

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
Rev. Dr. Louise Johnson, Director of Christian Education
David Shedden, Seminary Intern
Anne Blackwood-Chirchir, Lector

Beverly Owens, Music Director
Amy Shortt, Organist
Victor Richards, Flutist

March 25, 2007

10:00 a.m.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

PRELUDE

INTROIT

Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross

arr. Albrecht

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WORDS OF WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God liberates those who are captives, bringing dreams to reality.

People: You have done great things for us, O God, we sing aloud for joy.

Leader: You fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues declare your praise.

People: You have done great things for us, O God, we sing aloud for joy.

Leader: Our lives overflow with your goodness, as dry river beds are transformed with abundant rain.

People: You have done great things for us, O God, we sing aloud for joy.

Leader: Those who go out weeping will come home with shouts of joy.

People: You have done great things for us, O God, we sing aloud for joy.

All: Let us worship the living, loving God!

PRAYER OF APPROACH

All: We praise and adore you, O God, for giving us reason to sing aloud with joy. The Psalmist wrote about a joyous future and the prophet Isaiah beseeches us not to dwell on things past, but to concentrate on the new thing that you have planned for us – a new thing greater than any could imagine when you entered our history in the person of Jesus Christ – a costly act which transformed the future forever. As we draw nearer to the events which led up to the death of Jesus, we marvel that through even that dreadful act you turn our weeping into shouts of joy and point us toward a new future through the glory of

the resurrection. Accept our prayers and praises we pray, for we utter them in joyful thanksgiving for all the great things you have done for us – especially for the great gift of Jesus, our Lord and our Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen.

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*OPENING HYMN

Lead On, O King, Eternal

#447

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: God of all righteousness, we know how the apostle Paul counted himself as a righteous person when zealously carrying out the law as a Pharisee. He considered himself to be blameless, but counted all that as loss when he came to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. From that time, on, righteousness took on a new meaning. Paul knew that he no longer needed to perform exemplary deeds in order to earn your love. All he had to do was to accept your gracious and unconditional love.

People: **Forgive us, O God, when we believe that righteous behavior is all that is needed to secure your love.**

Leader: We know that we can neither earn nor deserve all that you have done for us.

People: **Help us to surrender our worldly attitudes and values so that, like Paul, we can celebrate anew lives centered in Jesus Christ.**

Leader: Paul acknowledges a desire to participate in the death and resurrection of Christ so that he can die and rise also. He urges others to do likewise.

People: **Forgive us, O God, when we lose sight of the goal of our lives as Christians – that of following Jesus;**

Leader: Even when that means, and perhaps especially when that means, taking up our cross and sharing in the suffering and struggle that Jesus shares with us. Merciful God, in the agony of the crucifixion, we see the lengths you were prepared to go, to “do great things for us.”

People: **Whatever gains we may have experienced in our lives, like Paul, may we regard them as loss compared to the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus as our Lord. This we pray in his name. Amen.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND SILENT CONFESSION

Congregational Response (Sung):

(see insert)

**Lord, you are more precious than silver.
Lord, you are more costly than gold.
Lord, you are more beautiful than diamonds,
And nothing I desire compares with you.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: The Lord has indeed done great things for us, as our righteousness is *one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith* (Philippians 3:9). The good news, therefore, is this: In Jesus Christ we are accepted, we are loved, 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!

(Students in grades 7-12 are dismissed for their Bible class.**)**

*HYMN *What Wondrous Love Is This* #85

SCRIPTURE LESSON John 12:1-8 Page 106

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(Students in grades 1-6 are dismissed for their Bible classes.**)**

SPECIAL MUSIC *Talk to the Lord* Young Voices of Faith

SERMON *Aroma -- Therapy* 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, we respond to your great gifts to us by offering these gifts to you – gifts of money, of time and talents, the gift of our lives. May these gifts declare your praise in ways which sweeten lives with the love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* #339

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Blessed Assurance

arr. Cutter

- * Congregation stands
- ** Latecomers ushered in

ANNOUNCEMENTS



WELCOME - The Pastor, Elders and Deacons of Witherspoon welcome most warmly all worshipers. 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. 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 Edwina Hawes is assisting with nursery care; next Sunday's nursery care will be assisted by Elizabeth Ferguson.



FLOWERS – Flowers for today's service were given by *The People's Verse Speaking Choir in celebration of its 21st anniversary; in memory of members who have died: John Counts, Braxton Ellerbee, Edith True, and Susie Waxwood; and with thanks to Pastor Burrows and Witherspoon Church for their support. Praise the Lord!* 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 April 15.

USHERS for this morning's service are Christo and Lucill Claassens. Next week's ushers are Illeana and Manuel Ojeda.



COFFEE HOUR - Please join us for a Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall following this morning's worship service. Host for the month of April is Valerie Smith. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the Coffee Hour should contact Valerie (609-799-1817).

ATTENDANCE at the service of March 18 was 108.

LECTIONARY TEXT for next Sunday, April 1, is Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Isaiah 50:4-9; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 22:14-23:56.



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.

DOLLAR\$&CENTS **COUNTERS FOR APRIL** are Robert Ellis (Team Leader), Rolston Gaiter, Briallen Hopper and Elizabeth Zingg. Counters for the Deacon's Benevolence Offering are Joyce Abbott, Barbara Brown and Florence Sharpless.



CHURCH CALENDAR – A copy of the WSPC calendar for April is inserted in this bulletin. Please review it and contact the Church Office with any additions or corrections **by this Wednesday, March 28**. The updated calendar will be posted in the rear hallway.



Trenton Area
Habitat
for Humanity®

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORK WEEK – This was an exciting week for our Habitat Project – the reason we are doing this! Barbara Flythe and Meg Coghlan met with our partner family last Friday. Habitat's term, "partner family" is used because each family that takes possession of a Habitat house must provide 500 hours of work on the house. Plus, remember they must also qualify for the mortgage, have steady employment and have good credit. We learned about our family and find out how we can help them make this house a home. We propose to have a house warming event where anyone interested can choose to help the family by supplying them with specific pre-determined items. Gifts can be purchased through registries at local stores (or online). These gifts will range from least expensive to more generous offerings (i.e., a can opener to a set of pots and pans). We will let you know which stores we will be utilizing and when the gift registry is in place. For more information, please contact Meg Coghlan (609-651-2945 or meg_coghlan@yahoo.com).

Footprints Walk



WALK FOR THE CRISIS MINISTRY – We hope to send a team on the annual *Footprints Walk* on **Saturday, April 21**. The aim is to raise as much money as possible to help the work of The Crisis Ministry. The Crisis

Ministry is facing cuts in its funding this year, so every dollar will make a difference. The event begins at 8.30 a.m. with registration. The walk starts at Kingston Tow Path, on Route 27, up to Harrison Street and then back to Route 27. The entire walk is just over five miles. If you want to join the WSPC team, please contact David Shedden (david.shedden@ptsem.edu) or the church office. This will be a great opportunity to spend some time with other church family members. If you are unable to walk on that day, why not sponsor the team so we can raise as much money as possible?



PROPERTY ACQUISITION UPDATE

(as of January 31, 2007)

Total collection for property acquisition*	\$154,655
Total expenses*	<u>109,155</u>
Balance	\$ 45,500

*2004-2007



FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

(Questions on Sunday's readings for use by discussion groups, prayer groups, or for individual prayer.)

THE LENTEN SERIES

by Gail Keffer

This series is written in the first person of the character as he/she may have felt at that time. I feel that there is a place for almost everyone in the story of Christ's death, so study of it helps us to find what is expected of us for the spreading of His Word today. All of us are tempted daily and sometimes we also deny Christ or do not take the opportunity to spread the Good News. We are all sinners. Sometimes we want to give and do so generously. The series concentrates on Judas, Peter, Pilate, a Roman soldier, the thief on the cross, Joseph of Arimathaea, and Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene: *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. (Mark 16:9 KJV)*

"I had been filled with what they called evil demons; I knew no good. I saw people throng around this gentle man who was speaking about a new heaven where all would be right; I wanted to know more. The more I listened to him, the more I realized that he was telling the truth. He was really not like anyone else I had ever seen. And believe me, I knew many people. I had used everyone I could just as they used me. One day I asked

him to cast the evil spirits out of my body as he had done for others. That day I knew that he was the Son of God. He was the Messiah, the only one that could heal me.

“I continued to follow as many others did. We wanted to hear more. We all wanted to know as much as possible about this man who was so wonderful, who told us how we too could become a part of his Heavenly Kingdom. He healed people; he removed evil spirits. He made the lame to walk; he made the blind to see.

“When the authorities seized him and wanted to put him to death, we were all devastated. There was nothing we could do. He had told the disciples this would happen. They didn’t understand any more than the rest of us. He had taught us to be gentle, to forgive, as he had forgiven us.

“As I stood at the foot of the cross with the other people who also loved Jesus, I heard one of the centurions admit that he felt this man was truly the Son of God, but he also could do nothing to prevent what was happening. There were many of us there, both men and women.

“When he died, they cut the body down. A man named Joseph asked to have Christ’s body put into his own tomb. He and Nicodemus anointed the body with the proper oils, put him in linen clothes, and laid him in a tomb that had been recently hewn from the rock for Joseph. I along with a couple other women stood off and watched them as they took care of his body and then sealed the tomb.

“On Sabbath morning, I, along with the other Mary, went to the tomb. There was a great earthquake and the stone had rolled away. We were afraid. As we cried an angel told us not to be afraid. He told us that Jesus had risen from the dead. What a joy! Then I heard that familiar voice say “Mary.” The dimness from my eyes was lifted as I saw our risen Lord standing beside me. Tears returned to my eyes, but this time they were joyful tears. Jesus told us to not be afraid and to go and tell his disciples that he would see them in Galilee. The disciples also were shy, uncertain and confused when I told them. We had such great news. None of us would ever be the same again.”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have told us that you are always with us. In times of loss, we sometimes forget that you are still there. When we are frightened, we know in our hearts that you are there. Help us to be strong like Mary Magdalene and the disciples and be willing to do all that we can to help others know about you by our actions as well as our words. Amen.

- ✠ How are we like Mary Magdalene? How can we be a witness to others?
- ✠ Is it right for us to seek to know the truth even though we may not feel we are good enough to be in the places where God’s word is taught because we do not have the right clothes or know the right people?
- ✠ Do we ever turn others away by treating them like they are not good enough to be a part of our church?