

**McKEESPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WORSHIP SERVICE**

1st Sunday of Epiphany

January 7, 2024

WE ENTER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

PRELUDE

Candice Holsinger, Organist

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE CHURCH

OPENING PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 72)

(L) We come this morning to pay homage to a King ...

(C) a ruler who is the Good Shepherd of His people.

(L) A King who judges His people with righteousness ...

(C) and defends the cause of the poor.

(L) A King who delivers the needy when they call ...

(C) And has pity on the weak.

(L) A king who delivers the weak from oppression and violence ...

(C) for they are precious in His sight.

(L) Blessed be this King, the King of Kings!

(ALL) Blessed be His glorious name forever.

***HYMN**

"As with Gladness Men of Old" (Vv. 1 & 2)

No. 290, brown

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

O King of Kings, You have come to us as an infant - born right in our midst. Yet, we confess, we have not looked for you very hard. We confess we are afraid of what we might have to give up if we find You. We are more determined to protect our rights than defend the cause of the poor. We are more inclined to condemn the weak than we are to understand their plight. We judge others based on what we told about them and not by what we learn from them. We confess we see the weak and needy as threats and not as precious in your sight.

'Gracious King, replace the tears we shed over our worldly losses with a genuine sorrow for our sins and their consequences.' (Henri Nouwen - paraphrased)

*** ASSURANCE OF PARDON: (Psalm 103)**

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, abounding in steadfast love. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our failures. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, is his steadfast love toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, he removes our sins from us." In Jesus Christ, your sins have been, are, and forever will be forgiven.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

**Glory be the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

JOYS

Leader: "For (joy), Gracious God..."

All: "we give you thanks"

CONCERNS

Leader: "For (concern), Merciful Lord ..."

All: "hear our prayer."

Let's pray together the Lord's Prayer:

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Please contact the church by email or phone with your prayer requests during the week.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

Please welcome the children to the front of the sanctuary.

ANTHEM

"We Three Kings"

**(Chancel Choir)
Arr. Hopkins**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MATTHEW 2: 1-12 and MATTHEW 2: 13-17

Matthew 2: 1-12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered

him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Matthew 2: 13-17

¹³Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

SERMON

"A Plot to Kill a Child"

Rev. Michael Stanton

THE RESPONSE

WE COMMIT TO THE WORK OF GOD

OFFERTORY

Candice Holsinger, Organist

***DOXOLOGY**

HYMN

"As With Gladness Men of Old" (Vv 3 & 4)

No. 290, brown

THE EXIT

WE ENGAGE THE WORLD OF GOD

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Candice Holsinger, Organist

All those who are able, please stand



ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 7, 2024

IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF PASTORAL CARE, please contact the church office.

TAKE CARE, THE FLU AND COLD SEASON IS UPON US:

Please help keep everyone healthy. If you have a cold or flu, please consider joining us virtually or utilizing the masks available at the entrances. We all thank you.

LAST CALL- 2024 PLEDGES:

We are excited about what God has in store for us in 2024. Your support plays a vital part. If you haven't already done so, please consider what God is calling you to contribute, financially and otherwise, to God's work through us.

PER CAPITA:

The 2023 per capita amount is \$35.70 per church member. These funds are sent to the Presbytery and are used by the Presbytery to provide services to local churches. Please make your checks payable to the church and note "per capita" in the memo line.

HATS, SCARVES, GLOVES AND SOCKS:

We have been collecting hats, scarves, gloves and socks in all sizes, for our community for the winter. If you have any extras of these items please drop them off at the church office. Thank you.

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

MCKEESPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Director of Music-Edward R. Moore

Organists-Candice Holsinger & Millie Kistler

Office/Financial Assistant- Robin Enright

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