

NATRONA HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Richard Harbaugh

Order of Worship, Sunday, December 17, 2023, 10 AM

“A stir begins as soon as Christ is born. He has not spoken a word; he has not wrought a miracle; he has not proclaimed a single doctrine; but ‘when Jesus was born,’ at the very first, while as yet you hear nothing but infant cries, and can see nothing but infant weakness, still his influence upon the world is manifest. ‘When Jesus was born, there came wise men from the east,’ and so on. There is infinite power even in an infant Savior.” –Spurgeon

GATHERING TO WORSHIP THE RISEN CHRIST

THE PRELUDE –Traditional

“Good King Wencesles”

THE WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND MOMENT FOR MISSION

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – Donna Crowe and Family

Today we relight the green candle of creation, which represents life. We also relight the violet candle of the incarnation, which represents Christ’s true royalty. Now as we light the red candle of the crucifixion representing sacrifice, we are reminded that while our hearts are saddened at the birth of the one born to die, we are yet filled with joy as we proclaim His advent and prepare to celebrate His coming into our lives for our salvation.

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: On the day the Lord returns we will gather together saying,

PEOPLE: HALLELUJAH, THIS IS THE LORD OUR GOD, IN WHOM IS OUR SALVATION!

Leader: For the Lord is near to all whose hearts rest in God's loving care.

PEOPLE: O GOD, LET ALL THE WORLD HEAR THAT YOU ARE INDEED THE KEEPER OF OUR SOULS.

Leader: And let the whole world hear our joyful praise to Almighty God!

ALL: BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD!

*PROCLAIMING PRAISE AND WORSHIP

**“Angels from the Realms of Glory”
“Little Drummer Boy”**

*THE TIME OF CHRISTIAN GREETING

THE PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

CHILDREN’S CHURCH – Children ages 3 through 12 may go upstairs to the Sunday School room for Children’s Church.

DEDICATION

THE RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

(Please pass the friendship pads down the pew. We invite all to sign names and write down contact info. Please pass the book back to the middle aisle when you’re finished. Thanks!)

THE PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

THE OFFERTORY – red hymnal #128

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

*THE DOXOLOGY

*THE OFFERING PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*THE HYMN OF PREPARATION

“We Three Kings”

No. 166

THE WORD

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 2:1-12

THE MESSAGE

**“The Three Kings & A Star”
–The Rev. Richard Harbaugh**

SCATTERING TO SERVE OUR RISEN SAVIOR

*THE HYMN OF COMMITMENT

“The First Noel”

No. 136

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“Emmanuel”

No. 134

THE POSTLUDE –Traditional

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

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*Please stand if you are able

“Jesus of Nazareth is so potent a factor in the world of mind that, no sooner is he there in his utmost weakness, a now-born King, than he begins to reign. Before he mounts the throne, friends bring him presents, and his enemies compass his death.” –Spurgeon

Chancel Flowers

Chancel Flowers

**In Loving Memory of
Floyd J. and Virginia L. Hepler
And Donald F. Hepler
Given by: Janet Darrell**

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY’S SERVICE:

-Pianist: Margie Shoop

-Praise Band Leader: Kevin Rudolph

-Online Filming: Marcy Korb

-Sound & Production: Ed Heintz

-Nursery: Jen Goldberg

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME TO Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church, and thank you for joining us as we worship on the third Sunday of this Advent season.

THE BULLETIN COVER was created by Carson Ankney, a member of youth group.

LIGHTING OUR ADVENT CANDLES this week are Donna Crowe and her family. Please welcome Donna’s daughter and her son-in-law, Dana and Antoine McDaniel. Also welcome her grandchildren: Alyssa, Jordan, Antoine Jr., and Landin. Donna has been a member of NHPC for many years. She has served our church in many ways including, but not limited to, volunteering for VBS and the church nursery, as a deacon, helping to decorate, bake bread or cookies, and lending a hand as a greeter on Sunday mornings. She is always a kind face, armed with a hug and joy when you see her.

NEXT WEEK’S SERVICES:

- 12/24 at 10 AM: “Christmas Memories,” Luke 2:1-20
- 12/24 at 7 PM : “The First Noel,” Luke 2:1-20

CHRISTMAS EVE IS ON SUNDAY this year and we are planning some wonderful opportunities for worship both in the morning and evening. It is our hope that you will join us for both services. For the morning service we are looking to do something special and share in the beauty of the season. We will be sharing "Christmas Memories" together as well as a Hymn/Carol Sing together. You can be a part of this special service by sharing your favorite Christmas memory with our church family and guests. If you would like to share your special Christmas memory with the church, please let Pastor Rick know. We would like to have five or six memories with our singing in between and are excited to have you share yours with us!

PLEASE NOTE: Children’s Church will NOT be held on Christmas Eve and the Church Nursery will also be closed, so all of our volunteers can attend worship with their families. Thank you!

GIVE A GIFT FROM THE HEART this holiday season! “A gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return.” Your gift doesn’t have to be from a store, it can come directly from your heart.

THE WINTER OUR DAILY BREAD is now available on our tables throughout the church.

A DIVINE CHRISTMAS GHOST STORY’s third book has just been released. The first three books of the six titles in the holiday series can be ordered through the church office. These books, written by Rev. Cam Malcolm, are similar in genre to Charles Dickens’ *Christmas Carol*. Also, copies of Cam’s book “Mary Magdalene: New Testament Eve” can be ordered through the church office. All four books can be purchased for \$19.95 apiece.

YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS are held on Sunday evenings for those in 5th through 12th grades. If you have any questions, please contact Toni Brooks at 724-766-1950.

- 12/17 – Christmas Party
- 12/24 & 12/31 – No Youth Group—Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!
- 1/07 – Regular Meeting

THERE ARE NO BIBLE BUNCH or Middle School After-School Youth Group meetings on Thursday, December 21st or 28th. Meetings will resume on Thursday, January 4th, 2024.

THERE IS NO INFORMAL Service on Thursday, December 28th.

ALL DONATIONS FOR 2023 must be received by the office no later than Sunday, December 31st. Any donations received after this date will be credited to your 2024 statement. Thank you for your understanding.

OFFERING ENVELOPES will be set out soon! If you do not currently receive envelopes, but would like to, please contact the church office at 724-224-7338 or nhpcsecretary@aol.com. Thank you!

YOUTH GROUP FUNDRAISER - MARIANNA'S HOAGIES & PIZZAS: You again have an opportunity to bless *two* ministries in the church with *one* fundraiser. First the proceeds of your purchase will go to help our youth to be able to help pay for their portion of retreat and activity fees. And secondly you can purchase additional hoagies to donate to the Women's Conference *This is Us...Armed with Praise* that will be held on January 27th. We provide a soup and sandwich lunch and these will be our sandwiches. The cost for hoagies and pizzas are \$10. Orders and money are due 1/7/24. Pick up will be 1/24/24 10:00am-10:30am and 5pm-5:30pm. There is an order form in the narthex or you can email Toni at nhpcyg@yahoo.com with your order and for Venmo or Zelle payment options. Thank you for your support of our ministries here at NHPC!

JOIN US IN PRAISING OUR GREAT GOD! This year we are going to arm ourselves with the power of praise. Come expecting to experience the presence of God and the love of Christ that is palpable in the presence of your sisters in Christ at the *This Is Us Women's Conference* January 27th, 2024. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/this-is-usarmed-with-praise-registration-684794868887?aff=oddtcreator>



COMING UP: Sunday, December 24th – 10 AM Worship; 7 PM Christmas Eve Service
Thursday, December 28th – No Informal Service
Saturday, January 27th – Women's Conference

WEEKLY FINANCIAL BUDGET TO RECEIPTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NEEDED</u>	<u>RECEIPTS</u>
Dec. 10	\$ 3,486.59	\$ 1,407.80

SCAN THE QR CODE to make a donation from your phone!



WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS: DECEMBER 17 – DECEMBER 24

TODAY:

- 9:00AM – Adult Sunday School
- 10:00AM – Worship Service
- 6:00PM – Youth Group Christmas Party

MONDAY:

- 4:00PM – AFN Elementary
- 6:30PM – Couples Connect

TUESDAY:

- 4:00PM – AFN Elementary

WEDNESDAY:

- 4:00PM – AFN Elementary
- 6:30PM – ONE Group

THURSDAY:

- 4:00PM – AFN Elementary
- 7:00PM – Informal Service

NEXT SUNDAY, December 24th:

- 10:00AM – Worship Service
- 7:00PM – Christmas Eve Service

CLERK OF SESSION: Deb Lehew – 724-664-1256

ELDERS:	-Donna Crowe – 724-882-5003	-Kevin Gourley – 724-596-2169
	-Doug Deemer – 412-335-0185	-Marcy Korb – 412-334-1173
	-Chad Gourley – 412-443-0682	-Jack Miller – 724-272-4787