National City Christian Church  
6th Sunday after Pentecost  
July 12, 2020

Rev. Dr. Amy Butler, Interim Senior Minister; Rev. Dr. Beverly J. Goines, Assistant Minister  
Rev. Steven Baines, Interim Executive Minister  
Valeria Foster, Interim Music Minister; Kevin Biggins, Jr., Interim Organist  
www.nationalcitycc.org

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**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**  
Variations on *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*  
Kevin Biggins, Jr., organist  
arr. Lawrence P. Schreiber

*Based on the text: In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

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**WELCOME**  
Amy Butler

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**CALL TO WORSHIP**  
Amy Butler

*It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.*

*This prayer was first presented by Cardinal Dearden in 1979 and quoted by Pope Francis in 2015. It’s commonly known as The Prayer of Oscar Romero.*
INVOCATION

Amy Butler

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

OPENING HYMN

The Crowds Gathered
Led by Terri Malone

Lavon Bayler

AURELIA

The crowds ‘round Jesus gathered to listen as he taught
of seeds a sower scattered and yields beyond their thought.
For God will bring the harvest of fruits a hundredfold
despite resistant hardness and all that we withhold.

God’s word is for our hearing, as seeds are for the soil,
but much is interfering, God’s harvest to despoil.
Like thorns, the world’s distractions choke out the truth we seek,
for wealth has its attractions and cares can leave us weak.

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PROCLAMATION

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Steven Baines

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. 13:2 Such great crowds gathered
around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he
told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some
seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where
they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when
the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell
among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought
forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

SELECTION

Sois la Semilla
Terri Malone, soloist; Valeria Foster, pianist

Cesareo Gabarain

Sois la semilla que ha de crecer, sois estrella que ha de brillar.
Sois levadura, sois grano de sal, antorcha que debe alumbrar.
Sois la mañana que vuelve a nacer, sois espiga que empieza a granar.
Sois aguijón y caricia a la vez; testigos que voy a enviar.

Estribillo:
Id, amigos, por el mundo, anunciando el amor,
mensajeros de la vida, de la paz y el perdón.
Sed, amigos, mis testigos de mi resurrección.
Id llevando mi presencia; con vosotros estoy.

You are the seed that will grow a new sprout; you’re a star that will shine in the night;
you are the yeast and a small grain of salt, a beacon to glow in the dark.
You are the dawn that will bring a new day; you’re the wheat that will bear golden grain;
you are a sting and a soft, gentle touch, my witnesses where’er you go.

Refrain:
Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
“Lo, I’ll be with you forever, till the end of the world.”
Sois fuego y sabia que vine a traer, sois la ola que agita la mar.
La levadura pequeña de ayer fermanta la masa del pan.
Una ciudad no se puede esconder, ni los montes se han de ocultar,
en vuestras obras que buscan el bien el mundo al Padre verá.

_Estribillo_

You are the life that will nurture the plant; you’re the waves in a turbulent sea;
yesterday’s yeast is beginning to rise, a new loaf of bread it will yield.
There is no place for a city to hide, nor a mountain can cover its might;
may your good deeds show a world in despair a path that will lead all to God.

_Refrain_

**Gospel Lesson**

*Matthew 13:18-23*  
Amy Butler

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

**Sermon**

*What’s the Point?*  
Amy Butler

**Song of Reflection**

_The Crowds Gathered_  
Lavon Bayler

O God, grant understanding and willingness to learn,
so soil where seeds are landing may yield a high return.
May depth and strong endurance accompany our joy,
and Love give reassurance no evil can destroy.

**Response**

_Hebrew Lesson_  
*Isaiah 55:10-13*  
Beverly J. Goines

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

**Pastoral Prayer/Lord’s Prayer**

Beverly J. Goines

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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

**Invitation to Holy Communion and Words of Institution**

Steven Baines

*If you have bread and juice to use at your home, we invite all to participate in Holy Communion*  
*after the minister offers Words of Institution and Prayer for the Elements.*
Since the very beginning of time, humans have been asking this fundamental question of human living: why do the wicked prosper? Jesus has some thoughts about that: not easy answers, but prompts for reflection as we work to live differently.

Please join our **Saturday morning prayer call** at 8 a.m. (712-775-7031; code 371015).

**Virtual Fellowship Hour - Sunday at 11 a.m.** Bring your coffee and enjoy virtual conversation with your National City family! We will send out a link on Friday. Subscribe to our email list via our website www.nationalcitycc.org, or email Colleen Walsh at cwalsh@nationalcitycc.org, to receive the link.

Please remember the vital ministries of our church by giving of our tithes and offerings on tithe.ly. Checks are being received in the mail and deposited weekly. Stay healthy, pray without ceasing, and remember, God is faithful.

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**Our prayers and sympathy** go out the family and friends of Bob and Frances Beck who have passed away. Frances passed on April 24 and Bob on June 25. Frances was the cook and manager of the Bethany Beach Conference Center.

**Prayers for Our Church Family**
Douglas and Chieko Cook; Dororthy Davis; Eddie Franklin; Helen Gray; Constance Jennings; Jim King; Frederickia Lloyd; Tawanna Lloyd; Lucas Lund; Alta Mainer; Drusilla McCain; Beverly Schacht; Steve Selde; Kathleen Swihart; Esther Tyson; Peggy Washington; John Foster Woods; and all medical personnel around the world.

**Capital Area Prayer Calendar**
Hyattstown Christian Church
Hyattstown, Maryland

**Global Ministries Prayer Calendar**
Brigitte Eale
in Kenya

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https://coronavirus.dc.gov/
https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/
https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/

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