



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

February 25th, 2024

11:00 AM

* We stand in body or spirit

PREPARATION & ADORATION

The installation on the chancel – masses of stuff that literally obscure the communion table – makes visible the question we'll consider together in the season of Lent: What is blocking the way to what truly feeds us? Members of the congregation answered a call for contributions to the project – televisions, cell phones, clocks and other symbols of our day-to-day lives. These and other found objects are wired and piled together to create a tangled and chaotic collection of "too-muchness." Can we ever hope to get rid of the stuff to see clearly what matters? Thank you to the Many Hands visual arts team who engineered and constructed this surprising and thought-provoking installation.

*GATHERING SONGS

*Draw the Circle Wide
O God, You Search Me*

Mark Miller
Glory to God #29

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Carter Broome, liturgist

Those who have too much long for simplicity.
Those who have too little long for abundance.
This is a place for those who have too much and too little.

**Only those who ache for meaning will pursue it.
Only those who yearn for a deeper life will seek it.
This is a place for those who ache and yearn for something more.**

We come today with our grief about our too-muchness and our not-enoughness,
We bring our unsatisfied longings, our heart-felt yearnings,
and let the God of life satisfy our souls.

* OPENING SONG

The Glory of These Forty Days

Glory to God #165

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Visitors are invited to leave your name and contact information by signing the Welcome Pad
or by using the QR code on back of the bulletin.*

TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE WHOLE40 EXPERIENCE

CELEBRATION OF REMOVING AN IMPEDIMENT TO FAITH

MEDITATION

The children are eating lunch at home on a summer weekday when a man comes to the door and asks their mother if she has anything that needs fixing or carrying or any yardwork he can do. They chew their food a little dreamily as, with her back straight and her voice carefully polite, she says No, thank you, I'm sorry, and the man goes away. Who was that, Mama? they say. Oh, no one, she says.

They are sitting down to dinner but they have to wait because the doorbell rings and a thin young boy begins to tell their father about a Sales Program he's completing for a scholarship to be Supervisor, and he holds up a filthy tattered little booklet and lifts also his desperate guile and heavily guarded hope, and the children's father says, No thank you, sorry but I can't help you out this time, and the boy goes away. The children start to eat and don't ask anything, because the boy was just a boy, but their father acts irritated and hasty when he sits back down.

Once a glassy-eyed heavy girl who almost seems asleep as she stands outside their door offers for sale some little handtowels stitched by the blind people at the Lighthouse for the Blind and the children are in the folds of their mother's full skirt listening to the girl's small voice and their mother says, Well, I bought some the last time.

She buys the children school supplies and food, she pays the two boys for mowing the yard together and weeding her flower bed. She gets a new sewing machine for her birthday from the children's father, and she buys fabric and thread and patterns and makes dresses for the girls, to save money. She tells the children each to put a dime or quarter into the collection plate at Church, and once a month she puts in a little sealed white envelope, and the ushers move slowly along the ends of the pews weaving the baskets through the congregation, and the organist plays a long piece of music.

Whisk brooms, magazine subscriptions, anything you need hauled away, little league raffle tickets, cookies, chocolate candy, can I do any yard work again and again, hairbrushes, Christmas cards, do you need help with your ironing one time, and more, came calling at the front door while the children were sometimes eating, sometimes playing. Their faces would soften with a kind of comfort in the authority of mother or father, with a kind of wonder at the needy callers.

Their father left for work every day early, and came home for dinner, and almost always went again on Saturday; in his car. Their mother opened a savings account for each child and into each put the first five dollars. The children felt proud to see their names in the passbooks, and wanted to know when they could take the money out. But they were told they had to save their money not spend it. They felt a kind of pleasure in these mysteries, to know that there were things you would understand later when you grew up and had your own house and while your children were eating their dinner and making too much noise the way you did, you knew it was true, the doorbell would ring, the familiar surprise of it, who would it be, and someone would be holding a little worn book or a bundle of dishtowels or once an old man, but perhaps he only looked old, with his beard, came with bunches of carnations, white, red, and pink, and he too was turned away.

Reginald Gibbons, "Money" from *Saints* (New York: Persea Books, 1986).

SILENCE

Be in conversation with God--speaking and listening--about your own relationship to money and things.

*ASSURANCE OF GRACE

God of daily graces,

To you, I will turn for nourishment along the way.

I will remember the simple pleasures

of being alive,

of being together,

of being placed among the creations of your hands.

There is no delight that money can buy. All delight comes from you. Amen.

*GRATEFUL RESPONSE

Seek Ye First

Glory to God #175

* 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 READINGS

Luke 12:13-21

13 Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." 14 But [Jesus] said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15 And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." 16 Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17 And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' 18 Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

SERMON

Our Money and Our Stuff

Rev. David Lewicki

DEDICATION

ANTHEM

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel
NDPC Community Choir

arr. Moses Hogan

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Victoria Robinson

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND CALL FOR OFFERING

*All gifts made to Change for Change in the month of February will support NDPC's mission partners in Guatemala, CEDEPCA. The Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA) is an educational institution that contributes to the transformation of lives and contexts by providing training and accompaniment, and by offering spaces for reflection to women and men from diverse Christian traditions, communities and contexts. Learn more at www.cedepca.org. **Text 'NDPC C4C' \$20 (or any amount) to 73256 (or leave an offering in the plate on your way out today).***

* CLOSING SONG

It Is Well with My Soul

Glory to God #840

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Elegy

Edvard Grieg

NOTES ON WORSHIP TODAY:

Images of the Day: The image of “Too Much Stuff” is made out of too much stuff. The second image is a Banksy mural, created in 2006. *Sale Ends Today* depicts four kneeling women, who pray, collapse or throw up their hands in attitudes of lament as at the deposition of Christ from the cross. Rather than the messiah, however, the object of the women’s distress is a large sign reading ‘SALE ENDS TODAY.’

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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. The nursery, located off the hallway just outside the sanctuary door, is open this morning during worship for kids 0-3. Kids can move around a bit in the narthex, where you can still listen to worship with your child, or there are child-friendly quiet activities that can be taken to your seat.

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, *Ministry Fellow*