

Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church

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Rev. M. Muriel Burrows, Pastor
Rev. Dr. Louise Johnson, Director of Christian Education
David Shedden, Seminary Intern
Patricia Fernández-Kelly, Lector

Beverly Owens, Music Director
Amy Shortt, Interim Organist
Lydie Dews, Men's Chorus Director

December 31, 2006

10:00 a.m.

First Sunday after Christmas

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

PRELUDE

INTROIT

As Good as God Has Been to Me

Men's Chorus

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CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 19:7-11)

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: The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

People: The decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple.

Leader: The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

People: More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold.

They are sweeter than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

Leader: By them is your servant warned.

People: In keeping them there is great reward.

All: Let us worship the living, loving God!

PRAYER OF APPROACH

All: Lord God, as we gather today, we ask that you would develop in us an immeasurable urge towards you, an affection that is unbounded, a longing that is unrestrained, and a fervor that throws discretion to the wind. Grant to us the same Spirit that was upon Jesus – the Spirit of mercy and of compassion, the Spirit of truth and of justice, the Spirit of power and of love. Lead us at this time by your most Holy Word – put it in our hearts and upon our lips – let it give light to our minds

**and shine through all that we do – to your everlasting praise and glory
– both now and forevermore. Amen.**

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*OPENING HYMN

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

#38

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (based in part on Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10)

Leader: As Ezra reminded the returning exiles of their identity as the people of God, they were deeply moved and wept, because they had forgotten about the mighty acts of God which had shaped them and their history.

People: We confess, O God, that we also forget our identity as your people and so fail to witness to your activity in our lives.

Leader: Ezra called on the people not to grieve their shortcomings, but to celebrate their calling and their strength as the people of God.

People: We confess that there are times when we concentrate on our weaknesses rather than rejoicing over our strengths.

Leader: Jesus also reminded the people of his day of their responsibilities as the people of God and then told them, *Today the scriptures have been fulfilled in your hearing.*

People: “Today” can be a confronting word when we tend to postpone until tomorrow what Jesus may be calling us to do today.

Leader: Jesus makes it very clear what his purpose is, as he spells out, and then radically reveals in his life and death the true meaning of loving one’s neighbor. Merciful God, anoint us with your Spirit so that the words of Scripture proclaimed by Jesus are heard by us – today – and acted upon by us – today – and fulfilled through our worship, witness and service – today – and in all the days that lie ahead. This we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND SILENT CONFESSION

Congregational Response (Sung):

#171

**The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.**

**And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Anointed with the Holy Spirit, Jesus brings us the good news of salvation – that we are released from the oppression of all our sins. And so I declare to you: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God!

*GLORIA PATRI (kids' pink page) #579

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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!

*HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* #339

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 4:14-30 Pages 61-62

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC *On Time God* J. Paul Stephens
Soloist

SERMON *All Too Familiar?* David Shedden

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 *I've Decided to Make Jesus
My Choice* Thomas Espenshade
Soloist

*DOXOLOGY (kids' red page) #592

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: God of all wonder – God of all beauty – God of all goodness – you who govern everything by your wisdom and bless it with your love – receive our offerings and transform them by the power of your Spirit – that they and we may worthily accomplish your purpose and bring everlasting praise to your name. Amen.

*HYMN *Rejoice, the Lord Is King* #155

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION *I Pray on Christmas* J. Paul Stephens
Soloist

* 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 Jasmine McEwen is assisting with nursery care; next Sunday's nursery care will be assisted by Edwina Hawes.

FLOWERS - 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 January 14.

USHERS for this morning's service are Curtis Johnson and Joan Tomlin. Next week's ushers are Melvin and Regina Campbell.



COFFEE HOUR - Please join us for a Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall following this morning's worship service. Host for the month of January is Doris Burrell. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the Coffee Hour should contact Doris (609-924-2296).

ATTENDANCE at the service of December 24 was 146.

LECTIONARY TEXT for next Sunday, January 7, is Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-22.



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.



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN – Offering envelopes for 2007 are in and available for pick up from the table in the Fellowship Hall. There are still a number of members and friends who have not submitted a pledge card for next year. This process is crucial for the

development of the church budget and the overall financial plan for the future. Extra cards may be obtained from a member of the committee or the Stewardship mailbox.



2007 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – The *Annual Congregational Meeting* will immediately follow the service on **Sunday, January 28**. ***Please note*** that all committee chairs and ministry leaders should **submit** their **reports** for inclusion in the Annual Report to the church office **no later than Sunday, January 14**, to allow adequate time for preparation. Your assistance is appreciated.



COUNTERS FOR JANUARY are Bernadine Hines (Team Leader), Deborah Colbert, Cecelia Hodges, and Mildred Trotman. Counters for the Deacon’s Benevolence Offering are Curtis Johnson, Vicki Meisel and Florence Sharpless.



CHURCH CALENDAR – A copy of the WSPC calendar for January is inserted in this bulletin. Please review it and contact the Church Office with any additions or corrections **by this Wednesday, January 3**. The updated calendar will be posted in the rear hallway.



MARTIN LUTHER KING COMMUNITY WORSHIP SERVICE will be held at Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church on **Monday, January 15**, at 7:00 p.m. This annual service is sponsored by the Princeton Clergy Association. Rev. Dr. Stacy Johnson will preach. He is the Arthur M. Adams Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.



Trenton Area
Habitat
for Humanity®

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).