

Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church

124 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, NJ 08542-3224

Office (609) 924-1666 • Fax (609) 924-0365 • Church Building (609) 924-1332

E-mail: witerspoon@verizon.net

Website: www.witerspoonchurch.org

Rev. M. Muriel Burrows, Pastor

Beverly Owens, Music Director

Rev. Dr. Louise Johnson, Director of Christian Education

Amy Shortt, Interim Organist

David Shedden, Seminary Intern

Cecelia B. Hodges, Verse Speaking Choir Director

Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, Lector

December 17, 2006

10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent: Joy

*Enter Reverently, Meditate Quietly, Worship Devoutly,
Leave Gratefully, Serve Christ Faithfully*

PRELUDE

INTROIT

Beautiful Savior

Traditional

**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Zephaniah 3:14-17)

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Sing, O Daughter of Zion.

People: Shout aloud, O Israel!

Leader: Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
O Daughter of Jerusalem!

**People: Lift up your voices in praise,
O chosen ones.**

Leader: The Lord has taken away your punishment,
he has turned back your enemy.

**People: The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;
never again will you fear any harm.**

Leader: On that day they will say to Jerusalem,
*Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.
The Lord you God is with you, he is mighty to save.*

**People: He will take great delight in you.
He will quiet you with his love and rejoice over you with singing.**

All: Let us worship the living, loving God!

*OPENING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#9

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

THE CANDLE OF JOY

Maddox Family

Reader: Last Sunday we lit the candle of peace. We light it and the candle of hope again as we remember that Christ, who was born in Bethlehem, will come again to judge the world and bring it everlasting peace.

*** (Light the first and second candles) ***

Reader: The third candle of Advent is the candle of joy. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her, she was filled with joy. She sang a song that began with the words: *My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.*

Reader: Just as the birth of Jesus gave great joy to his mother, so his presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him. From hope, peace, and love grows joy.

Reader: We light the candle of joy to remind us that when Jesus is born in us, we have joy and that through him there will be everlasting joy on earth.

*** (Light the third candle) ***

Reader: Joy is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle we celebrate the joy we have in Jesus Christ.

Reader: Let us pray: Thank you God for the joy you give us. We ask that as we wait for all your promises to come true, and for Christ to come again, that you would remain present with us. Help us today, and everyday to worship you, to hear your word, and to do your will by sharing your joy with each other. We ask it in the name of the one who was born in Bethlehem. Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING SONG

A Candle Is Burning
by Sandra Dean, 1986

(tune: *Away in a Manger*)

**A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow
As joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Merciful God, we hear from John the Baptist that the practical meaning of repentance is to live exercising love and justice to all. His words to us today would be no less challenging than to those that day in the region around the river Jordan. Woe betide all who try to escape living lives of true faith by paying lip service only to the gospel.

People: **What then should we do?**
Leader: We are to bear fruit consistent with living united to the vine, Jesus Christ.

People: **Forgive us, O God, when we fail.**
Leader: Woe betide all who believe that attending church for an hour each Sunday is all that is required to be considered a disciple of Jesus.

People: **What then should we do?**
Leader: We are to hear Jesus' words addressed to us: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose of forfeit themselves?" (Luke 9:23-25)

People: **Forgive us, O God, when we fail.**
Leader: Woe betide all who exploit or take advantage of others out of greed or a desire to increase one's power and prestige.

People: **What then should we do?**
Leader: We are to remember the words of Timothy about the love of money being a root of all kinds of evil, that in their eagerness to be rich, some have wandered away from the faith.... But as for us...we are to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. (based on 1 Timothy 6:10-11)

People: **Forgive us, O God, when we fail.**
All: **Help us, O God, to prepare ourselves to receive Jesus by truly living out our baptism by being a loving community in Christ: through our gentle nurturing of one another in faith, our genuine upholding of one another in prayer and our enthusiastic encouragement of one another in service. Amen.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND SILENT CONFESSION

Congregational Response (Sung): #10

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**All praise to You, eternal Son,
Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit, evermore.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: We can surely agree with the prophet Isaiah and affirm God as our salvation – for Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Is not this reason enough to shout aloud and sing with joy? Rejoice then, and hear

the word of grace and the assurance of pardon that in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God.

*GLORIA PATRI (kids' pink page) #579

**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

People: And also with you!

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of peace!

READING *Psalm 150* Verse Speaking Choir

*HYMN *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* #464

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 3:7-18 Page 60

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(Students in grades 1-12 are dismissed for their Bible classes.**)**

SPECIAL MUSIC *Mary Had a Baby* arr. Landon

SERMON *Is Membership Enough?* Rev. Muriel Burrows

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER (kids' orange page)

TITHES AND OFFERINGS *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
and put your trust in the Lord.*

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY (kids' red page) #592

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: Gracious God – as you gave your most precious gift to us – and still give to us today the wonders of your love – so we in joy and thanksgiving give to you these gifts – and all of ourselves – that you might sanctify and make holy both them and us – through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

*HYMN *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night* #20

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

* Congregation stands
** Latecomers ushered in

ANNOUNCEMENTS



WELCOME - The Pastor, Elders and Deacons of Witherspoon welcome most warmly all worshippers. Our fellowship is enriched by your presence. If you do not have a church home of your own, we do sincerely invite you to be a part of our fellowship. Please contact the church office for further information if you are interested in church membership (609-924-1666 or witherspoon@verizon.net).



SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGE GROUPS! Adults will meet on their own schedule each month in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 a.m. All other Sunday school classes for students in grades 1-12 begin immediately after the children’s message in morning worship. (A nursery is available for children in preschool and kindergarten.)

NURSERY CARE is provided for children 0-5 beginning at 9:45 a.m. Today Karen Delk and Elsie McKee is assisting with nursery care; next Sunday’s nursery care will be assisted by Louise Johnson.



FLOWERS – Flowers for today’s service were given by *Shirley Satterfield* in honor of *six generations of the Van Zandt family at Witherspoon*. If you would like to provide flowers in honor or memory of a loved one, or simply to beautify the church, please sign up on the chart located on the door of the sound room (left-hand entrance from the sanctuary to the parish house). After worship service, the donor may take the flowers home. At present, it is the responsibility of the person giving the flowers to make his/her own arrangements for preparation and delivery of the flowers for the Chancel. The next available date is December 31.

USHERS for this morning’s service are Christo and Lucill Claassens. Next week’s ushers are Robert Ellis and Curtis Johnson.



COFFEE HOUR - Please join us for a Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall following this morning’s worship service. Host for the month of December is Vicki Meisel. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the Coffee Hour should contact Vicki (609-637-9417).

ATTENDANCE at the service of December 10 was 151.



FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THIS WEEK – LUKE 3:17-18

- ✚ What kind of people went to hear John the Baptist and repented?
- ✚ Would you show up to hear someone like John today? Why? What would you want to see and hear?
- ✚ Should you disregard people as prophets because their looks or their behavior are a departure from the norm?
- ✚ In John 3:29, the Baptist compares himself to “the friend, who stands and listens for [the bridegroom, and] rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice.” Discuss with someone the “friend” and the “listening” part of this imagery.

LECTIONARY TEXT for next Sunday, December 24, is Micah 5:2-5; Luke 1:47-55; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55; Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20.



STAY IN TOUCH – Shirley Ellis is quite ill; her cancer has returned. She is staying with her daughter and would appreciate hearing from her Witherspoon family at the following address: c/o Joanne Glen, 84 Yantacaw Brook Road, Montclair, NJ 07043. You may also call Shirley (973-783-3174).



FOOD DONATIONS FOR CRISIS MINISTRY – The Deacons are collecting nourishing food for the Crisis Ministry. *****NO GLASS JARS, PLEASE.***** Checks made payable to the Crisis Ministry are always welcome and may be placed in the offering plate or given to a deacon. Please consider an extra purchase during your next grocery shopping trip and place items in the wooden box in the Narthex.



PROPERTY ACQUISITION UPDATE

(as of June 30, 2006)

Total collection for property acquisition*	\$143,359.43
Total expenses*	<u>84,313.17</u>
Balance	\$59,081.26

*2004 to present



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN – The Stewardship Committee thanks Witherspoon members who have submitted pledge cards. We are still collecting! Offering envelopes for 2007 are now available. Please pick up your envelopes in the Fellowship Hall **today!**



Advent Giving

2006 WSPC ADVENT GIVING PROJECT will be the International AIDS Ministry Early Learning Centers in Kinshasu, Democratic Republic of the Congo. This PC(USA) sponsored program is being developed to establish Early Learning Centers for children ages 5-12 orphaned by AIDS and the ongoing civil war in the Congo.

These children have critical health, education and care needs. It is important to note that every dollar raised for this effort will be matched by a special UN fund set up for this purpose. A project of the Peacemaking and Social Justice Ministry, this offering will be collected **today and next Sunday, December 24**, at the morning worship service. Please consider giving generously to this critical need. (Special envelopes will be provided.)



KWANZAA AT WITHERSPOON – Join us for the *Kwanzaa Celebration* on **Friday, December 29**, at 6:30 p.m. at the church building. We are planning for a very exciting event. Anyone who has new ideas or is interested in helping may contact: Barbara Flythe (732-274-9435), Grace Kimbrough (609-386-1410), and Shirley Satterfield (609-924-2010). The event is again being sponsored by the Junior Usher Ministry and the Peacemaking and Social Justice Ministry.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORK WEEK – Our Habitat for Humanity project needs your help. To participate, please contact Meg Coghlan (609-651-2945 or meg_coghlan@yahoo.com).