



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 15, 2024

11:00 AM

*An * means we rise together in body or spirit; **bold text** words are spoken in unison.*

PREPARATION & ADORATION

As we prepare for worship, we do so in song. Music makes us "one body"—breathing, moving, and vibrating together. Feel free to stand up or stay seated, listen with your eyes closed, or sing along.

GATHERING MUSIC

Mary, Did You Know?

M. Lowry & B. Greene

NDPC Youth Band

arr. R. Emerson

Tucker Schoeneberg, Lenore Cochran, Martin Cochran, Ezra Morrison, Kieva Morrison, Dominic Eby,
Alice Hickcox (guest), Marielle Mai (guest)

CHIMES

SILENT PRAYER

We enter God's presence in silence.

OPENING SONG

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Glory to God #291

Through the four Sundays of Advent, we build a manger. This container, intended to feed animals and made from found objects, becomes a container for more precious things: the dreams of ancient prophets, the longing of the human spirit, "the hopes and fears of all the years."

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

Virginia Legener, liturgist

Holy One,
The season of dreams is upon us.

**Dreams of possibilities,
dreams for what might be,
dreams for all the world.**

As we light this candle,
may live in the direction of your dream for us.

(sung refrain, O Come, O Come Emmanuel)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors are invited to leave your name and contact information by signing the Welcome Pad.

MEDITATION

O Holy Spirit of Fire,
life in the life of all life,
holy are you,
enlivening all things.
Holy are you,
a healing balm
to the broken.
Holy are you,
washing
blistered wounds.
O Holy Breath,
O Fire of Life,
O Sweetness in my breast
infusing my heart
with the fine scent of truth.
O Pure Fountain
through which we know
God unites strangers
and gathers the lost.
O Heart's Shield, guarding life
and hope, joining the many members
into one body;
Belt of Truth,

wrap them in beauty.
Protect those ensnared
by the enemy,
and free the worthy
from their fetters.
O Great Way that runs through all,
from the heights,
across the earth,
and in the depths,
you encompass all and unify all.
From you the clouds stream
and the ether rises;
from your stones precious water pours,
springs well and birth waterways,
and the earth sweats green with life.
And eternally do you bring forth knowledge
by the breath of wisdom.
All praise to you,
you who are the song of praise
and the joy of life,
you who are hope and the greatest treasure,
bestowing the gift of Light.

- Holy Spirit of Fire, by Hildegard of Bingen (12th century).

SILENCE

*ASSURANCE OF GRACE

by Bruce Prewer

At the end of a long journey
for a called people seeking a destiny;
at the end of an enforced trek
to a highland town with no room for the poor,
at the end of the hard travail
for a teenage woman sheltering in a shed:
came the unspeakable Gift;
the wondrous self-emptying, the embodied word, the great folly of God;
a baby crying in the night
who frightened jeweled kings and shook the gates of hell.

*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; or, if you choose,
shake hands or offer a warm embrace to the Beloveds of God who are seated near you.
Children are invited to come forward to sit in front, with or without their adult.*

PROCLAMATION

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O Little Town of Bethlehem

SCRIPTURE

Joel 2:12-13, 28-29

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Sugarplums and Justice

by Margaret Waltemath Lewicki &
Erin Reed Cooper

Narrators – William Waltemath Lewicki, Rowan Dunn

God (star) – Abby Bowen

Mimi - Genia Duchon

Grandpa - Kip Duchon

Dreamer - Emma Grace Reece

Dreamer - Theo Ward

Dreamer - Gus Reid

Dreamer - Libby Schoeneberg

Dreamer - Milan Hill

Young Child - Theo Watson

DEDICATION

ANTHEM

"O Night" from Come and Behold Him

N. Howe

NDPC Children's Choir

Derrick Ng, guest conductor

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Tucker Schoeneberg, Youth Elder

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.

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND CALL FOR OFFERING

*Change-for-Change contributions in December support the Pastors' Discretionary Fund. Part of the origin of this fund at NDPC in the 1970s was to help women access reproductive healthcare when it was not widely available. In the current moment, this function of the fund has become important again. If you know of someone who is prevented from getting access to reproductive care under Georgia law, please reach out to the pastors for help. In addition, we will also consider requests to help undocumented immigrants secure safety for themselves and their families. Donations to the PDF are also used for church and community members experiencing financial emergencies. **Text 'NDPC C4C' \$20 (or any amount) to 73256 (or leave an offering in the plate on your way out today).***

* CLOSING SONG

Light Dawns on a Weary World

Glory to God #79

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

NOTES ON WORSHIP TODAY:

Images of the Day: Pablo Sanaguano (Ecuadorian, 1964–), *Cristo nace cada día* (Christ Is Born Every Day), 1994. Acrylic on particle board, 41 × 50 cm. Meditation: Judith Tutin (Irish, 1979–), *Nativity*, 2011. Oil on canvas, 60 × 40 cm. Private collection of Fr. Jim Doyle, Wexford, Ireland.

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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! It takes courage to show up at a new church. Please introduce yourself to those around you as you are comfortable. If you share your email address in the red Welcome Pads, we will send you the weekly NDPC e-newsletter. You can learn more about NDPC's programs at **www.ndpc.org**. We come from many different backgrounds, traditions, and cultures to worship. Feel free to use language and pronouns for God and for yourself that are authentic to you. After worship, the pastors would love to meet you in person.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Children are welcome in worship at NDPC. The nursery, located off the hallway just outside the sanctuary door, is open for kids 0-3. Kids are free to move around in the narthex, where you can listen to worship with your child, and there are child-friendly quiet activities in the Children's Corner that can be taken back to your seat. The presence of children in worship is a gift, never a disruption.

Would a large print hymnal, magnifying glass, or hearing assist device help you worship? Ask an usher and they will gladly assist you. Let us know how we can make worship accessible for you.

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

Revs. David Lewicki, Mary Anona Stoops, and Erin Reed Cooper are available to meet for pastoral care. Pastoral care is confidential and can be held in-person or virtually. Email david@ndpc.org, maryanona@ndpc.org, or 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*
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