

WELCOME

Church In Bethesda is a multi-denominational, multicultural, open & inclusive community, connecting our city through spirituality, education, and service.

We seek to serve people of all races, genders, ages, cultures, orientations, family configurations, physical and mental conditions, and all other distinctions that make up the beautiful tapestry of God's creation.

Words

In some traditional prayers, hymns, and scripture passages, God is often portrayed as gender-specific. As we pray, sing, and learn together, you are invited to substitute terms that reflect your understanding of the full inclusiveness of God.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Natalie, Nadim, and Zade Mediouni

Today, we light the third Advent candle as a sign of joy.

SINGING

Noel

Verse 1

The first Noel
The angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds
In fields as they lay
In fields where they lay
keeping their sheep
On a cold winters night
that was so deep

Chorus

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

Verse 2

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night

Chorus

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

Verse 3

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far
To seek for a king was their intent
And to follow the star wherever it went

Chorus

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

Verse 3

This star drew nigh to the northwest
O'er Bethlehem it took it rest
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay

SINGING

Hail Gladdening Light

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Verse 1

Hail Gladdening Light, Son so bright
Jesus Christ, the end of night
Alleluia
Hail Gladdening Light, eternal, bright
In eventime, around us shine
Alleluia

Chorus

We see your glory, loving, divine
You bring the seasons, all in your time
No one more worthy of songs to be sung
To the Giver Of Life
all glory is Thine

Verse 2

Hail Gladdening Light, joyous Light
Star in the East forever shine
Alleluia
Hail Gladdening Light, eternal, bright
In eventime, around us shine
Alleluia

Chorus

We see your glory, loving, divine
You bring the seasons, all in your time
No one more worthy of songs to be sung
To the Giver Of Life
all glory is Thine

Bridge

Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, rejoice

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Natalie Mediouni

We're glad you're here! Welcome back if you've been here before, and a very special welcome if you're here for the first time.

CiB Kids

Our program for kids, K through 5th grade happens right now, downstairs. During The Passing Of The Peace, you may take your children there if they would like to join the other kids.

The Passing Of The Peace

This is a time for us to greet one another in the spirit of peace.

A SONG OF CENTERING

Reckless Love

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Verse 1

Before I spoke a word
You were singing over me
You have been so, so good to me
Before I took a breath
You breathed Your life in me
You have been so, so kind to me

Chorus

O the overwhelming never-ending
Reckless love of God
O it chases me down
Fights 'til I'm found
Leaves the ninety-nine

I couldn't earn it I don't deserve it

Still You give Yourself away
O the overwhelming never-ending
Reckless love of God

Verse 2

When I was Your foe
Still Your love fought for me
You have been so, so good to me
When I felt no worth
You paid it all for me
You have been so, so kind to me

Bridge

There's no shadow You won't light up
Mountain You won't climb up
Coming after me
There's no wall You won't kick down
Lie You won't tear down
Coming after me

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Michael Orevba

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever.

TODAY'S SERMON

Ryan Phipps

"I looked and saw a door open in heaven. And I heard a voice that sounded like a trumpet, saying, "Come up higher and I will show you what comes next."

—*The Revelation Of John Of Patmos 4:1*

"Beyond our differences there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about."

—*Rumi*

A TIME OF REFLECTION

Lisa Dale

Communion

We take time each Sunday to remember the love of God for us symbolized by bread and wine.

Candles

You are invited to light a candle representing a loved one, a sign of peace, a prayer, or a concern.

Giving

We donate financially as gestures of gratitude and worship. You are invited to place your offerings in the box at the back of the room. You may also give digitally by using the QR code on the offering box.

Table Time

This is a time for us to engage with an object lesson to help us further contemplate our lesson from today.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jan Fox

This is a time for us to share our celebrations and concerns with the community. All are welcome to share.

NEWS

Mike Lee

We have plenty for you to be involved with and to keep you engaged throughout the week.

Christmas Eve, Eve, Eve

This Friday, December 22, 2023

Join us at 7pm on December 22, 2023. Snacks and Jazz in the chapel, with plenty of Christmas music to follow in the Sanctuary. Please bring your favorite snack, appetizer, or dessert to share.

Staff Gifts

This Friday, December 22, 2023

Every year, we do a special offering for gifts for our church staff.

1. For online giving, write "Staff Gift" in the "FOR" field.
2. You may write: "Staff Gift" on an offering envelope and put it in the offering box at the back of the sanctuary.
3. If you mail in a check, please write "Staff Gift" on the check memo line.

All staff gift donations will be listed in your year-end tax information.

CLOSING SONG

I Have A Light

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I have a light
And it always shines
It shines in the day
And it shines in the night

When the dark days come
And the sun isn't bright
I will be shining
Because I have a light

BENEDICTION

Jacki Kwan

a few departing words of blessing as we head into the coming week

AFTER WORSHIP

May we pray with you?

If you have a need, a fear, a hurt, or a triumph to share with God, we'd love to pray with you at the front of the sanctuary after the worship service concludes.



DECEMBER 17, 2023

WELCOME



SNAP HERE TO
SAVE TREES