

December 31, 2023

Christmastide

Welcome to
**NATIONAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

Leading people to become
faithful followers of Jesus Christ
together in God's world

*"For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples"*

Luke 2:30-31



Senior Pastor
Associate Pastors

Parish Associates

Music

Ministry Directors

Dr. Ray Hylton, Sr.
Dr. Quinn Fox
Rev. Lisa Larsen
Dr. Nancy Fox
Dr. Kerry Stoltzfus
Dr. Michael Denham (Director)
Todd Fickley (Organist)
Joanna Zorack-Greene
(Contemporary Music Leader)
Jonathan Edwards (Serve)
Kristin Franke (Youth & Families)
Jill Meek (Children)
Leslie Saum (Connections)

EVENTS AT NATIONAL

For more information about all our events, please visit the [Events page](#) on our website at nationalpres.org. Questions? Email us at info@nationalpres.org!

Bible Reading Guides for 2024

Go deeper into God's word with our convenient Bible reading guides. You can pick up a printed version in our Welcome Center or download your copy from our Resources page. There are full-Bible and New Testament only versions to choose from.

Men's Breakfast

On Saturday, January 6, at 8:00 am all men are invited to join us in-person on the first Saturday of every month for our men's breakfast. Our speaker will be Dr. Ted George, presenting *Embracing the New Year*. Please email grow@nationalpres.org for more information or to RSVP.

Laser Tag with Camp Ligonier

Today, January 7, our ministry partners from Ligonier Camp and Conference Center will join us for worship and Parent Gathering to share about their ministry. Then all children and youth are invited for laser tag in the evening!

- 5:00 pm: Children's Laser Tag
- 6:30 pm: Youth Group Laser Tag

Adult Sunday School January Term Kick-off

On January 7, Adult Sunday School will meet from 9:55-10:45 am. Please check out our classes on the [Adults Classes](#) page. We hope to see you there!

High School Overnight

Join your NPC High School youth friends for a lock-in at the church! Meet at 6:00 pm for dinner, then we'll head to Zava Zone for the evening. We'll play games, do devotionals and small groups, and hangout all night!

Week at a Glance

For information about all of these events, please see the [Events webpage](#) on our website.

Today, December 31

New Year's Eve

- 10:00 am: Traditional Worship

Monday, January 1

New Year's Day

- Office is closed

Saturday, January 6

- 8:00 am: Men's Breakfast

Sunday, January 7

Epiphany

- 8:45 am: Contemporary Worship
- 9:55 am: Sunday School resumes for all ages
- 11:00 am: Traditional Worship
- 5:00 pm: Children's Laser Tag
- 6:30 pm: Youth Group Laser Tag

Friday, January 12 -

Saturday, January 13

- 6:00 pm: High School Overnight

Sunday, January 14

Second Sunday after Epiphany

- 8:45 am: Contemporary Worship
- 9:55 am: Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 am: Traditional Worship
- 12:15 pm: Second Sunday Sandwich Making
- 6:30 pm: Youth Group

10:00 AM WORSHIP

Sanctuary and Online

WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

Jonathan Rajaseelan, organ

CHIMES

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dr. Quinn Fox

▲ HYMN 27

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

Tempus est floridum

CONFESSION OF SIN *in unison*

Lord Jesus, your birth means little to us unless we be born again.

Raise us, O Savior, that we may bow before your glorious throne.

Fill us with a true sense of your grace and glory,

as you prevail against all darkness and sin,

even the sinful shadows of our own hearts.

In the afterglow of this holy season, forgive us once again.

May we see afresh your coming among us,

and the way of salvation you open before us.

SILENT CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Believe the good news of the Gospel. **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.**

▲ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

In dulci jubilo

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice:

Now we need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls us one and calls us all to gain the everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

▲ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH A Christmas Affirmation

We believe in one God, whose almighty word brought forth the universe,
who speaks to us by his Spirit through what has been created
and through what has been written for us in Holy Scripture.

We believe that at the right moment in time,

God's Word became flesh in the life of Jesus of Nazareth,

who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary.

We believe that this good news of great joy which heralded Jesus' birth

also points us to the cross on which Jesus died, and to his empty tomb.

There the angel's message "He is risen!"

heralded the glorious good news of Christ's resurrection.

We believe that this same Jesus is alive to meet us every day,

and to offer us new and abundant life.

We rejoice in the knowledge that he will one day return to rule in righteousness,

to renew the earth, and to claim us as God's own.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Fox

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:22-40

Deacon Mercedes Condy

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Seeing the Messiah

Rev. Lisa Larsen

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE AND CALL

▲ HYMN 603

Song of Simeon

Land of Rest

CALL FOR OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

Dr. Nancy Fox

OFFERTORY

How Far Is It to Bethlehem?

Traditional Carol

How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far?

Shall we find a stabled room lit by a star?

Can we see the little child, is he within?

If we lift the wooden latch, may we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there—ox, ass, or sheep?

May we peep like them and see Jesus asleep?

If we touch his tiny hand, will he awake?

Will he know we've come so far just for his sake?

God in his mother's arms, babes in the byre

Sleep as they sleep who find their heart's desire.

Dr. Michael Denham

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Our regular worship services will resume in the Sanctuary and online on our [Watch](#) webpage on January 7.

- **8:45 am:** Contemporary Worship
- **9:55 am:** Sunday School for all ages
- **11:00 am:** Traditional Worship

2024 January Adult Sunday School

Sunday School will resume in the new year. January Term classes will meet January 7, 14 and 21. On January 28 all adults will meet in [Stone Fellowship Hall](#) for our large group gathering, *The Dangerous Act of Following Jesus* with Mark Labberton. For class descriptions and more information please visit our [Adult Classes webpage](#).

- ***Practical Christian Ethics for Challenging Times:*** Howard Frost, Chapel and online
- ***Care-Prayer-Dare:*** Ginny Beeson and Lisa Larsen, Garden Room C
- ***Faithful Stewards of God's Gracious Gifts:*** Ray Hylton and Margaret Gardner, Garden Room A
- ***Learning to Live with Difference:*** David Montgomery, Room #209
- ***Parent Gathering:*** Kristin Franke and others, Jones Hall

Childcare

The Nursery rooms are available 8:30 am-noon for infants to walkers, up to age 4.

Youth Sunday School

Visit our [Youth webpage](#) for information about Sunday School and other youth events. Youth grades 6-12, please come to the Multipurpose Building for Sunday School. We'll meet there briefly then split to smaller groups by age.

Children's Sunday School

Visit our [Children's webpage](#) to read about our Children's Ministry.

- Children ages 2-3 years have Sunday School in the Toddler Room in the main church building.
- Children age 4 through 5th grade meet for Sunday School in the Education Building (National Presbyterian School).



**Called
to Care**

The Care and Joy List

Would you like to be on or receive our Care and Joy list, for those who want our congregation to pray for them?

careoffice@nationalpres.org / 202.537.7540

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone. 1 Timothy 2:1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday School for All Ages Resumes January 7

Now is a great time to join us for the new year! We meet at 9:55 am on Sundays, between our worship services. Please see our classes webpage for more information about our classes.

Fund for Charitable Giving

Grow your generosity. Save on your 2023 taxes. Establish a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) with the NPC Fund for Charitable Giving. Don't know what a DAF is? It's a special charitable giving account, professionally managed and invested to multiply the impact of your family's generosity. Learn more about setting up a DAF before year-end by contacting Jonathan Dickey or Rick Hawthorne on 301-452-8269 or at npcfund@nationalpres.org.

Pathway of Christian Discipleship Class Saturdays, January 20 & 27, online

Becoming a church member here at National can be a meaningful step forward in your spiritual journey. To inquire about membership or just learn more about Christian faith, please attend the online Pathway of Christian Discipleship classes on January 20 & 27. Please see the [Events webpage](#) for more information or contact Kemet Rakiatu to register by January 10th at krakiatu@nationalpres.org or 202.537.7578.

JOIN OUR NPC TEAM!

NPC Communications Director Needed

The National Presbyterian Church is searching for a Communications Director to provide internal and external messaging about the life and ministry of NPC using a variety of communication tools including bulletins, website, mailings, email blasts, publications, signage, exhibits, podcasts, and social media. Reporting to the Senior Pastor, the Communications Director will develop and implement an overall communications strategy aligned with the Church's mission and vision. The successful candidate will be creative, analytical, well versed in social media and today's communication tools, and have excellent attention to detail and strong writing and graphic design skills. The Communications Director must be able to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, effectively manage deadlines, collaborate with pastors, staff, and congregants and work independently. The position is based at the National Presbyterian Church campus located in upper Northwest Washington, DC.

Summer Interns at NPC

Applications are now open for Children's and Youth Interns for Summer 2024. Spend your summer supporting our younger congregants in encountering Jesus' love for them at VBS, camps, and weekly programs. Application deadline is January 15, 2024. For more details, visit our Jobs webpage.

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE!

New to National? Welcome!

Welcome and thank you for being here today! Please stop by the Welcome Center just outside the sanctuary. We would love to meet you, and we have a gift for you! Here are some other easy ways to connect with us:

- Sign the guestbook in the pews or online on our [Watch webpage](#).
- Sign up for our e-newsletter on our website or info@nationalpres.org.

Children and Youth E-newsletters

If you have little ones or youth in your household and would like to receive our updates, please:

- Visit our [Children's webpage](#) for kids up to 5th grade.
- Visit our [Youth webpage](#) for kids in middle and high school.

Prayers

We pray:

That our witness to the grace of Jesus Christ would shine throughout 2024.

We pray for:

NPC's youth, for God's encouragement and guidance as they grow, and for boldness to share the good news of Jesus.

How may we pray for you?

Please submit prayer requests to the Care Office,
careoffice@nationalpres.org
202.537.7540.

Community Health Note

Masks are optional at our services, with the exception of the balcony and the lectern-side transept (at the front on your right), where masks are required. Our ushers are happy to guide you to your preferred seating area.

Your Giving Makes a Difference! Thank you!

Giving Report

As of December 24, 2023

	Faith Giving
Annual Budget	\$ 3,075,000
Received YTD	\$ 2,874,061
Remaining Needed	\$ 200,939

Would you like to make a gift?

- Mail or place it in the offering plate
- Go to nationalpres.org/giving
- Text "NPC" to 833.414.9444
- Donate stock
- Disburse your Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA
- Scan the QR code below:



Monthly financial reports are available in the Narthex.

For help or questions about giving, please contact our Finance Office at 202.537.7495 or email our Director of Finance and Administration, Leah Skrine at lskrine@nationalpres.org.

Today's Flowers

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God with a thankful heart for Dr. Ray and Judith Hylton and for the Flower Ministry. Looking forward to a blessed 2024.



4101 NEBRASKA AVE. NW
WASHINGTON DC 20016
202.537.0800
WWW.NATIONALPRES.ORG



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