



**National City**  
Christian Church

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January 10, 2023

Dear National City Church Family,

This is an exciting time in the life of National City Christian Church, the welcoming space for Disciples of Christ in our nation's capital and a place of prayer for all people. As this faithful community of believers turns another page in its long and storied history, the leadership is proud to introduce Rev. Stephanie Kendell as its next Senior Minister and the first, permanent female Senior Minister in our neatly 100-year-history.

Pastor Stephanie has shared previously how this congregation and its national friends have long held special significance in her own faith development, spiritual practice, and Christian witness. We have chosen a servant leader, prophetic preacher, and a compassionate pastor to prayerfully guide us into this next, bold chapter of our lives together. She is excited to begin this ministry and to get to know all our church community, and by extension, all Disciples who claim a spiritual home at 5 Thomas Circle in Washington, D.C.

Our leadership along with Pastor Stephanie have been prayerful about what this time of transition would look like for our community. Pastor Stephanie wanted to make sure that the time National City spent with Pastor Amy was given the honor, love, and respect that it so rightly deserves, which we did so beautifully this past Sunday. However, what we did not plan in this transition, is a space for a deep communal breath so that we care for each other well as we move through this space. Transitions are spaces of hope, grief, love, joy, and anticipation (a little bit like Advent as Kevin Biggins pointed out) and the space to find rest and calm in between the big events of our shared lives. This is a practice that Jesus models and a practice that we as a community hope to emulate.

So, with love for what was, gratitude for what is, and hope for what is to come we invite you into an intentional time of prayer for our community. This time is meant to help us individually and collectively open our hearts, minds, and spirits for what God is doing within us and among us, and to honor the time of prayerful preparation that is needed for both our Senior Minister and this congregation to take a collective breath of the Spirit's refreshing power and start our new ministry together with excitement, commitment, and joy.

With the help of God, National City Christian Church Foundation, and our incredible congregation, Pastor Stephanie has already begun her ministry with us getting to know our neighborhood and the District of Columbia, and being intentional with her time, to get to know the National City

community. If you have not had the opportunity to meet Pastor Stephanie, two Zoom fellowship hours are being planned for 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 19 and Noon on Friday, January 27. During these weeks, National City's lay leadership will also be celebrating the *Week of Laity* designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from January 15 – 21, closing in spiritual retreat at the church on Saturday, January 28, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At the conclusion of these weeks of preparation, we will welcome Pastor Stephanie to the pulpit for her first sermon on Sunday, January 29 at 10 a.m.

National City is blessed with a talented pastoral and worship staff in the persons of Rev. Steven Baines, Gerald Lee Ricks, Kevin J. Biggins, Jr., and the Chancel Choir. They will lead us in worship and preparation on Sundays, January 15 and 22. We will then honor and celebrate the gifts of Pastor Stephanie Kendell on Sunday, January 29, as she leads in worship and brings God's message of welcome, justice, and unconditional love with her series, "Won't You Be My Neighbor." We hope you will mark this date now on your calendars and plan to join with us in fellowship and worship!

With hopes and God's assurance of all that is to come through Christ,



Karla Williams  
Moderator



Rev Steven C. Baines  
Executive Minister