



NATIONAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

December 31 at 11:00 AM



“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

–Luke 2:29

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 welcome card 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

WiFi Password: Welcome!

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

PRELUDE

The Old Year Now Hath Passed Away- J.S. Bach

Todd Beckham, organ

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

✝ **PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

Once in Royal David's City

UMH 250

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Janet Craswell

Every year we celebrate Christmas. Every month we break bread.
Every week we gather for worship.

Every day we count our blessings. Every minute God is near.

Yes, every minute God is near. These are the rituals of our faith. Let us worship Holy God.

† HYMN

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

UMH 218

† CALL to CONFESSION

Rev. Janet Craswell

Church family, our faith is decorated with rituals and rhythms that help tie us to God. Confession is one of those rituals. Every week we gather in this space and tell the truth about our lives. And every week God hears our prayers and offers us grace. This holy dance of confession and mercy is one of the many rituals I could not live without. So let us embrace this holy tradition together. Let us pray:

† CONFESSION

**God of rhythms, we confess:
our faith would not be what it is without rituals.
Unlike you, we depend on bread and water.
We have to return to this space again and again
to hear old, familiar stories.**

**For if we stopped,
we know it would not take long before we lost our way.
Forgive us for our fragility, and thank you for giving us
ordinary rituals and rhythms to hold onto.
With grateful and humble hearts we pray,
amen.**

† ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Friends, it is not enough to hear once a month or once a year that you are forgiven. We need to hear it every single week. Every single week we need to be reminded that we are held in God's loving embrace.

So hear this good news: no matter where you are on your journey of life, love, or faith, and no matter what you have done or left undone, you belong to God. You are claimed. You are known. You are forgiven. This is the good news of the gospel! Thanks be to God! Amen!

† EXCHANGING SIGNS of RECONCILIATION

One: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven
All: In the Name of Jesus Christ, You are forgiven

† RESPONSE IN SONG

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place,
I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings, I see glory on each face.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Janet Craswell

CAROL of CHRISTMAS

We Three Kings

UMH 254

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:21-38

Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

RESPONSE IN SONG

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life!

SERMON

Climbing the Bell Tower

Rev. Doug Robinson-Johnson

INVITATION TO OFFERING

We support the life of this church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Ushers will receive our welcome cards, prayer requests, and financial gifts at this time. Online gifts may be shared using this QR code.



OFFERTORY

Myn Lyking - Richard R Terry

Chancel Choir

I saw a fair mayden sytten and sing.
She lulled a lyttel childe, a sweete Lording.
Lullay myn lyking, my dere sonne, my sweeting,
Lullay my dere herte, myn own dere derling.

That same Lord is he that made alle thing;
Of alle lord is he is Lord, of alle kynges Kyng.

There was mickle melody at that chylde's birth.
All that were in heav'nly bliss, they made mickle mirth.

Angels bright sang their song to that chyld;
Blyssid be thou, and so be she, so meek and so mild.

DEDICATION

In the Bleak Midwinter

UMH 221
verse 4

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet
what I can I give him: give him my heart.

PRAYER of THANKSGIVING

CLOSING HYMN

Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New

Insert

✠ AFFIRMATION of FAITH

Unison

**We believe that faith is a journey marked by rituals and rhythms.
We come to worship. We confess our sins. We pass the peace.**

**We offer grace. We hear the Word.
We baptize children. We break the bread.
And we tell the story of a loving God.**

**And through these sacred rituals,
we are reminded: we are not alone.
God is near, and we have work to do.
May this belief shape the rhythm of our lives.
Amen.**

POSTLUDE

The Bells – Arthur Wills

Todd Beckham, organ

(Based on the Chime of Ely Cathedral, Cambridgeshire, UK)

New Members Class: All Newcomers Welcome!

On Sunday, January 7, 12:30-2 PM, there will be a class for those who wish to join National UMC. The class will be in-person only. We'll meet in the library at the Metropolitan Memorial campus. The class will cover what it means to be United Methodist, what it means to be part of National UMC, and ways you can connect with the life of the church. Lunch will be provided. RSVP: JCraswell@NationalChurch.org

United Methodist Women Recognition Brunch

Join National Church's UMW on 13 January at 11:00 am in Wesley's fellowship hall for the annual Recognition Brunch. During the brunch, we will celebrate the significant contributions of individuals whose work during 2023 has improved lives within our Church and broader community. Additionally, we will welcome babies born or adopted within our Church family and remember with gratitude those who died this past year. One doesn't have to be a UMW member to attend. All are welcome!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday Features NUMC Author Debbie Hines

*Sunday, January 15th, 9am | Metropolitan Memorial Campus, 11AM | Wesley Campus
10AM Dialogue with author in Metropolitan Great Hall*

In *Get Off My Neck*, Debbie Hines draws on her unique perspective as a trial lawyer, former Baltimore prosecutor, and assistant attorney general for the State of Maryland to argue that US prosecutors, as the most powerful players in the criminal justice system, systematically target and criminalize Black people. Hines describes her disillusionment as a young Black woman who initially entered the profession with the goal of helping victims of crimes, only to discover herself aiding and abetting a system that prizes plea bargaining, speedy conviction, and excessive punishment above all else. In this book, she offers concrete, specific, and hopeful solutions for just how we can come together in a common purpose for criminal justice and racial justice reform.

NUMC Leadership Retreat: Newly Nominated Leaders Encouraged to Attend!

Saturday, January 20th 10am to 2pm (Lunch provided)

Metropolitan Memorial Campus Vestry

Part One: Orientation for new and returning leaders

Part Two: 2024 Budget Review

Please RSVP: 202-363-4900 In-person only