

The News of National City

May 2018 Issue XVIII Vol. 5

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Epiphany Retreat Shines Light on New Possibilities



Rev. Rick Morse

Members take part in a team exercise



Rev. Roger McKinney

For three days in April and months prior in preparation, congregational leaders met with leaders of Hope Partnership Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to worship, pray, ponder, and create new ministry possibilities at and through National City Christian Church. Rev. Rick Morse and Rev. Roger McKinney joined us for dynamic days of team building and leadership exercises with the goal of developing and living into a future story of vibrant and relevant ministry for our congregation.

Thirty-eight members gathered to share personal stories of spiritual transformation that had occurred in their lives while at National City and then think about ways for transformational ministry to continue for future generations. Together, we learned that just as old wineskins cannot contain unfermented wine, the workings and wonders of the Holy Spirit cannot be contained by four walls of brick and mortar.

Now that the preparation and planning has begun, we can continue our worship and ministry together preparing for National City's epiphany moment. In the next few weeks, Rev. Morse, our congregation coach, will share with us an assessment report from the information gleaned last month, and once again gather a team of leaders to begin drafting in words and pictures the future story narrative of National City Christian Church.

We look forward to distributing more information of the Epiphany process through our communication channels. We are always interested in your perspective so please feel free to contact any one of us with thoughts and ideas. It is our prayer and desire that as we journey together, we can fully realize, not only our potential as a transformational congregation, but the witness to our community and our world of transformed lives in Christ.

- In peace and service,
Steven C. Baines
Jane Campbell
Stephen Gentle

May Birthdays

- 2 Wayne Sharp
Marie Temple
Kevin Wilson*
- 5 Brody Bacon*
- 8 Charlie Daniel
- 9 Courtney Aklin
Emma King
Kristen Walling
- 11 Kristin Cambell
Tawanna Lloyd
- 12 Steve Jordan
- 13 Joe Reef
- 17 Byron Cotton
James Kelley
- 18 Katie Blaisdell
Sara McCue
- 19 Jane Campbell
- 24 Tom Kelley
- 26 Monique Ashton
Diana Morse
- 27 Sushila Maru

**Indicates child or student*

For additions or changes, contact Kathleen Swihart at kswihart62@gmail.com

NCCC Offers Prayer Call on Monday Mornings

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

The News of National City is a monthly publication. Please submit articles for the June Newsletter by May 15 to Diana Morse at morsediana@comcast.net and to Colleen Walsh at cwalsh@nationalcitycc.org



Imagine over a thousand preachers gathering to worship, to listen to stimulating lectures, and -- of course -- to hear great preaching. National City Christian Church and Metropolitan AME Church are hosting the annual Festival of Homiletics on May 21-25. The theme is "Preaching and Politics" and features Richard Rohr, Otis Moss III, and Diana Butler Bass. Other speakers include Walter Brueggemann, Cynthia Hale, Craig Barnes, Mariann Budde and many more. Also of interest, National City will be hosting the bookstore in the Community Room and Yoga classes in the Howland Center. Go to www.festivalofhomiletics.com for further details.

Bible Study on May 1

Rev. Steven Baines will be leading the Tuesday morning Bible Study on May 1 at 11 a.m. in the Music Suite. He will be discussing what the Letter of Paul to Philemon has to say in a modern world. Everyone is invited. Bring a sandwich and share fellowship following the program.

- Kathleen Swihart
President, Disciples Women





DOG BLESSING
 Sunday, May 20, at 10 am
 All Are Welcome

LGBTQ Community Activities for May

Bible Study on Wednesday, May 9

Come and join us for the next installment in our series of Bible studies based on Mark, the shortest of the Gospels, which we (along with churches of many denominations) are reading during worship on most Sundays of this year. This month's session will be held in the Music Suite on Wednesday, May 9, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., and will be led by Rev. Dr. Beverly Goines. Haven't attended previous sessions? No worries. You'll be able to join right in and are most welcome!

**Happy Hour on May 17
 To Benefit Brother, Help Thyself**

Join friends old and new for a happy hour on Thursday, May 17, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Uproar Lounge and Restaurant, 639 Florida Avenue, NW, located just two blocks from the Shaw Metro station (Green Line). A minimum donation of \$10 is requested to benefit Brother, Help Thyself, a community-based organization that provides financial and other support to non-profit organizations serving the LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS community in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C., metro area. For more information, please contact Rev. Michael McMahon at mmcmahon@nationalcitycc.org.

Music at Midday: Organ Music in Full Bloom

Organists from Washington, Boston, and Chicago will bring our Sanctuary to life this month with the rich sonority of music by a wide variety of composers.

May 4:

Organist Carson Cooman, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, performs works of three contemporary European composers: Carol Williams, Thomas Åberg, and Marco Lo Muscio.

May 11:

Chicago organist Alan Hommerding presents "An Easter Sampler," with works of the season by Jean Langlais, Jaak-Nicolas Lemmens, Russell Schulz-Widmar, Johann Gottfried Walther, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Lynn Trapp.

May 18:

Washington, D.C. organist Benjamin LaPrairie performs works of twentieth century European composers Charles-Marie Widor, Jean Roger-Ducasse, and Joseph Jongen.

May 25:

Carol Feather Martin, from Arlington, Virginia, performs a feast of French organ music, including works of Jean Langlais, Olivier Messiaen, Gaston Litaize, Eugène Reuschel, and Naji Hakim.

Gospel Choir Schedule for May
 The Gospel Choir will rehearse on Tuesdays May 8, 15, and 22 at 7 p.m. in the Music Suite. There will be no rehearsal on May 29.
 If you are interested in joining the choir or want more information on the choir, contact Valeria Foster, Gospel Choir director.

**Pentecost Offering Scheduled
 for May 20 and May 27**

The Pentecost Offering will be collected on May 20 and May 27. This offering is used to support the mission for starting new churches. Half of the money collected during this offering goes to Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation to fund their efforts and the remaining half stays in the region where the donor resides.

- Barbara Kelley

Supporting Our Young Violinist

Fifteen-year-old member and violinist **Lauren He** is participating in a fundraiser for a trip with the D.C. Youth Orchestra to perform at an Italian music festival this summer. She has passed the audition to go. Lauren is the daughter of **Polly He**. Performances at the 11-day festival include: Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet Suite, Beethoven's 7th Symphony, and Dvorak's American Suite.

Lauren has posted her story on the website for donors for the orchestra trip -- <https://www.mightycause.com/story/Gp633g>.

Let the People Sing!

I've always loved congregational singing. When we sing together, we know that Christ is with us because we are the two or three gathered in his name. The lifting of our voices together is a common response to God's grace at work in our midst. By joining in song as one body, we support one another in our shared faith and commitment to discipleship. As a friend of mine used to say, "There is no more beautiful sound than the voice of a singing congregation."

One of my favorite events to attend each year is the conference of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. Early in the month of July, more than 400 "hymn geeks" representing more than 25 denominations gather from all over the United States and Canada for five days in a different city to study, to share resource, and above all to sing!

Taking part in Hymn Society conferences has reinforced my own experience as a life-long leader of congregational song that hymns and other forms of singing together are one of the primary ways of bringing Christians together. Sharing with colleagues from various faith traditions and cultural backgrounds has also confirmed how challenging it can be to empower an assembly that brings a broad diversity of worship experiences.

Some members of our congregation have expressed a desire that we sing hymns that are more familiar to them. We will definitely be looking for ways to honor that request. In a diverse congregation like ours, "familiar" will be different for different people.

Others in our community have struggled a bit with new forms of congregational song, such as psalms or hymns in which the whole assembly sings a refrain while verses are sung by choir or cantor. This way of singing comes to us from the broader ecumenical church and from the traditions of cultures from all over the world. As Disciples of Christ who are deeply committed to the unity of the church and the inclusion of all, these songs help us to broaden our vision even as we worship.

How can we improve congregational singing here at National City Christian Church? Drawing on "familiar" repertoire is one way that we are striving to implement, but let me suggest two others.

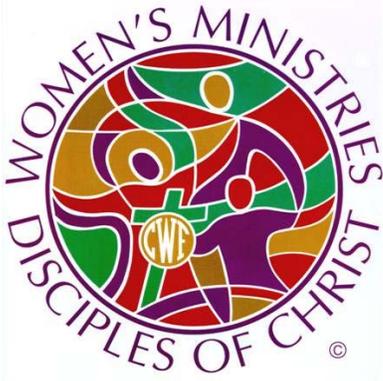
First, group singing can't happen without a group. We need to gather our scattered congregation from their islands all over the sanctuary into places where we are close to one another, can hear one another, and thus support one another in common song. Second, congregational singing requires effort. Even (and especially) if you don't know a song, pick up the book or bulletin, follow along, and pray the words without worrying if you're singing the right notes. Hymns and songs can become familiar over time if everyone approaches them with good will and a willingness to make some effort.

To God be the glory – and let the people sing!

- J. Michael McMahon
Minister of Music



Easter Sunday 2018



Christian Church-Capital Area Women's Spring Retreat

"Disciples Women in Conversation" is the theme for this year's Christian Church-Capital Area women's spring retreat in Bethany Beach, Delaware, June 1-3.

In its invitation, the CCCA Disciples Women president Sara Hindsley and its executive committee writes:

"Last fall the internet movement and phenomenon known as #MeToo became a universal rallying cry for survivors of sexual assault and harassment and advocates of women. Since then we have borne witness to people's stories and experiences, which has led us to deeper questions about women's experiences in the workforce, in leadership positions, and throughout society.

"The focus for the Women's Retreat this year emerges from these significant cultural moments and our hope to locate the role and engagement of our church in these conversations.

"Our leaders for these conversations will be co-led by **Rev. Alexis Kassim**, Disciples minister and Associate Minister at Little River UCC, and **Rev. April Lewton**, Disciples minister and VP for Development and Marketing with the National Benevolent Association (the Disciples health and social service general ministry)."

Additional printed information is on the rack in the Atrium. The CCCA Outdoor Ministries Committee of the Commission for Camps and Conferences has partnered with CampDoc.com so that you can register and submit your health record on-line, all in one place. Pamela Findley, the CCCA Camp Registrar, can help with any questions you may have about registration. If she is not there, leave a message at 301-942-8266 x201 or send her an e-mail at campregistrar@cccadisciples.org.

To download the traditional Application & Medical Forms: <http://www.cccadisciples.org/camp-forms>

Adriene Dickerson Publishes "Lessons in Waiting"

Adriene Gesell Dickerson, daughter of Dick and Carol Gesell and granddaughter of Forrest and Betty Warner, has published a book about her experiences last year carrying a baby with a severe heart defect and a few important lessons she learned along the way as she waited to see what God had in store for her and her family.

Adriene is very grateful to all of her NCCC friends who prayed for her last year and thought they may be interested in learning more about her journey. She is selling copies of her book to raise money for Children's National Medical Center's Fetal Heart Program for ongoing research into congenital heart defects.

If you would like to support her efforts and purchase a copy, you can find it by searching for "Lessons in Waiting" on Amazon.com.

Carol Richardson's book Wins Silver Medal in Religion

Rev. Carol Richardson has received a Silver Medal in the Independent Publisher Book Awards in the category Religion (Eastern/Western) for her book "Truth and Illusion: The Politics of Spirituality and How One Person's Lie Is Another One's Truth." The book, as a paperback or on Kindle, is available on Amazon.com.

Taking Things For Granted

It has been almost five months since I answered the call to serve in Washington, D.C. Each Wednesday I volunteer in the food pantry, meeting and greeting our guests with items that have been donated to the church such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, wash towels, socks, tee shirts, etc. This ministry National City provides is more than just a few hours a week of time and resources; this is time of being neighbor, and most importantly, building relationships that will last forever. Each day on this journey I'm constantly being reminded of the gifts the Lord has blessed me with when I pick up a washcloth, toothbrush, and put on a pair of socks or gloves. I look in the mirror and reflect on the many days while serving in the food pantry handing out our food and hygiene bags. I realize I am the one blessed beyond measure in return with a smile, hug, thank you, and another friend on this journey.

Luke 6:38 reminds us: "Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full - pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back." You may have noticed the colorful box in the atrium for such donated items listed above. I hope you will take just a few moments in the next several weeks, look around at our homeless neighbors, and then be reminded to fill not just one box, but dozens of boxes of donations in the atrium - our neighbors' atrium.

I have received joy, laughter, hugs, friendships, and the greatest of these...things we take for granted.

- Tony Johnson
My Neighbor Ministries

In Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of **Rev. Harold "Hal" Dungan** upon his death April 14. Hal was an ordained Disciples of Christ pastor who had served as a missionary for the Division of Overseas Ministries and as a local church pastor in Kansas and elsewhere. A member of National City, he lived in the Capital Area and provided pulpit support for various congregations.

He is survived by his wife Mary Lu Dungan, his two children, and their families. He and his wife lived at 9906 Maple Leaf Drive, Montgomery Village, MD 20886-1134.

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Tim Schaefer** and his family upon the death of his mother Dorothy Barnes Schaefer on April 2 and his grandmother Pearl S. Barnes of Silver Spring, Maryland, on April 7.

Mrs. Schaefer, 81, of Hanover, Pennsylvania, passed away at Homewood at Plum Creek. She and her husband John David (Dave) Schaefer shared 60 years of marriage. She sang in the National Christian Choir and served as a core leader in the Community Bible Study for over 20 years at Calvary Baptist Church in Hanover. In addition to her husband, she is survived by her children, Mark Thomas and wife Barbara of Woodbine, Maryland; Timothy David of Darnestown, Maryland; Daniel Paul and wife Rebe of Mount Airy, Maryland; Joel Matthew and wife Sheri Lynn of Frederick Maryland; a brother; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Her funeral service was held April 5, at Calvary Bible Church in Hanover.

Mrs. Barnes, 104, had worked in the mapping department for National Geographic, as a lab technician for the National Bureau of Standards, and later executive secretary for the deputy director of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. She retired from the government after 25 years of service. Church activities were always a central part of her life and she sang in many church choirs. She was a member of the Silver Spring Women's Club and managed their thrift shop. She traveled extensively with family and friends. She is survived by her daughter, Judy Gnagey of Ellicott City, Maryland, and son, Eugene Barnes of Westminster, Maryland. Her seven grandsons include Tim Schaefer. Services will be at the Presbyterian Church of the Atonement in Silver Spring.

Former member **Tracey Martin** passed away Sunday, April 15, at Buffalo General Hospital in New York. He was 59. A chef with over 30 years culinary, hospitality, HR, and catering experience, he had served as Executive Sous Chef for Catering at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., was travel chef in the Clinton White House, and worked in private service for Mrs. Robert Kennedy and other members of the Kennedy Family.

He had co-owned the culinary staffing agency, Wolff, Martin & Associates, and owned and operated A Moveable Feast Catering Co. in Chautauqua County. During his career, he cooked for numerous heads of state, including Jacques Chirac, Yitzhak Shamir, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, President & Mrs. George H. W. Bush, Mrs. Ronald Reagan, Deng Xiaoping, Yitzhak Rabin, and Boris Yeltsin.

He is survived by his father Carl, three brothers, and their families.

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Lorraine Magnussen** and **Barbara Boward** on their death of their nephew David Pauli Williams, who died at the age of 32 in Nashville, Tennessee, on April 15 after a long illness.

He is survived by parents Richard and Deborah Pauli Williams; his brothers, Robert and James Williams; and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins. David loved working out and learning languages including Spanish, Italian, and Romanian.