



Sunday December 7th Annual Congregational Meeting in sanctuary immediately after worship service. All are welcome to attend. Members voting on 2026 budget.

Weekly Inspiration

The Thoughts That Are Always On Repeat: An Advent Sermon

December 9, 2016 by [Nadia Bolz Weber](#)

On Wednesday night this week about 25 of us gathered at one of those public pianos on 16th street mall and sang Vespers together. It was chilly and peaceful, and we had some candles burning on the back of the piano. Then Meghan read the Gospel we just heard, and as soon as she said John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness wearing camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist saying repent for the kingdom of God has come near I swear to God at that exact moment an inebriated woman in stained and tattered clothes stumbled down the sidewalk near us shouting something indiscernible and I was like OMG is that him? It was like Joan the Baptist appeared on the 16th street mall a voice crying out in the wilderness and she wore a terrycloth bathrobe tied around her waist and ate whatever she could find in the garbage can outside the Popeye's Chicken place shouting repent! And I immediately thought: that is perfect. Our charming little wintery gathering to sing Vespers around a piano on the mall was interrupted by the screaming of a crazy person. It's perfect because I think we always have a John the Baptist reading the 2nd Sunday of Advent – which means that any quiet, cozy feeling you might be having around this time in the Advent season is always going to be interrupted by John the completely crazy Baptist yelling Repent! at you as little unchewed bits of crickets come flying out of his unshaven mouth. Happy Advent.

I used to hate that word, repent. Maybe you feel that way too, like when I hear a preacher shouting "repent" what I really hear is he or she saying is Stop being bad and start being good or else God's gonna be so mad at you that he'll send you to burn in hell. Repent or burn! Which feels like more of a threat than anything else. And that just never worked on me. Who wants their spiritual arm twisted until they cry Uncle.... it's like... religious bullying or something.

And I just can't imagine that it was religious bullying which brought all of Judea and Jerusalem to be baptized by John. I mean fear and threats can create change in behavior. No question about it. But fear and threats don't really change your thinking. Threats don't change your heart.

And that's what God is up to. Changing our hearts and minds. I mean, after all, the Greek word for repentance is Metanoia which means changing your mind. – Changing how you think about

something. We want to make repentance about changing our lifestyles and maybe sometimes that is what is called for. But I also just think God is after more than that. I mean changing things in our lives can of course be a holy thing, but repentance isn't just about cleaning up your act. Because what metanoia means is to snap out of it, to think new thoughts... Which on the surface might seem pretty minor – changing our thoughts. Big deal, right? But this week I realized just how amazing thinking new thoughts sounds to me. Because I honestly feel like I am a prisoner of about half a dozen neurological grooves that just funnel the same exact thoughts through my brain over and over year after year. Like I'm in bondage to a couple deeply worn grooves that funnel all the same thoughts about what's good and bad about my life and about the world and about other people too.

And hey, since we are in the holiday season we might just go ahead and admit that it's especially hard to think new thoughts when it comes to our families. Like, I know it's hard to imagine, but if our parents have actually changed as people – if they have grown and are not the same as who they were when they raised us– can we see that? Can we even allow for it? Same goes for our kids as they get older. I wonder if the quality of the relationship we are able to have with our children directly correlates to how quickly we can keep up with the ways they change – correlates to being able to think new thoughts about who they are. It's so easy to get stuck on seeing our kids – or our friends or our siblings or our boss – really anyone in our lives in only one way. I mean, even when the things we think about other people might be true. Maybe your boss really is kind of stupid. Fine. But that's not the only thing she is. Maybe your kid is a little selfish. Fine. But that's not the only thing they are.

And for some of us, the set neural grooves that produce the same thoughts over and over about ourselves are the most entrenched and the most pernicious. I mean think for a moment about that. What thoughts do you think about yourself to yourself the most often. And would anyone who loves you ever think those same things? Are those the thoughts a God who loves you would have about you?

I mean, as someone who believes that we are all simultaneously sinner & saint, who believes that none of us are only ever just one thing – that there is bad in the best people and good in the worst people, I'm not suggesting that thinking only positive affirmations about how wonderful we are would be accurate or even healthy –but I'm suggesting that some of us tend to only allow the negative aspects of who we are to enter into the equation of how we view ourselves.

And I get it – I mean, some of these thoughts about ourselves may have come from our childhood when messages about who we are were so sticky, and clung to us like name tags like, “Hello, I'm selfish” or “hello I'm not worth sticking around for” or “hello I am the center of my parents whole universe”

But what if repentance means being freed from thinking these same thoughts over and over and that includes the thoughts we have about ourselves. I know it can feel like changing our thinking is just one more thing we ^should be able to pull off and just haven't managed it yet.

But this week I started to think that maybe the call to repent – the call to change our thinking isn't a threat – or even a command – maybe the call to repent is an invitation. It's like God is saying to us, here, have some corrective lenses.

Maybe repentance means that God is offering us some brain spackle for those neural grooves.

I'd sign up for that. Because I find my mind exhausting.

Because when all I am left with are the same thoughts over and over, nothing ever gets to be new.

And we are told that Jesus Christ came to make all things new. Even us. Even our minds.

All I know is that I got sober almost 25 years ago but I only started getting healthy about 4 years into sobriety – which was when I was finally willing to re-think my old ideas about myself.

I don't know about you, but I could go for a thing like that again right about now.

John the Baptist says that Jesus has a winnowing fork in his hand, and he will separate the chaff from the wheat and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. Now, the fire and brimstone street corner preachers might threaten us to repent or burn.

But tonight, I'm saying let's accept the invitation to repent AND burn.

Because maybe there is both wheat and chaff within us all. And maybe we are seriously not the best judges of which is which. And God is offering us metanoia... to separate the good from the bad and burn away that which does not serve us.

Our brother Paul wrote in his letter to the church in Rome:

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed (not by the renewing of your lifestyle – not by the renewing of your workout – not by the renewing of your credit history – but) be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

Which is why my prayer for tonight is that we turn AND burn. I pray that all of us here tonight be given new thoughts.

I pray the God who makes all things new, help us let go of our old ideas. May God give us some divine spackle to fill in those worn neural grooves that produce thoughts that do not serve us and that do not serve God and that do not serve our neighbors. May God give us the strength to reach for those corrective lenses she's wiping on her shirt and handing to us so we can see with new minds. Minds that see God's glory amidst the chaos. Minds that perceive God's hand at work in even the most annoying people in our lives. Minds that move more toward curiosity than judgment. May God burn away the old. And make us new.

Repent and burn, people of God. Repent and burn. In God's blessed and holy name, Amen

Love, Rich



Sunday 12/07/25 " Peace — The Peace That Disrupts " 2nd Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 11:1–10 and Luke 1:26-38

"Peace is our gift to each other." ~ Elie Wiesel

"Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge; and through humane ways."

~ Dalai Lama

"The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us."

~ Black Elk

Metropolitan Community Church of the Quad Cities. A progressive Christian community
Where YOU and YOUR spiritual journey are always WELCOME
2930 W. Locust, Davenport IA 52804 - Phone: 563.324.8281 Pastor Rich 563.940.9630



Service at 11am on Sundays

Regular Office Hours: Monday 9-5; Wednesday Noon-5pm; Thursday 9-11

Pastor Rich available by appointment or stop by on Wednesdays from Noon – 2pm

Special Announcements



Fa la la la...it is that time of year where we invite you to join in the singing of carols prior to worship service. Grab a set of bells from the ushers, the words to the songs and meet us in the sanctuary by 10:50AM. "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas"



Sunday December 7th at 4pm Celebration of Life for Dave Ramsey

David F. Ramsey, 76, of Davenport Iowa passed away on November 23, 2025. A memorial service will be held on Sunday, December 7, 2025, at Metropolitan Community Church of the Quad Cities at 4 pm. Immediately following services all are invited to a luncheon at the church.



For your safety: During Worship Service, the outside doors will remain locked after 11:10am and will not reopen until after service is over. There can be no exceptions regardless of who is at the door. Please do not text the ushers and ask them to let you in.

If you are late, please join us on Facebook Live and plan to attend the following Sunday. Thank you for your cooperation.



Please recycle all paper, cans and plastics in the recycle bin in our kitchen.



Humility Homes and Services is in need of Hats, Gloves, Hand warmers, Winter Coats (especially bigger sizes). Men's clothes, all sizes. Socks, Boots etc. Also Backpacks, Duffle bags, luggage medium to large or X-Large.

Please deliver to: Humility Homes, 1016 W 5th Street, Davenport. They are willing to pick up items as well. Call 563-322-8065 with questions or for additional information.

You can also drop off at MCCQC 2930 W Locust St Davenport on Mondays 10am-4pm or Wednesdays Noon-4pm. We suggest that donations be made by 12/10 as the weather is starting to get colder. THANK YOU to all who have donated to and supported Our Homeless Community.



Check out the holiday resources and suggestions from One Home One Future

[Sustainable Holidays | One Home One Future](#)



Recurring Events (All are at MCCQC unless indicated otherwise)

Banned Book Club- every Wednesday at 6:30pm

Bible Study – every Friday at 10am

Board Meeting – 4th Sunday at 12:30pm-2:00pm

Community Meal – 3rd Saturday at 5-6pm (12/20 Casseroles)

Dining Out – 2nd Tuesday at 6pm (12/09 Soi 2 Thai 18252nd Ave Rock Island)

Game Night- 4th Saturday at 6pm in Social Hall. (12/27)

Let's Write & Create Studio – every Thursday from 6-8 pm (making ornaments on 12/04)

Recognition Sunday – 1st Sunday during service with potluck following

Sisters of Sobriety AA – every Saturday at 10am



Children's Story Time Every Sunday

Meshel RM and Mona Riteman are now rotating Sundays so that our children between the ages of 3 - 10 can experience this special time every week. Children are released after our opening hymn and will return to share communion. **Thank you, Mona and Meshel, for providing this ministry!**

YouTube video of “Women's leadership during HIV AIDS celebrated at MCC Church Conference in 2005”.

Please take the time to watch this video that was shared during the online MCC Denomination World AIDS Day: 30-minute Observance of Reflection and Hope. The 7:35 minute video takes place at a MCC General Conference in Calgary in 2005, and covers the crucial role played by women, especially lesbians, in helping People with AIDS, and especially gay men, is recognized with a long-sustained ovation.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=V_Llzoe0DuRaR_EE&v=gkE2PjT-sCw&feature=youtu.be

Scheduled Events



Thursday December 4th 6-8pm Christmas Ornament Class led by Angel Carr and Julie Johnson...part of the Arts Studio class held that night

If you have sheets of craft foam (any colors that you enjoy) or a hot glue gun, please bring. There will also be supplies available. These make fun gifts or add to your current ornament collection.



Saturday December 6th Red Ribbon Ball- “Leather & Lace: An Evening of Bold Elegance and Unexpected Harmony”

Join The Project for a night that celebrates the power of contrast—where strength meets softness, grit meets grace, and individuality is worn with pride. Leather & Lace is more than a theme—it’s a tribute to the beauty of what happens when bold identities and delicate details come together to create something unforgettable. Thank you to [ImpactLife](#) for sponsoring the Red Ribbon Ball! ImpactLife saves lives every day through their community services and now they’re supporting us in continuing our work to aid those living with HIV.

Want to join the party? Get your tickets at tpqc.org/rrb



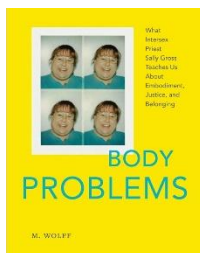
Saturday 12/13: Annual Holiday Cookie Walk 9am – Noon

Save the date on your calendars for the 7th Annual MCCQC Holiday Cookie Walk. We have some of the most talented cookie makers at our church...you will not want to miss this event! We provide containers and sell by the pound. We also take Venmo payments if you do not want to carry cash. **Don't forget to sign the cookie sheet, please!** Questions...see Meshel, Jolene or call the church at 563-324-8281



Sunday December 21st Annual Christmas Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange

Check your closets, cupboards, drawers, attics and basement for items you really want to get rid of. Wrap them and bring to church on the 21st. Items can be useful, but it is way more fun if the items have no real purpose, or they are funny and unusual. For those of you who do not keep unused items around for long, grab something at a local thrift store such as Goodwill or D.A.V. There is always the Dollar Tree. Just do not spend more than \$8. If you are able, bring an appetizer or sweet treat to share. There will be a Contest, too...stay tuned for details!



Monday January 12th @ 6pm Body Problems book study on Monday nights beginning 1/12/26 with the 1st session led by author M. Wolff at MCC QC Social Hall

The Atlas Collective is a great local queer bookstore where the book can be purchased. Stay tuned for more details.



SAVE THE DATE!! Saturday February 21st Annual Chili Potluck Cook-off and Drag show at CASI 1035 W Kimberly Rd Davenport

Potluck Chili, Raffle Items, Silent Auction and 50/50....followed by a family-friendly Drag Show featuring 4 performers. Cost: \$10 suggested donation/person 8 years of age and older. Watch for sign-up sheets for volunteers and raffle baskets as we get closer to the date. Questions?

Contact the church at 563-324-8281 or message the hosts on Facebook.

Doors open at 4pm

Chili and raffle baskets must be delivered by 4:15pm

Potluck/activities begin at 5pm.

Beverages available for purchase. Cash bar.



PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please add/update prayer requests via email: richdhendricks@msn.com or call 563-324-8281

Greg Kennedy health concerns

Prayers for Dave Hendershot with cancer

Prayers for trans service members and trans community

Prayers for Zash

Prayers of comfort for Angel Pawlik facing the loss of her mother, Peggy Cole, who is in hospice.

Osumo Kendgi asks for prayers for her sister Aggy

Amanda prays for Destiny and Beth

Marsha VZ asks prayers for her friend Teresa

Prayers for Bebe, Marvin and Princess Stephanie for health concerns

Prayers for Emmie R for continued healing

Deb offers prayers of thanks for the help she has received since Sue's passing

Sara M prays for her granddaughter's mental health

Patricia asks prayers for her sister-in-law who just lost her mother, and her sister, Kathy, recovering from shoulder surgery

Loretta asks continuing prayers for our country

Prayers for all families this month who will be without food stamps and for a good Thanksgiving for all

Sara prays for continued healing from her knee replacement

Prayers for the family of Mary Geneseo

For Jessica Snow and Kathryn

Prayers for Dixie as she recovers from hip surgery

Loretta prays for the leaders of our country

Prayers of comfort for Walt Youngman with the passing of Dave Ramsey

Prayers for Jeff T for health and healing

Continuing health issues: Sharon Rash, RoxAnn Kowalski, Rich Voltz, Heather York, Jen Jarvis, Terri Patterson, Anna Hitchcock, Connie Hildebranski, Larry Hansen, Christine Jackson, Walt Youngman, David Ramsey, Deb Calsyn-Polsen, Greg Starjohann and partner Roger, Larry Best and Russ Wood, Cliff Shade, Kevin Detra, Margaret Ristau, Donna Kuhl, Dixie Carter, Marvin Brown, Bob R

BY THE NUMBERS

MCC QC & those touched by our ministries thank you for your regular giving!

******For 11/30 offering, please consider using your Online Bill Pay feature at your bank, drop off in mailbox/office or mail checks to
2930 W Locust, Davenport, IA 52804**

Thank you 

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>	<u>OFFERING</u>
Nov 2 nd	65 (virtual 351)	1627.00
Nov 9 th	52 (virtual 332)	977.00
Nov 16 th	39 (virtual 226)	1036.00
Nov 23 rd	50 (virtual 320)	1691.00
Nov 30 th	Snow day Virtual 100+ likes/comments	65.00 ****
	General Fund Checking Bal	5981.59

Love God ~ Love One Another; everything else is window dressing ~ Love, Rich

Rev. Rich Hendricks Metro Community Church Quad Cities 2930 W Locust Davenport, IA 52804 563.324.8281