

Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church

124 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, NJ 08542-3224

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E-mail: witherspoon@verizon.net

Website: www.witherspoonchurch.org

Michael Livingston, Guest Preacher
Denyse Leslie, Lector
Edin Orellana, Sexton

Fumi Nakamae Korodan, Director of Music
Chun Tong, Guest Organist
Cynthia Parker, Office Manager

December 31, 2023

10:00 a.m.

First Sunday after Christmas

PRELUDE

Organ Instrumental

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 90)

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands —

O prosper the work of our hands!

Let us worship God!

GATHERING HYMN

Joy To The World (AAHH #197)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Scripture tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Scripture also promises us that we are now made right with God by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Acknowledging this truth about ourselves and with gratitude for the truth about God, let us confess our sins in God's presence and before one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious and loving God, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, we look back and recognize the many ways we have fallen short of your glory: missed opportunities to share your love; times when we were silent when we could have spoken up for what was right; indifference to your claim on our whole lives through Jesus Christ; and a lack of gratitude for your amazing grace by which you save us and call us to be your people. Lord, forgive us.

As we look ahead to a new year, free us from thinking we can save ourselves. Help us to follow where you lead. Show us how to be your children and your heirs, forgiven and freed to live for our God and for one another in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

*GLORIA PATRI

(PH #579)

**Glory be to 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.**

WELCOME OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

SPECIAL MUSIC

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen/We Three Kings Medley

**God rest ye merry gentlemen let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our savior was born upon this day
To save us all from satan's power when we were gone astray
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.**

**From God our heavenly father this blessed angel came
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same
How that in Bethlehem was born the son of God by name
Oh tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.**

Refrain:

**Woh, oh star of wonder, star of night
Star of royal beauty bright
Westward leading still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light.**

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown him again
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign**

Repeat Refrain...

**Glorious now, behold him arise
King and god and sacrifice
Hallelujah, hallelujah
Worship him God most high**

**God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay (4x)**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, as we hear your Word read and proclaimed, may it not return to you empty. May it accomplish that which you purpose. May it succeed in the thing for which you sent it. Open our ears and hearts to your Word that we may live as your children and heirs. Amen.

FIRST READING

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

¹I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

²I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

³You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David:

⁴“I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.””

¹⁵Happy are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance;

¹⁶they exult in your name all day long, and extol your righteousness.

¹⁷For you are the glory of their strength; by your favor our horn is exalted.

¹⁸For our shield belongs to the Lord, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

SECOND READING

Matthew 10:40-42

⁴⁰“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴²and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

SERMON

Welcoming the Children

Rev. Michael Livingston

PROFESSION OF FAITH

(from A Declaration of Faith)

**Jesus, the long-expected Savior,
came into the world as a child,
descended from David,
conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of Mary, a virgin.
He lived as a Jew among Jews.
He announced to his people
the coming of God’s kingdom of justice and peace on earth.
We affirm that Jesus was born of woman
as is every child,
yet born of God’s power
as was no other child.
In the person and work of Jesus,
God himself and a human life**

**are united but not confused,
distinguished but not separated.
The coming of Jesus was itself
the coming of God's promised rule.
Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity
that God always intended.
Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. Let us give thanks to the Lord as we continue our worship and bring our tithes and offerings.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Organ Instrumental

DOXOLOGY

(PH #592)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious and giving God, we give thanks to you for you are good. Your steadfast love endures forever. We thank you for the blessings of the past year and for how you have stood with us and guided us in difficult times. We give thanks that you will stand with us and guide us in the year to come. Bless these offerings that they may be used to your glory and in service to others in the name of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Help us to have grateful hearts and to live as the joyful people of God; through Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / INVITATION TO FELLOWSHIP

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

**We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

**Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

**Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
And bring it right here**

**Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

**We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
So bring it right here**

**Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

**We all like our figgy pudding
We all like our figgy pudding
We all like our figgy pudding
With all its good cheers**

**Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

**We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year**

CHARGE and BENEDICTION

SPECIAL MUSIC

Auld Lang Syne

**Should old acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind
Should all acquaintance be forgot
And auld lang syne**

**For auld lang syne, my dear
For auld lang syne
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne**

**We too have paddled in the stream
From morning sun to night
But the seas between us broad have roared
From auld lang syne**

**For auld lang syne, my dear
For auld lang syne
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne**

POSTLUDE

Organ Instrumental

Today's liturgy was created by Philip Gladden (The Presbyterian Outlook).

**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ARE LOCATED IN THE HALLWAYS TO THE RIGHT
AND LEFT OF THE PULPIT, THE NARTHEX, AND THE BALCONY.**

**OFFICE HOURS 112 WITHERSPOON ST.
MONDAY - FRIDAY 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

The CDC's most recent COVID Community Levels for Mercer County remain Low. Witherspoon's COVID protocols for in-church worship service going forward are that **masks are optional for in church worship for low risk parishioners and are highly recommended for people at high risk for severe illness in consultation with their health care providers.** Hand sanitizing before entering the sanctuary and social distancing within each pew such as sitting on the ends or in the middle of a pew are in effect. Self health screening at home is encouraged prior to worship. If you are not well, please stay at home and contact your healthcare provider. Witherspoon will continue to monitor our COVID Community Levels weekly and update our protocols when the levels change.



WELCOME – The Elders and Deacons of Witherspoon warmly welcome 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 if you are interested in church membership or if you want to be added to the church e-mail distribution list. (wITHERSPOON@verizon.net or 609-924-1666)

WE HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE! “Like” our Facebook page



(<http://www.facebook.com/WitherspoonStreetChurch>)

to get the latest updates on your wall. Share your WSPC comments, photos and videos. If you want pictures added or notices posted please send an email to the church office (wITHERSPOON@verizon.net).

GIVING TO WITHERSPOON STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Support our mission using your credit or debit card. On our church website, click on the *Give Now* button. **WWW.WITHERSPOONCHURCH.ORG** <http://bit.ly/WSPCGive>

For those who prefer to give through the mail, please send your donations to: 112 Witherspoon St., Princeton NJ 08542

IN APPRECIATION FOR THEIR SERVICE

Our Ushers and Tech Media Team

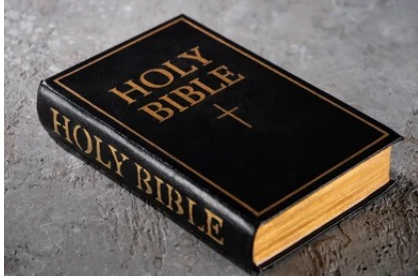
NEED HELP? Through generous donations by members and friends of Witherspoon, **THE DEACON BOARD** has resources available to provide monetary relief for members of our congregation who need **FINANCIAL SUPPORT** due to an extended illness, loss of a job, or other circumstances that are creating a difficult financial situation. We encourage you to let your deacon, the pastor, or an elder know if you, or a family member, needs financial assistance.

PATRICIA BUGGS AND BERNADINE HINES would like to thank the Witherspoon family and friends for the cards, calls, and words of compassion and kindness over the recent loss of Uncle Earl. He is very much missed. May you all enjoy a **HEALTHY, HAPPY AND JOYOUS CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



GUEST PREACHER
REV. MICHAEL LIVINGSTON

Rev. Michael Livingston is the recently retired Interim Senior Minister at the Riverside Church in New York City. He was the National Public Policy Director for Interfaith Worker Justice and worked for the National Council of Churches as Director of its Anti-Poverty Program. Rev. Livingston began his ministry serving congregations in Los Angeles at St. Paul's United Presbyterian Church and in New York City at the Hollis Presbyterian Church. He spent fourteen years at Princeton Theological Seminary as, first, its Director of Admissions and then as Campus Pastor and Director of the Chapel. Rev. Livingston served as President of the National Council of Church, USA, 2006-07. Michael is the fortunate husband of Nancy Rucker Livingston--49 years this past July! He is the father of two, Aaron and Megan, and has two amazing grandchildren, Zahahia and Senai. Michael and Nancy worshipped at Witherspoon during their years in Princeton. Nancy taught 25 years at Littlebrook Elementary School.



SATURDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

We invite you to connect with us each Saturday morning at 10 a.m. to study and discuss scripture. All are welcome to be with us as we learn together.

December 25 *Christmas Day and Beyond: Don't be a Stranger* (Isaiah 52:7-10; Matthew 2:13-23)

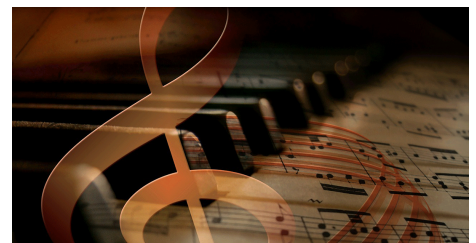
January 6 *Corinthians 6 and 7*



FELLOWSHIP HOUR BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS will be held **THIS Sunday December 31** immediately following the Worship Service. If you are celebrating a Birthday or Anniversary in December, the Deacons invite you, your family, and friends to join us in celebrating you and your important event on this the last Sunday of your special event month.

VOLUNTEER MUSICIANS

Do you have a gift that God gave you? Do you feel led to share it with us at Church? Volunteer Musicians for all instruments are needed to add to our Music Ministry for Sunday and Special Worship Services. Volunteer guitar player(s) (amplified, non-amplified or electric) are also needed for select Sunday Worship Music. We encourage you to come, rehearse and play with us!



Please contact Witherspoon Office to share your gifts with Witherspoon.

**GO TO OUR WEBSITE TO VIEW ANNOUNCEMENTS, FLYERS, AND
CALENDAR EVENTS:
[HTTPS://WWW.WITHERSPOONCHURCH.ORG](https://www.witherspoonchurch.org)**

**WATCH SERVICE ON WSPC NEW WEBSITE
WSPC website <https://www.witherspoonchurch.org>**

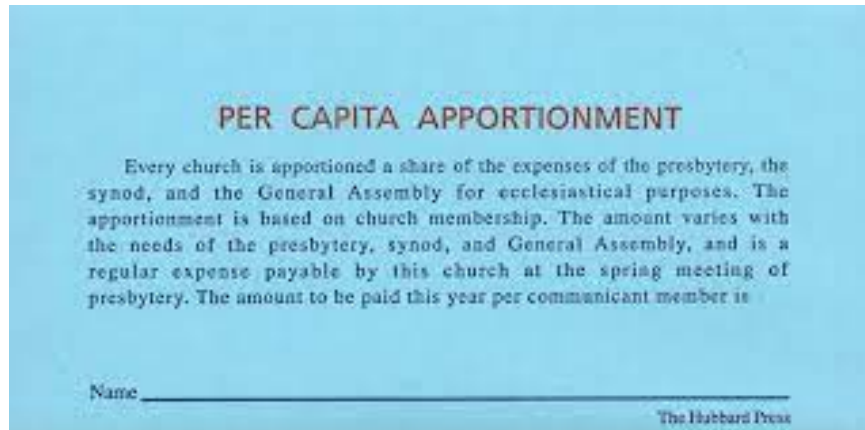
A MESSAGE FROM WITHERSPOON'S TECH/MEDIA TEAM:

Witherspoon is transitioning to a new streaming platform and Tech/Media staffing. Periodically we will not be able to stream to Zoom, YouTube and Facebook. **On this Sunday December 31, 2023 we will be streaming the Worship Service to Zoom and to YouTube.** We will continue to update our streaming availability weekly.

WITHERSPOON'S TECH/MEDIA TEAM

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN OPERATING THE SANCTUARY TECHNOLOGY TO
LIVE STREAM THE WORSHIP SERVICE ON SUNDAYS? JOIN OUR TECH
MEDIA TEAM AND LEARN HOW TO BRING WITHERSPOON'S MESSAGE TO
OUR CONGREGATION AND OUR ONLINE VIEWERS!!**

**EMAIL witherspoon@verizon.net FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SCHEDULE
TRAINING LESSONS!!**



2023 PER CAPITA \$40

Mail to 112 Witherspoon St., Princeton NJ 08542
or Pay Online <https://www.witherspoonchurch.org/give>

Witherspoon Session Makes a Last Appeal for Members to Submit 2023 Per Capita - Help Close \$2000 Gap

Witherspoon has a long tradition of paying our full Per Capita apportionment to the PCUSA and our Presbytery. We are committed to doing so again for this past year (2023). The Session asks those of you who have not yet paid to please submit your \$40/member per capita amount. If you can add an additional \$40 for members who cannot afford to do so, please do. Per capita connects Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations and mid-councils with the work of the larger Church. Session believes that paying our full per capita is an important element of belonging to a **connectional church** and a recognition that **Witherspoon has received support from the Presbytery and the Synod of the Northeast** over the years. We hope that 50 members will pay \$40 so Witherspoon can close the gap and raise an additional \$2000.

Pay Online [LINK](#)

By Mail - Check to 112 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08542

In Church - In Collection Plate during Worship Service



CHOIRS CONTINUE WITH A NEW SCHEDULE!!

We are continuing all Choirs rehearsing and singing at Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church during Worship Service with a new schedule!!

Both **CHOIR MEMBERS** and **NEW SINGING AND VERSE SPEAKING VOICES** are invited to join in fellowship in our **MUSIC MINISTRY** to meet, greet and work with Fumi Korodan our Music Director and Cecelia Hodges our Verse Speaking Choir Director to sing, speak in verse and review planned rehearsals, repertoire, scripts and upcoming music and verse speaking events. All are welcome to audition.

All are welcome to join us in rehearsal to prepare to perform at any time that you are inspired to begin membership in our Music Ministry! Please look forward to upcoming announcements about the new choir rehearsal schedule. All Choir rehearsals will begin promptly at their designated rehearsal times.

Our **MENS CHORUS** will rehearse on **Sundays** following Chancel Choir Rehearsal. The estimated starting time for Men's Choir rehearsal is 12:30 p.m. **Everyone is invited to sing.**

VERSE SPEAKING CHOIR

If you've been thinking about joining the Verse Speaking Choir, but haven't gotten around to it, now is the time! We'll be performing every third Sunday in church. The Choir meets at 6:30 p.m., on Tuesdays, in the sanctuary. Come and raise your voice in biblical, secular, and sometimes even fun selections. **EVERYONE** is invited.

Our **CHANCEL CHOIR** will rehearse on **Sundays at 11:30 a.m.** and will perform Anthems and Hymns on Sundays to be determined. Everyone is invited to sing.

For additional information and inspiration please contact WSPC office.

This Week at Witherspoon

Today	Worship - Guest Preacher Michael Livingston	10:00 AM
	Birthdays/Anniversaries Fellowship	11:00 AM
	Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	11:30 AM
Monday		
Tuesday	Verse Speaking Choir (Sanctuary)	6:30 PM
Wednesday	Sunday Worship Planning Group (via Zoom)	5:30 PM
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday	Saturday Morning Bible Study (via Zoom)	10:00 AM
Next Sunday	Worship - Guest Preacher	10:00 AM
	Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	11:30 AM