



National City Christian Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2017, at 11 a.m.

5 Thomas Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20005

202-232-0323

www.nationalcitycc.org

Welcome to National City Christian Church, national church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and a house of prayer that is open to and affirming of all people. Thank you for joining us in worship. Please fill out the Connect with Us card, and place it in the offering tray. Today's service is approximately 75 minutes.

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR WORSHIP

Worship Leaders: Phillip Gentle, Kenneth Lowenberg, and Michael McMahon

Preacher: Stephen Gentle, Senior Pastor

PRELUDE

Greensleeves

Richard Purvis
(1913-1994)

MOMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND WELCOME

Stephen Gentle

INTROIT

Creator of the Stars of Night

Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all, we pray you, hear us when we call.

Plainsong, Mode IV

✘ OPENING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

No. 119
VENI EMMANUEL

✘ LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Phillip Gentle

Leader: Come, long-expected Jesus, born to set your people free! From our fears and sins release us, Christ, in whom our rest shall be.

People: Long ago the people were given a sign of God's presence. "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"

Leader: God's promise to us remains sure and true.

People: God's Anointed One will soon walk among us, to lighten our darkness, to restore the joy of our salvation, to save us from our sins.

Leader: Four lights now shine in spite of our despair. Jesus is coming soon!

Unison: God of mystery, help us accept your gifts of grace. Plant a relentless hope deep in our hearts, so we will be able to embody the Christ-child, when Jesus is birthed anew in our lives. On this Holy day, we offer our resolute worship in his Holy name. Amen.

✘ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

One Candle Is Lit

Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play,
where evil is banished and faith takes the day,
a babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes.
One candle is lit for God's loving surprise.

No. 128 (4)
CRADLE SONG

THE COMMUNITY HEARS GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Phillip Gentle

Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

CANTICLE

No. 130

My Soul Gives Glory to My God (Luke 1:46b-55)

MORNING SONG

Please join in singing verses 1, 2, 4, and 5. The choir will sing verse 3.

SCRIPTURE READING

Phillip Gentle

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

ANTHEM

Basque Carol

The Angel Gabriel

harm. Edgar Pettman

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favored lady,," Gloria!

"For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honor thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favored lady," Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me as it pleaseth God," she said,
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name."
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say—
"Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould

SERMON

Stephen Gentle

Song of Hope and Healing

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

Stephen Gentle

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO GOD'S GRACE

Those desiring to become members of the community of National City Christian Church, either by transfer of membership, profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or as an associate member, are invited to come forward during the hymn.

- ✘ HYMN OF COMMITMENT No. 136
Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming PLEADING SAVIOR
- GIVING AND RECEIVING OF THE OFFERING Stephen Gentle
- OFFERTORY ANTHEM EST IST EIN ROS
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming arr. Michael Praetorius
Text may be found in the Chalice Hymnal at number 160
- ✘ DOXOLOGY WINCHESTER NEW
All Praise to You, Eternal Son
All praise to you, eternal Son,
Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit, evermore.
- INVITATION TO COMMUNION Stephen Gentle
- PRAYERS FOR THE BREAD AND CUP James Ferguson
- WORDS OF INSTITUTION Stephen Gentle
This table is for all believers in Jesus Christ. Please come forward by the center aisle as directed. When receiving communion, take the bread and dip it into the cup. Return to your seat by the side aisle. If you prefer to remain seated, communion will be brought to you. *Gluten-free Communion Wafers are available in a marked section on the bread tray.*
- COMMUNION HYMN No. 144 (3)
O Little Town of Bethlehem ST. LOUIS
How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the joy of highest heav'n.
No ear may hear Christ coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH TO SERVE

- ✘ GOING FORTH No. 143
Joy to the World ANTIOCH
- ✘ BENEDICTION Stephen Gentle
- POSTLUDE Dale Wood
Noel Nouvelet (1934-2003)

Following the worship service, pastors and elders are at the back and side doors of the Sanctuary to greet you. All are invited to the Atrium for coffee and fellowship immediately following the service.

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH FAMILY

Willie Alexander; Fay Arrington; Dorothy Davis;
Eddie Franklin; Helen Gray; Constance Jennings;
Courtney & Betty Jones; Cyril Jones; Tawanna Lloyd;
Robin Schacht; Lily Stewart; David Williams;
persons in military and civil service around the world.

CAPITAL AREA PRAYER CALENDAR

Christian Temple
Baltimore, Maryland

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Michael Joseph, Colombia

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Questions for reflection: Mary's song proclaims that God is lifting up the lowly while scattering the proud, and feeding the hungry while sending the rich away with empty hands. How does this change the way you think about God's coming kingdom of justice and favor? How does this change the way you live?

A daily prayer for this week: Expectant God, Mary sings because she has new life in her, the promise of your salvation. Fill me with hope this day, as I lift my life to you and seek to do your will. Look with favor on our world, and all who are in need, that your love may be magnified as I follow humbly in your way. Amen.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal - 9 a.m., Music Suite.
Christian Pathways - 10 a.m., Large Atrium.
Toddler Class - 10 a.m., 2nd Floor Work Room.
Barbara Kelley and Aixa Diaz, leaders
Sanctuary Tour - 12:15 p.m. Meet at the back of the Sanctuary, near the President Garfield Memorial Window, for a special guided tour of National City.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

7 p.m. Prelude of Festive Music
7:30 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS - NCCC OFFICES CLOSED

Prayer call at 6 a.m. - All are invited to join the weekly conference prayer line for National City. Simply dial 712-775-7031, enter access code 371015. For more information, contact Loretta Tate at 202-489-2020.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

Toddler Playgroup - 9:30 a.m., Community Room
Food Pantry - 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Atrium

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal - 9 a.m., Music Suite.

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

NEWS YEAR'S DAY - NCCC OFFICES CLOSED

CONNECT WITH US

Visit www.nationalcitycc.org and click the "sign up" tab to subscribe to our email list. **Get Social** - Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram [@nationalcitycc](https://www.instagram.com/nationalcitycc)

FOR OUR GUESTS

Membership at National City Christian Church - It would be our joy to welcome you into the membership of this congregation. You may join through transfer of membership from another congregation or through a profession of faith and baptism. Full and associate memberships are available. Please feel free to talk with any minister or email sgentle@nationalcitycc.org

Nursery - Childcare is available during the morning for children through age four. The nursery is in the 2nd Floor Conference Room. Speak with a greeter or any member for directions.

Pastoral Needs - If you would like to speak with a pastor, please feel free to meet with one of the pastors at the door after the worship service or call 202-232-0323 during office hours.