

NATIONAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Metropolitan Memorial Campus 3401 Nebraska Avenue, NW | Washington, DC

December 10 at 9:00 AM



ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

I wanted to create an image that spoke tenderly to the viewer as this text does to the reader. "Comfort, O comfort my people" (Isaiah 40:1)

When I've read this text before, the shepherding metaphor has only yielded masculine imagery in my mind. It makes sense with the text's pronouns that I would imagine a masculine figure. It was also ingrained in me— through translations, biblical art, movies, children's pageants, etc.—that shepherds were always men. I learned recently, however, that women were shepherds too. Some young women were trained and worked as shepherds before they were married; this notion completely added new dimension and depth to the shepherding metaphor.

I decided to use imagery of modern-day shepherds to inspire this image. A shepherd is at once fierce and tender, willing to face the most dangerous of predators in the dead of night while warmly cradling the most vulnerable of the flock.

In this image, the shepherd nurtures a lamb while leading the flock through fields of tall grasses and flowers. The fuschia flowers in the foreground are marjoram flowers that represent comfort and the steadfastness of God's word even in the midst of the leveling of the land. The shepherd's clothes have repeated medallions with simplified imagery of a straight highway in the wilderness. Within the stylized landscape, a voice proclaims the coming glory of the Lord. —Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Making the Love of God Obvious!

Our Commitment

We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

An Invitation

As faith awakens in you and you seek to deepen your discipleship of Jesus Christ, we invite you to become a member of National United Methodist Church. Indicate your interest in membership on the attendance registry today and our Minister of Discipleship will extend an invitation to upcoming orientations and then an introduction to the faith community.

www.nationalchurch.org | (202) 363-4900 | communications@nationalchurch.org
Wi-Fi Password: Welcome!



* Standing as you are able | **UMH:** United Methodist Hymnal | **TFWS:** The Faith We Sing

PRELUDE *Lo how a Rose e'er Blooming-* Johannes Brahms Todd Beckham, piano

*Children are invited to gather at the back to receive bells to ring.
At the sound of the chime, please be seated while the children walk forward.*

WELCOME

Rev. Janet Craswell

***LIGHTING the CANDLES of ADVENT**

ONE: How does a weary world practice peace?

ALL: By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.

ONE: By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor. By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.

ALL: By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.

ONE: There are a million ways to practice peace. So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge.

ALL: With God's help, may we bring peace into a weary world. Amen.

***SONG of ADVENT PEACE**

Blessed Be the God of Israel

UMH 209
verse 1 only

***SONG of THANKSGIVING**

Angels from the Realms of Glory

UMH 220

CALL to OFFERING

Rev. Janet Craswell

We support the life of this church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Ushers will receive our attendance sheets, prayer requests, and financial gifts at this time. Online gifts may be shared using this QR code. Today we are also consecrating prayer shawls.



ANTHEM

Let There Be Peace On Earth - Craig Courtney

Dayspring Choir

***DEDICATING our GIFTS TO MINISTRY**

We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise

TFWS #2031

We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.

We bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.

And we offer up to You the sacrifices of thanksgiving;

And we offer up to You the sacrifices of joy.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Janet Craswell

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 40: 1-11 and Luke 1: 24-45

Ann Michel

MESSAGE for TODAY

Enduring Images of 2023

Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

INVITATION to DISCIPLESHIP

In this time of meditation and commitment, participants may move to a prayer station around the sanctuary featuring the following options today:

- Left Chapel**—Light candles of peace against the 30% rise in Washington DC homicides in 2023.
- Right Hallway**—Meet with Ann Michel to help with Friendship Place's "Warmth and Joy" drive for winter coats and Christmas gifts.
- Front Altar and Pew near cross path**—Receive individual prayer from pastors.
- Seated and Online**---Contemplate the following Poem: "Lessons in Connection"

It's been a long day, long enough to complain,
long enough to wine and dine my disappointment, to give weariness keys to the house.
But then you get the giggles dancing with the dog in the kitchen.
Paws-sliding, tail-wagging, side-cramping giggles. I can hear it from across the house.
Your joy burrows its way through the cracks in my armor and then we are both laughing,
gulping for joyous, electric air. And that's when I know—
if you grab my hand, if you ask me to dance,
if our weary human souls can make room for connection, then we will survive.
Joy will take root. Love will keep her keys to the house.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

LORD'S PRAYER

TFWS Back cover

***CLOSING SONG**

O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines

UMH 729

BLESSING

Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

POSTLUDE

A Basque Carol - Grant Colburn

Todd Beckham, piano



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Started in 2006, the Prayer Shawl Ministry combines knitting and crocheting with prayer. Our prayers are that each shawl will carry our strength, love, and energy to each who receives one. To date, we have given approximately 500 shawls to friends locally and internationally. **Reasons for the creation of Prayer Shawls include:**

- In need of comfort after a loss
- Undergoing medical procedures
- Caring for a family member or friend
- Making a life-style change
- Needing to be reminded of God's love

The Prayer Shawl Ministry welcomes all ages, experienced or beginners.

You can be a member of the ministry without attending meetings. Completed shawls can be left in the church office to the attention of "The Prayer Shawl Ministry".

Yarn is available either free or at a discounted price. **If you would like to join us in any capacity contact Mary Jo Marchant at mjmarchant@verizon.net or 703-517-8676**



Pageant at Family-Friendly Christmas Eve Service | 11AM

Metropolitan Memorial Campus

Children and youth from both campuses are invited to participate as readers, angels, shepherds, magi, and various animals.

We also need adult chaperones and helpers.

There will be one rehearsal at 10 am, Sunday the December 17th. **Contact Rev. Janet at JCraswell@nationalchurch.org to sign up**



Volunteers for Christmas Eve Dinner/Carol Sing

Wesley Campus | 5PM

To sign up to be a singer, server, or chef, email communications@nationalchurch.org



Evening in Advent

December 17 | 5PM – 7PM

Metropolitan Memorial Campus | Great Hall

For info or volunteer opportunities email communications@nationalchurch.org



SEATING IS LIMITED!
Purchase Tickets in Advance



HAVE A JAZZY CHRISTMAS

With Bobby Felder



and Friends

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

Holiday Dinner: 5:00-6:30 pm
Concert: 6:30-8:30 pm



TICKETS ON SALE AT EVENTBRITE
tinyurl.com/jazzatwesley

Dinner & Concert: \$35 | Concert: \$20

must purchase in advance in advance or at door

5312 Connecticut Ave., NW, DC | www.nationalchurch.org/jazz