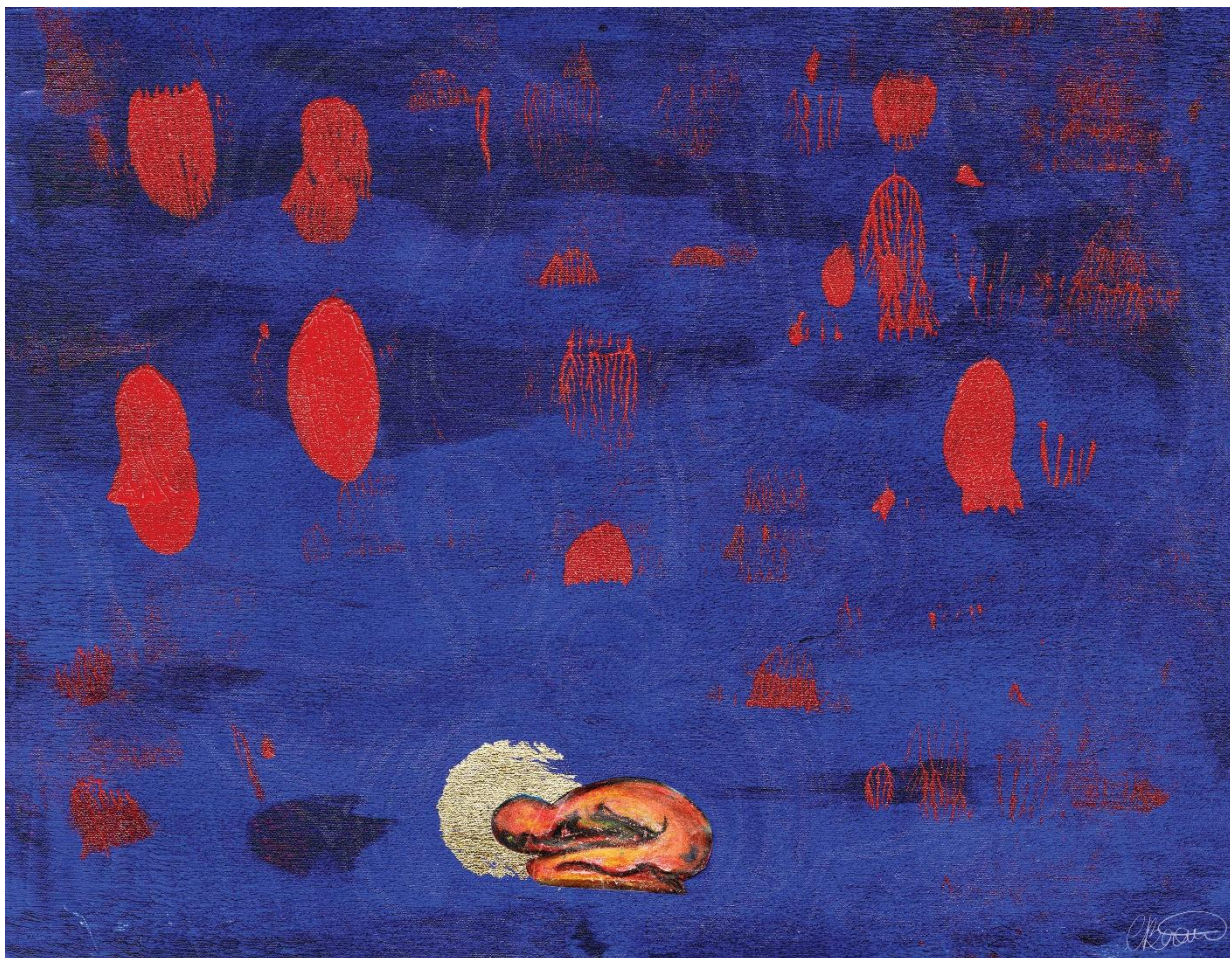




# DANVILLE

Congregational Church

United Church of Christ



"Depths" by Camille Beaugelin Caldwell

**First Sunday of Advent**

*November 30, 2025*

## OUR PURPOSE

***Love God • Love Each Other • Be God's Love in the World***

Danville Congregational Church acknowledges that the land this house of worship sits upon is the traditional, unceded land of the Ohlone and Bay Miwok people. We offer this land acknowledgment as a sign of respect, with the knowledge that this land was sacred before we ever arrived.

At Danville Congregational Church, we welcome you to a progressive spiritual community that is open and affirming, celebrates differences, and encourages alternate views. We explore the Bible with curiosity and enthusiasm, taking it seriously but not literally. Taking Christ's call passionately to love our neighbor, we extend our faith into action for the betterment of all. Wherever you are on life's journey, we offer you a place of peace and hope.

Danville Congregational Church is an Open and Affirming church, welcoming all of God's people—of diverse race, gender, sexual orientation, family status, economic condition, and physical, mental, and emotional ability.

## A NOTE TO WORSHIPERS

Please take note of the emergency exits around you and locate the nearest one to you.

At DCC, wearing a mask during worship or inside the building is optional; please do whatever is comfortable for you. Please be aware of others' personal space and space yourselves out in the sanctuary accordingly. Please invite consent before shaking hands and hugging. The left-hand section of pews as you enter the sanctuary has been designated for those who are free of scents and perfumes.

Please silence your cell phone when you enter the sanctuary.

If you would like to use one of our listening assistance devices, please see the sound technician in the back of the sanctuary.

**First-time visitor?** Welcome to Danville Congregational Church! We are glad you are here with us today. Please register your attendance in the Blue Pew Book located in the pew and share whatever information you would like us to have about you. If you are interested in learning more about DCC, please see one of the pastors after worship in the narthex (lobby) or contact Joyce Klassen ([joyce.klassen@comcast.net](mailto:joyce.klassen@comcast.net)) our Community Life Commissioner. We look forward to meeting you!

***The DCC sanctuary is available for meditation and quiet prayer  
during the week during normal business hours.***

***Please feel free to come by any time—enter through the office.***

# WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD



Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

PRELUDE

*Finding Hope*

Faith Angelina

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Alene Riley

WELCOME

Rev. Lauren Jewett

***Please sign the sheet in the blue pad, pass it to another, and place it in the offering plate.***

*To offer a special prayer, please fill out a Prayer Card, which will be collected during Prayer Time.*

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Hazel Furber-Dobson and Max Posadas

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Kyra Kennedy

*\*All are invited to rise in body, mind, or spirit.*

One: On Sundays and Mondays,

**All: on good days and bad days,**

One: early in the morning and very late at night,

**All: here in this room, and out in the world, God, we long for you to break in.**

One: Meet us in this space.

**All: Surprise us with your presence.**

One: Fill this room with your good news.

**All: With hope, we sing, we worship, we pray. Amen!**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Kyra

One: Peace be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Let us greet one another and pass the peace of Christ

\*OPENING HYMN

*In the Time of Herod*

See next page.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Pastor Lauren

*Following the Time With Children, children are invited to meet their teachers in the back of the sanctuary for Godly Play.*

# In the Time of Herod

CRANHAM 11.11.11.11

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Music by Gustav Holst, 1906



In the time of Her - od, fear had ta - ken hold  
Thick as fog the fear grew, slow - ly creep-ing in  
Pierc-ing through the stra - tus comes the an - gels' song  
In the time of Her - od, fear has ta - ken hold

5



Hope was bur - ied deep and hid - den, rare as gold  
Day by day the peo - ple bent and drew with - in  
"Do not fear!" rings hol - low when we've feared so long  
Still we share a long - ing for a glimpse of hope

9



Or - di - na - ry peo - ple dared not speak a - loud  
With the clouds so hea - vy, who could see the stars?  
Still in the re - cess - es of our wea - ry souls  
Or - di - na - ry peo - ple shout the truth we trust:

13



Dreams of the Mes - si - ah break-ing through the clouds  
Hope - less-ness had trapped them, strong as pris - on bars  
Some - thing is a - wak - ened— could it be our hope?  
God will stop at no - thing to be here with us

## SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Lamentations 3:55-57](#)

Max

I called on your name, O LORD,  
from the depths of the pit;  
you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear  
to my cry for help, but give me relief!"  
You came near when I called on you;  
you said, "Do not fear!"

## GOSPEL LESSON

[Luke 1:5-13](#)

Hazel

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.

## SERMON

*In the Time of Herod,  
We Long for God to Break in*

Rev. Todd Atkins-Whitley

*It's the season of the year we come to celebrate  
In all our ways, from different paths we come to be  
Yet when we look around us, we see division everywhere  
Even friends and family can't seem to agree.*

*There are empty chairs for some around the table now  
Loved ones gone, others just can't find their way.  
But we lift our hopeful eyes with open hearts and soul and mind  
In whatever way we know you and however we might pray.*

*Chorus:*

*We need a silent night in here;  
we need your presence to be near.  
Give us the hope we need and the peace we seek,  
We need a silent night in here.*

*Now we pray that we can find our shared humanity  
Knowing what affects just one affects us all.  
When darkness hides the light it is the star that shines so bright  
With the courage to be change, lift us up before we fall. (Chorus)*

*In the silence, renew our sight  
Help us to see you shining in the night  
Still the noise the world can give  
Come teach us how to live! (Chorus)*

#### TIME OF PRAYER

Pastor Todd

Sharing our Joys and Concerns

**All: Hear our prayer**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Loving God, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive  
our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## TIME OF GIVING

Alene

### Invitation to Giving

*For those of you who have already made a gift by check or automated giving, we are grateful. If you would like to make a gift today, please place it in the offering plate or [give using our web site](#) or donate using your mobile device, text the word give to 855-940-3756.*

### Offertory

*Wait For the Lord*

Jacques Berthier

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

\*Doxology     **Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen**

\*Offertory Prayer

## WORK OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Todd

\*CLOSING HYMN

*How Can It Be*

How can it be, that the wicked ones prosper?  
How can it be, that the greedy ones thrive?  
How can it be, that oppression and anger  
Hold such control, while the poor just survive?

Refrain:

Though hope is hidden now, God changes nations.  
God brings the powerful down to their knees.  
God sets a table of great celebration.  
God sent us Jesus who welcomes and frees.

Old ways of selfishness, old ways of sinning,  
Old ways of apathy seem to go on.  
Old angry patterns still seem to be winning,  
Old fears and prejudice shadow the dawn.  
(Refrain)

Prophets proclaim it in times of despairing,  
Pushing toward justice while others destroy.  
Precious the gift! And it's ours for the sharing!  
Precious is Christ, who brings hope, giving joy.  
(Refrain)

Evil may prosper, but God's love is stronger.  
Everyone, some day, will know this is true:  
Envy and strife will not win any longer.  
Eternal God, all our hope is in you!  
(Refrain)

- Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH & BENEDICTION

Pastor Todd and Congregation

**All: We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars.  
We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.**

POSTLUDE

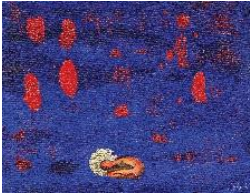
*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*  
Sandra Lepley, piano

arr. Mark Hayes

Please remain in your pews until the light has been taken out of the Sanctuary. Thank you!

*Music reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-717493. All rights reserved.*

## WORSHIP NOTES



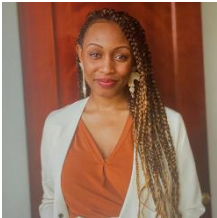
“Depths” by Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

Inspired by Lamentations 3:55-57 | 16”x20” Acrylic, oil pastel, metal leaf on canvas

I am reminded of my love-hate relationship with theme park rides as soon as the ride quiets into a slow, steady climb—creeping toward an edge that seems to vanish. It’s at this point that full panic sets in and it hits me: a drop is coming.

It’s not the speed or height of roller coasters that scares me. It’s the weight—being pulled down by something far heavier than myself, strapped to metal with gravity dragging me into the depths while my stomach scrambles to catch up, my heart left behind in midair.

Many of us, like the writer of Lamentations, know this kind of free fall—in our personal lives, in our ministries, and in a political climate that seems to collapse our sense of security into a bottomless pit. Yet, when the fall ends, when the deepest depths have been reached, who hears us when we call? As we echo prayers from the depths of each of our lives, we can rest in the assurance that we are heard by a God who meets us at rock bottom. — Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell



**Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell** (she/her) is a Haitian-American multidisciplinary artist whose visual lexicon fuses gestural abstraction and theology to explore themes of diaspora, faith, and cultural memory. Borrowing her use of color from the vibrancy of Haitian artistic traditions, Carmelle’s art pulses with movement and mysticism. Beyond her studio practice, Carmelle serves as Associate Director of the Missing Voices Project at Flagler College’s Center for Religion and Culture and serves on the board of Artworks Trenton ([artworkstrenton.org](http://artworkstrenton.org)).

[beaufoliostudio.com](http://beaufoliostudio.com) | [@beaufoliostudio](https://www.instagram.com/beaufoliostudio)

## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

8:30am–9:15am	Choir Rehearsal
9:30am–10:30am	Worship (In-person and Zoom)
10:30am–11:00am	Time of Fellowship in Koinonia / breakout room
1:00pm–3:00pm	Celebration Bells Rehearsal

Our unattended nursery is open for anyone who would like to make use of it during worship. For safety reasons, we request that no child be left on the playground without appropriate supervision.

**Godly Play** (for children ages preschool through 5th grade) is offered immediately following the Opening Hymn. All children are invited to participate in Godly Play.

## THIS WEEK AT DCC

<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00am	Men's Coffee and Donuts
<b>Wednesday</b>	10:00am	Wednesday Morning Prayer
<b>Wednesday</b>	7:00pm–8:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
<b>Friday</b>	2:00pm–5:00pm	Celebration Bells Rehearsal

# TODAY'S EMMAUS TEAM

Today's Emmaus Team is **Team 6.**

Candlelighters: Hazel Furber-Dobson and Max Posadas

Greeters: Dianne Dorn and Anne Seiler

Ushers: Nancy Halseth and Richard Stein

Liturgists: Hazel Furber-Dobson, Max Posadas,  
Kyra Kennedy and Alene Riley

Fellowship Hosts: Eileen Ackley, Kristin Chambers,  
Kyra Kennedy and Alene Riley

Sound Tech: Brett Clark

Tech Ministers: Carol Bassett and John Klassen

Lock Up Duty: Brett Clark

## **Children's Ministers**

Godly Play: Barb DeBarger and Pastor Lauren

Next Week's Emmaus Team is **Team 1.**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Children - Join us for Godly Play today

Join Ms. Barb and Pastor Lauren in Godly Play this Sunday as we begin our Advent journey to Bethlehem. This Sunday we'll hear about the prophets and how they pointed the way. All children are welcome!



*Next Sunday at noon*

## Monthly Lunch Bunch - Please Join Us!

Would you like to get to know some of your DCC colleagues better? Come join us for lunch after church next Sunday. We'll be gathering at noon at **The Peasant and the Pear** in downtown Danville and would love for you to join us! If you have joined us before, please come again! If you haven't been able to

make it before, please join us. Note: Please come prepared to pay for your meal with check, cash, Paypal or Venmo. Thanks! Please RSVP to Wilson Jackson to let him know you'll be attending.

*Next Sunday*

## Pastor Todd's PSC Meeting

Pastor Todd's Pastoral Support Committee will meet after worship on December 7th. Members include Dee Brook, Jen Faught, John Klassen, Dave Michaud, and Jenn O'Neal.

## *Sunday, December 14th after worship* **Christmas Lunch and Cookie Exchange**

Join us in Kairos Hall after worship on Sunday, December 14th, for our Christmas Lunch and Cookie Exchange.

- Soup and salad lunch will be provided by the Community Life Commission
- Bring 1-2 dozen of your favorite cookies to share! We'll pack boxes for our homebound friends (delivery addresses will be available), with plenty left to enjoy and take home
- Bring a Christmas card or make one for our friends in Guatemala
- Enjoy festive music and warm fellowship
- Friends and family are welcome!

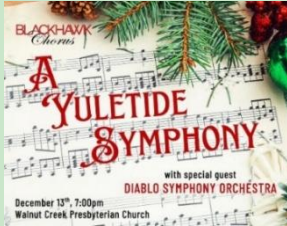


## Wednesday Morning Prayer

Pastor Todd facilitates morning prayer on Wednesdays at 10:00am via Zoom and in the Sanctuary. We will engage in centering prayer and then pray for those requests we have received. To join via Zoom use this [link](#).

*Saturday, December 13th at 7:00pm*

### Blackhawk Chorus presents "A Yuletide Symphony"

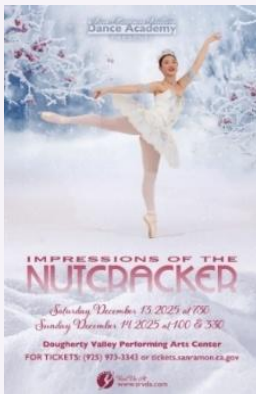


The Blackhawk Chorus, which includes DCC Choir members, **Alene Riley, Karol Mead, and Heidi Bridgeman**, will be performing "A Yuletide Symphony" on Saturday, December 13th at 7:00pm at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church. For more information and the ticket link, visit

[www.blackhawkchorus.com/events](http://www.blackhawkchorus.com/events).

*Saturday, December 13th at 7:30pm and  
Sunday December 14th at 1:00pm and 3:30pm*

### SRVDA's "Impressions of the Nutcracker"



"Impressions of the Nutcracker", featuring **Sabrina Jackson-Kimball**, brings the holiday spirit to life with an exciting fast-paced production that incorporates multiple styles of dance while following the traditional storyline of the Nutcracker! In just over an hour, this beloved story ballet performance will delight and entertain the whole family! Tickets can be purchased through the Dougherty Valley Performing Arts Center Box Office

[tickets.sanramon.ca.gov/](http://tickets.sanramon.ca.gov/)

## Pastoral Availability

Pastor Todd keeps regular office hours remotely on Monday and in the office Tuesday through Thursday. If you would like to meet with Pastor Todd, please reach out to him directly via phone or [email](#).

Pastor Lauren is available by appointment. You can reach her via [email](#) or phone.



## Pictures of the Week

Last weekend was a busy one at DCC! Saturday was our Gratitude Walk at Annabel Lake and on Sunday, we were blessed with the vocal stylings of Elana Bolds, we greened the church to prepare for the Advent season, and several DCC members (not all pictured here) attended the interfaith Friendsgiving service Sunday at Beth Chaim where Jenn O'Neal and Pastor Todd were among the participants.

*If you'd like to submit a picture to be considered for the pic of the week, email [anne-marie@danvillechurch.org](mailto:anne-marie@danvillechurch.org).*



Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers, however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear."

In our own time, we might ask: is it even possible to be fearless in a fearful world? When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

During this Advent season, we will take seriously the angels' message and trust that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people, looking closely at the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and considering the fears we hold now.

Fear can divide and paralyze us, and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? *Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?*

This Advent season invites us to identify where fear is present—both in the Advent story and in our lives—while also finding our way toward hope, with the angels' voices in our ears.

Every Advent, we light candles, sing carols, and pray for Christ's coming because we believe God entered a frightened world to bring good news. We hold onto hope because we believe that Christ did come—that's the promise of the season. Our hope is not flimsy or fleeting. It's gritty, resilient, and can endure—no matter what we fear or face. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.

***Ministers—The Entire Congregation***

***Church Staff***

**The Rev. Todd Atkins-Whitley, Senior Pastor**

**The Rev. Lauren Jewett, Minister of Youth & Community Engagement**

**John Kendall Bailey, Music Director**

**Anne-Marie Vanniasinkam, Office & Communications Manager**

The **DCC Prayer Team** prays daily for those in need of prayers.  
If you would like to submit a prayer request for yourself or someone else,  
contact a pastor or send an email to **prayers@danvillechurch.org**.  
All requests are kept confidential unless specified otherwise.

**Maria Arroyo, Dayspring Preschool Director**

**[www.dayspringpreschool.org](http://www.dayspringpreschool.org)**



**Danville Congregational Church**

*United Church of Christ*

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