nothing that is not involved. There is present here what William James refers to as “acquaintance-knowledge” as contrasted to “knowledge about.” It is immediate experience and yet experience that is purely immediate is not quite possible. The individual is never an isolated, independent unit; the individual brings to their religious experience certain structural and ideological equipment or tools. This equipment is apt to be very determinative in how they interpret the significance not only of their religious experience but also the significance of experience itself.

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.
Loving, Giving, Serving, Inclusive, Reconciling, Fellowship, Liberating	INCLUSIVE: <i>Embracing, Welcoming, Accepting</i>
LOVING: <i>Worshiping, 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 VISION

METROPOLITAN INTERDENOMINATIONAL CHURCH

Sunday, February 3, 2019 ~ 4TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THIRTY-EIGHTH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

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.

STANDING ALONE

STANDING ALONE is an experience most of us would just as soon avoid if possible. When we find ourselves feeling compelled to identify with a cause, an issue, a belief or a person that puts us outside of the established norms of society, we are sometimes challenged at the very greatest depths of our being. Jesus' posture as "he stood to read" from the prophet Isaiah, in the fourth chapter of Luke's gospel, is a beautiful example of how speaking the truth as reflected in God's word can put us in conflict with the keepers of the status quo. What appeared to be pleasing at first glance translates into a moment of confrontation when Jesus voices his interpretation of the word in a fashion that was an indictment of those who were gathered in the synagogue. His statement left him STANDING ALONE even after he had sat down. Those who heard him were so infuriated by his words that they drug him out of town with the full intent of hurling him to his death. The light of contradiction he shined upon them revealed their oppressive nature and their faithless behavior. Their failure to care for the poor, advocate against injustice and proclaim "liberty to the captives" put them at odds with God. They were like "the good church folks" of our time who refuse to embrace the gospel mandate for social justice preaching, teaching and serving. For those who are practicing Jesus' teachings, it sometimes means STANDING ALONE. However, when the love of God and the desire to do God's will is central to every aspect of your being, you never have to fear STANDING ALONE.

(Reprinted from Sunday, January 31, 2010)

Senior Servant

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.
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UPCOMING EVENTS

MIDWEEK FELLOWSHIP: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
Dinner by Circle 4; Bible Study 7:00 – 8:00, Classes for Adults and Children

2nd Annual Choir Sunday: February 10th

Inner City Sanctuary Dedication: February 16th 11:00 a.m.

~ Plant 9 more trees as part of the 500K root Nashville campaign ~

Volunteers needed; please coordinate with Brother Sizwe at (615) 300-2941

4th Annual Black History Program: February 16th 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. Dinner; 6:00 p.m. Program

Founders' Day Brunch: February 24th following morning worship

Saturday, March 2, 2019, 6:00 p.m. – Sunday, March 3, 2019 8:00 a.m. *(breakfast!)*

Praying Through the Night for the Healing of AIDS

BIBLE READINGS

February 4-10, 2019

Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13)

Psalms 138

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Luke 5:1-11

Read... Pray... Sacrifice...

5th Sunday after the Epiphany

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.

~ 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 ~

February 13	Circle 5	March 6	Circle 1
February 20	Circle 6	March 13	Circle 2
February 27	Circle 7	March 20	Circle 3

~ Giving Summary ~

Date	Offering – Budgeted	Offering – Actual	Offering (Un)Realized	Summary
2017 Year End	\$305,710.00	\$294,948.21		(\$10,761.79)
2018 Year End	\$300,040.00	\$285,448.70		(\$14,591.30)
January 6, 2019	\$5,770.00	\$6,582.00	\$812.00	
January 13, 2019	\$5,770.00	\$4,680.00	(\$1,090.00)	
January 20, 2019	\$5,770.00	\$2,391.00	(\$3,379.00)	
January 27, 2019	<u>\$5,770.00</u>	<u>\$6,950.86</u>	<u>\$1,180.86</u>	
January, 2019	\$23,080.00	\$20,603.86	(\$2,476.14)	
2019 Year to Date	\$23,080.00	\$20,603.86		(\$2,476.14)