



We welcome all.

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

January 4, 2026, Epiphany

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

About the Artwork: Crafted by the Many Hands Liturgical Arts Group, our Advent/Christmas paraments honor the sacred presence of fire, air, water, and earth in the stories of our faith. Each element on the communion tablecloth is expressed within a diamond shape that echoes the visual architecture of the chancel, creating a dialogue between the art and the worship space. The pulpit cloth gathers the colors and textures of the four elements into a star, extending the visual language of the diamonds and evoking the light we await in this season. Pieced and sewn by members and friends of NDPC, the work reflects the diversity and unity of our community in and beyond the church, offering a visual reminder of God's creative energy moving through all creation.

PRELUDE

CHIMES & SILENCE

We enter God's presence in silence.

* OPENING SONG

What Star is This with Beams So Bright?

Glory to God #152

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

What are you looking for?

SCRIPTURE

A Meditation on John 1:35-51

READINGS

Swerving east, from rich industrial shadows
And traffic all night north; swerving through fields
Too thin and thistled to be called meadows,
And now and then a harsh-named halt, that shields
Workmen at dawn; swerving to solitude
Of skies and scarecrows, haystacks, hares and pheasants,
And the widening river's slow presence,
The piled gold clouds, the shining gull-marked mud,

Gathers to the surprise of a large town:
Here domes and statues, spires and cranes cluster
Beside grain-scattered streets, barge-crowded water,
And residents from raw estates, brought down
The dead straight miles by stealing flat-faced trolleys,

Push through plate-glass swing doors to their desires—
Cheap suits, red kitchen-ware, sharp shoes, iced lollies,
Electric mixers, toasters, washers, driers—

A cut-price crowd, urban yet simple, dwelling
Where only salesmen and relations come
Within a terminant and fishy-smelling
Pastoral of ships up streets, the slave museum,
Tattoo-shops, consulates, grim head-scarfed wives;
And out beyond its mortgaged half-build edges
Fast-shadowed wheat-fields, running high as hedges,
Isolate villages where removed lives

Loneliness clarifies. Here silence stands
Like heat. Here leaves unnoticed thicken,
Hidden weeds flower, neglected waters quicken,
Luminously-peopled air ascends;
And past the poppies bluish neutral distance
Ends the land suddenly beyond a beach
Of shapes and shingles. Here is unfettered existence:
Facing the sun, untalkative, out of reach.

-“Here,” by Philip Larkin from *Collected Poems* (2004).

I was passionate,
filled with longing,
I searched
far and wide.

But the day
that the Truthful One
found me,
I was at home.

-by Lal Ded (Kashmir, 14th century), translated by Jane Hirshfield

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Come and see...

It's come to this: I'm sitting under a tree,
beside a river
on a sunny morning.
It's an insignificant event
and won't go down in history.
It's not battles and pacts,
whose motives are scrutinized,
or noteworthy tyrannicides.

And yet I'm sitting by this river, that's a fact.
And since I'm here,
I must have come from somewhere,
and before that
I must have turned up in many other places,
exactly like the conquerors of nations
before setting sail.

Even a passing moment has its fertile past,
its Friday before Saturday,
its May before June.
Its horizons are no less real
than those a marshal's fieldglasses might
scan.

This tree is a poplar that's been rooted here
for years.
The river is the Raba; it didn't spring up
yesterday.
The path leading through the bushes
wasn't beaten last week.
The wind had to blow the clouds here
before it could blow them away.

And though nothing much is going on
nearby,
the world's no poorer in details for that,
it's just as grounded, just as definite
as when migrating races held it captive.

Conspiracies aren't the only things shrouded
in silence.

Retinues of reasons don't trail coronations
alone.

Anniversaries of revolutions may roll around,
but so do oval pebbles encircling the bay.

The tapestry of circumstance is intricate and
dense.

-“No Title Required,” by Wislawa Szymborska from *View with a Grain of Sand*,
translation by Stanislaw Baranczak and Clare Cavanagh (1995).

Of all that God has shown me
I can speak just the smallest word,
Not more than a honey bee
Takes on his foot
From an overspilling jar.

-Mechtild of Magdeburg (Germany, 13th century), translated by Jane Hirshfield.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Follow me

Cloud-puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows | flaunt forth, then chevy on an air-
Built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-gangs | they throng; they glitter in marches.
Down roughcast, down dazzling whitewash, | wherever an elm arches,
Shivelights and shadowtackle in long | lashes lace, lance, and pair.
Delightfully the bright wind boisterous | ropes, wrestles, beats earth bare
Of yestertempest's creases; | in pool and rut peel parches
Squandering ooze to squeezed | dough, crust, dust; stanches, starches
Squadroned masks and manmarks | treadmire toil there
Footfretted in it. Million-fuelèd, | nature's bonfire burns on.
But quench her bonniest, dearest | to her, her clearest-selvèd spark
Man, how fast his firedint, | his mark on mind, is gone!
Both are in an unfathomable, all is in an enormous dark
Drowned. O pity and indig | nation! Manshape, that shone
Sheer off, disseveral, a star, | death blots black out; nor mark
 Is any of him at all so stark
But vastness blurs and time | beats level. Enough! the Resurrection,
A heart's-clarion! Away grief's gasping, | joyless days, dejection.
 Across my foundering deck shone
A beacon, an eternal beam. | Flesh fade, and mortal trash
Fall to the residuary worm; | world's wildfire, leave but ash:
 In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
I am all at once what Christ is, | since he was what I am, and
This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, | patch, matchwood, immortal diamond,
 Is immortal diamond.

Ants stitching in the grass.
The grass sewn into the ground.
The pattern of a wave being needled by a
 twig.
So it happens that I am and look.
Above me a white butterfly is fluttering
 through the air
 on wings that are its alone
and a shadow skims through my hands
that is none other, no one else's, but its own.
When I see such things I'm no longer sure
 that what's important
 is more important than what's not.

-“That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection,”
by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), from *Poems and Prose*.

Because there is no me
And because I feel
How much there is no me

-“A Double Rapture,” by Anna Swir (1909-1984) from *Talking to My Body*,
translated by Czeslaw Milosz and Leonard Nathan

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND CALL FOR OFFERING

The Change-for-Change offering in January supports Presbyterians for a Better Georgia (www.p4bg.org). PBG engages in public policy advocacy at the Georgia statehouse to promote legislation that will end homelessness, increase affordable housing, and expand access to healthcare for all Georgians.

To give by text, text ‘NDPC C4C’ \$20 (or any amount) to 73256. You may also **use the QR Code**. Scan the code, enter the amount of your gift, and in the dropdown menu called “Fund,” find “Change for Change.” **To give cash**, leave an offering in the plate on your way out today. Thank you for supporting the healing of the world in the name of God.



COMMUNION

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

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

CONFESSiON & ASSURANCE

PASSING THE PEACE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

(use these or other words that are close to your heart)

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.

SHARING THE BREAD & CUP

The ushers will invite you to come forward by row, beginning in the front. If you prefer to remain in your seat, an elder can bring Communion to you. To make this meal accessible to all, the bread is gluten-free and cup is grape juice. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead of Communion, come forward to a pastor, placing your hands over your heart.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Loving God, thank you for feeding us with your Word in poetry and music and by the spiritual food of your presence. May we follow you and love one another. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

Go, Tell it On the Mountain

Glory to God #136

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

NOTES ON WORSHIP TODAY:

Today's Guest Musician is Michael Collier.

Today's Images in Worship: from flickr.com (all creative commons)

Today's flowers are provided by 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 you've joined us! It takes courage to show up at a new church. Introduce yourself to those around you as you feel comfortable. If you share your email address in the red Welcome Pad, we will send you the weekly NDPC e-newsletter. Learn more about NDPC at www.ndpc.org. We come from different backgrounds, traditions, and cultures to worship, so please 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. Ready to join NDPC? Email engagement@ndpc.org.

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. For PreK – 2nd grade, Worship & Wonder is our child-centered worship; kids are led by adult volunteers to the Worship & Wonder and parents should pick them up there after worship. Kids who want to remain with their adult can 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 enjoyed there or 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 volunteer to serve as an usher or liturgist, donate flowers, 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 and Mary Anona Stoops are available to meet for pastoral care. Pastoral care is confidential and can be held in-person or virtually. Email david@ndpc.org or maryanona@ndpc.org.

NDPC STAFF

Rev. David Lewicki, *Pastor*

Rev. Mary Anona Stoops, *Pastor*

Kristin Hicks, *Children, Youth, & Family Ministry*

Huu Mai, *Music Director*

Mahsheed Khawary, *Office Administrator*

Javier Sanchez, *Custodian*

Jerel Jefferson, *Music Fellow*

Carolyn Mielke, *Music Fellow*

Min-Jae Cho, *Ministry Fellow*

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