



North Decatur Presbyterian Church is called by God to be a community of faith and worship, dedicated to Christian education and nurture so that we may go into the world to serve, work for peace and justice and share God's love with all people.

611 Medlock Road, Decatur, GA 30033
www.ndpc.org

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

December 3, 2023

11:00 AM

* *We rise in body or spirit*

PREPARATION & ADORATION

As we gather for worship, we do so as a whole community in song. Singing brings us together—makes us “one body”—breathing and moving and vibrating together. Feel free to stand up or sit down, listen with your eyes closed or sing at the top of your lungs.

GATHERING MUSIC

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
The Wexford Carol

arr. Michael D. Costello
arr. Dorothea Baker

*ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY

-Tim Merritt & Ellen Gadberry, liturgists

Knock, knock!

Who's there?

Matthew!

Matthew who?

Matthew, the writer of the first gospel.

Settle in, my family, I've got a story to tell you. It's about how God came to be with us in Jesus Christ. It's a long story—hundreds of years long!

It begins with Abraham and Sarah, the very first members of our family to be called to a special life with God. In *every single generation afterward*, God was preparing for the coming of Jesus. Every ordinary act of human faithfulness—even every boneheaded act by our ancestors—even the pain and loss of Exile. It was part of God's marvelous plan.

Do you mean that God is alive in the day-in-day-out lives of regular people?

You're getting it! Take Mary and Joseph—Joseph doubted he could handle being Jesus' father. God appeared in his dreams to show him this was the right path.

God is always showing us signs?

You're getting it! Even the heavens declare the good news of God's love—that's what the magi knew when they saw the star.

God is with us! Emmanuel!

* OPENING SONG

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Glory to God #82

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECONCILIATION

MEDITATION

Jan Cribbs, liturgist

Now as at all times I can see in the mind's eye,
In their stiff, painted clothes, the pale unsatisfied ones
Appear and disappear in the blue depths of the sky
With all their ancient faces like rain-beaten stones,
And all their helms of silver hovering side by side,
And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more,
Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied,
The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor.

-The Magi, by William Butler Yeats

SILENCE

The magi in the poem seem to return, endlessly, to the stable to make sense of what happens there. They are "unsatisfied." What do you think they are looking for? What are you looking for?

*ASSURANCE OF GRACE

In this place and among your people gathered
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Into this broken world we call planet earth
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Into the busy place that we call home
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Into this fragile group of your people
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Into cold hearts and dulled minds
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Where there is no peace
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Where people shout in the wilderness
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
Where people walk in darkness
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
O Come Lord Jesus and help us find room for you. Amen.

*GRATEFUL RESPONSE

While We Are Waiting, Come

Glory to God #92

*PASSING THE PEACE

*Share a sign of peace by learning "Peace be with you" in American Sign Language.
Children are invited to come forward and find a rug or pillow and sit by the baptismal font.*

PROCLAMATION

WORD IN WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN

*Children (Pre-K – 3rd grade) are invited to go to Worship & Wonder in the 2nd floor Education Hall.
Parents/guardians can meet kids there right after worship.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Matthew 1 & 2

SERMON *Christmas According to Matthew* David Lewicki

DEDICATION

ANTHEM *Glow* Eric Whitacre
NDPC Community Choir
Emily Halbert, guest conductor

DEDICATION

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND CALL FOR OFFERING

All gifts made to Change for Change in the month of December will support the Pastors' Discretionary Fund, which supports church and community members with immediate financial needs. Text 'NDPC C4C' \$20 (or any amount) to 73526 (or leave an offering in the plate on your way out today).

COMMUNION

Everyone who seeks to know God is welcome to receive Communion.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

GREAT THANKSGIVING & PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our [Divine Parent] in heaven, holy is your name, your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever.

(sung) **Amen, amen, amen.**
Hosanna in the highest (x3).

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

MUSIC FOR COMMUNION *Divinum Mysterium*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God who is with us in our deepest lament, we thank you for this holy communion that returns us to love again and again-- to you and to one another. Let us not waste this heartache. Amen.

* CLOSING SONG *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* Glory to God #107

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Good King Wenceslas* arr. Larry Shackley

NOTES ON WORSHIP TODAY:

Image of the Day: *Star of Bethlehem Quilt*, 1835, fiber arts, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Today's flowers are from the Worship Committee.

Music & Lyrics are printed/streamed under ONE LICENSE #A-719269 and CCLI #21115205 & 21115212; CCS PERFORMmusic & WORSHIPcast License #14957

Livestream and video are produced by NDPC volunteers. If you would like to help with our weekly audio and video production, come up to the balcony and introduce yourself to the team.

WELCOME, VISITORS!

We're happy that you've joined us! Please introduce yourself to those around you as you are comfortable. You may share your email address with us by using the QR code on this bulletin—we will send you our weekly e-newsletter. You can learn more about NDPC's ministries and social justice work at **www.ndpc.org**. We come from different backgrounds, traditions, and cultures to worship. Please use language and pronouns for God and for yourself that are authentic to you. After worship, the pastors would love to meet you.



Welcome, Visitors!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Children are always welcome in worship at NDPC. There are a variety of quiet activities for children in the Children's Corner in the narthex that kids can take to their seats during worship. We offer nursery care for babies on Sundays from 9:45 – 11:15AM.

Magnifying glasses and large print hymnals are available in the lobby. **Hearing assist devices** are also available. Ask an usher and they will gladly help.

If you would like to donate flowers, volunteer to serve as an usher or liturgist, or share comments about worship, email worship@ndpc.org.

Videos of worship services are available at ndpc.org. Subscribe to our **sermon podcast** through any major podcasting service.

CONTACT NDPC: Office Phone: 404-636-1429; Office Email: office@ndpc.org

Revs. David Lewicki, Mary Anona Stoops, and Erin Reed Cooper are available to meet to support your spiritual, mental, and physical health. Pastoral care is confidential and can be held in-person or virtually. Email david@ndpc.org, maryanona@ndpc.org, and erin@ndpc.org.

NDPC STAFF

Rev. David Lewicki, *Pastor*

Rev. Mary Anona Stoops, *Pastor*

Rev. Dr. Erin Reed Cooper, *Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries*

Huu Mai, *Music Director*

Mahsheed Khawary, *Office Administrator*

Javier Sanchez, *Custodian*

Victoria Robinson, *Ministry Fellow*

Emily Halbert, *Graduate Music Assistant*

Didier Monga wa Shakapanga, *Ministry Fellow*