

Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church

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Princeton, NJ 08542-3224

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Website: www.witherspoonchurch.org

Rev. Ron Thompson, Guest Preacher
Bruce Campbell, Lector
Edin Orellana, Sexton

Fumi Nakamae Korodan, Director of Music
Cynthia Parker, Office Manager

August 20, 2023

10:00 a.m.

12th Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE

Piano Instrumental

CALL TO WORSHIP

Turn us, O God,
away from the world's temptations and distractions.
Return us, O God,
to the quiet calm of your presence.
Restore us, O God,
to the path you call us to follow.
Orient us, O God,
to the hope of all that is possible through you.

GATHERING HYMN

Blessed Assurance (AAHH #508) (PH #341)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us honestly acknowledge how we have gone astray and confess our sins to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God our refuge, you hear our cries for mercy. You lift the lowly and offer hope to the hopeless. But we, who benefit from your grace, do not emulate you and your ways. We are quick to condemn, exaggerate critique and act mercilessly. We confess the ways we demean and dehumanize others. We pray for your forgiveness. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Isaiah 43:1)

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

*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!

CHOIR ANTHEM

Halle Halle Halle Hal H. Hopson
How Great Is Our God ChrisTomlin, Ed Cash, JesseReeves

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. Open us to your life-giving Word. Quiet the voices within us that do not align with your will. Focus our minds on the message you intend for us so we may faithfully discern your way. Amen.

FIRST READING

Genesis 45:1-15

¹Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. ⁴Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷God sent me before you to preserve for you a

remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ ¹²And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

SECOND READING

Matthew 15:10-20

¹⁰Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” ¹²Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

SERMON

Forgiveness In the Family

Rev. Ron Thompson

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(from A Brief Statement of Faith)

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,

everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

**The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves
and to love God and neighbor,
and binds us together with all believers
in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

**The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.**

**In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God's abundance cannot be matched. Still, we are inspired to be generous by a generous God. We are inspired to give by the greatest of givers. In gratitude to God, let us present our tithes and offerings.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Piano 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 God, the gifts we offer reflect only a portion of all that you have given us. Take these offerings, we pray, and multiply them for your use.

May our offerings be a blessing to those most in need, to those most vulnerable. May our offerings, given in a spirit of generosity, abate the desire to hoard, and spread the desire to share. 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

Great Is Thy Faithfulness (AAHH #158)

CHARGE and BENEDICTION (1 Peter 2:5)

We are the Body of Christ, his hands, his feet, his heart, his lungs; Bearing witness in this world to God's mercy and love.

May the nourishment of God's Word, the accountability of Christian community, and the guidance of God's Holy Spirit fortify us for faithfulness. Amen.

AMEN

(PH #587)

POSTLUDE

Piano Instrumental



Today's liturgy was created by Teri McDowell Ott (The Presbyterian Outlook).

**CYNTHIA WILL BE AWAY FOR HER DAUGHTER'S WEDDING
MONDAY, AUGUST 21**

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 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 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

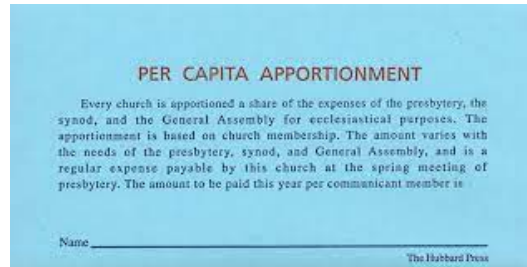
GO TO OUR WEBSITE TO VIEW FLYERS AND MORE CALENDAR EVENTS:
WSPC website <https://www.witherspoonchurch.org>

THERE WILL BE NO FELLOWSHIP HOUR BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN AUGUST.



GUEST PREACHER RON THOMPSON

Rev. Ron Thompson was born, raised and continues to live in Union County, New Jersey. Pastor Ron believes that he “can do all things through Christ,” who is the source of his strength (Ephesians 4:13). He has a BS in Organizational Management from Nyack College, New York as well as a Master of Divinity from Cairn University, Pennsylvania. His mother was instrumental in starting his early Christian training at the Greystone Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth, NJ. His Christian education and spiritual formation continued at the Greater Mount Moriah Baptist Church of Linden, NJ. There he would later receive his call to ministry. Pastor Ron was ordained as an Associate Minister in 1991. He accepted the opportunity to serve as Interim Pastor and then Pastor of the Imani Temple Baptist Church of Elizabeth, NJ. He is currently the installed pastor at Townley Presbyterian Church, Union, NJ. Pastor Ron built a career as a “tent maker” (co-vocational) enabling him to financially support his family, his educational expenses, and contribute to the advancement of the Gospel. He retired from the Bayway Refinery in Linden, NJ after 38 years. Ron has previously served as Vice Moderator and Moderator of the former Presbytery of Elizabeth. He has served on the Leader Search Team for the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey. Ron is currently a member of the Administrative Commission serving Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Vyonna, will be celebrating 43 years of marriage in June. They have two adult sons, Jeremy and Steven, and are blessed with three granddaughters and two grandsons.



2023 PER CAPITA \$40

Mail to 112 Witherspoon St., Princeton NJ 08542

or pay on-line <http://bit.ly/WSPCGive>

The Session asks Witherspoon Leadership and Congregation members to participate in the **2023 Per Capita Campaign**.

Witherspoon's expected 2023 contribution is **\$4,720**, Or \$40 x 118 members.

Per Capita contribution supports the work of three parts of our Presbyterian Church:

- 1. The PC(USA)** - 2022 RGJ-08 - Apology to African Americans for White Supremacy - Supports Reparations -- **Strategic Initiative that will benefit Witherspoon**
- 2. The Synod of the Northeast** - 2015 settled Robeson House Mortgage with a \$170,000 Gift; 2023 and 2024 Innovation Grants of \$15k, \$7500 supporting Joint WSPC - NPC Bending the Moral Arc Courageous Conversations.
- 3. The Presbytery of the Coastlands** - Provided the 2023 Administrative Commission, 2022 Investigative Commission, and Permanent Judicial Commission. This year, our three Commissioners are participating as trustees, on committees, and in meetings to secure Witherspoon's **Voice and Vote**.

As of **June or midyear**, of Witherspoon's **\$4,720**, members and friends have provided **\$1,600**, leaving **\$3,120**.

We ask each member to give **\$40 per family member**. Those who can provide another **\$40** or more for those who cannot, please do so.

Your generosity will be appreciated. The Presbytery tracks and reports Per Capita Collections quarterly starting **at the beginning of the fiscal year**, so making your contribution **Today** would be appreciated.

Those who want more information can consult the [Presbytery of the Coastlands 2023 Report on Per Capita](#), which presents contributions collected to date by the congregation. [Find more descriptive information at this LINK](#)

This Week at Witherspoon

Today	Worship - Guest Preacher Rev. Ron Thompson	10:00 AM
Monday		
Tuesday		
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 Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth	10:00 AM
	Chancel Committee	12:00 PM