

CAROL #25*

“Away in a Manger”

SERMON

“The Gift”

Dr. Louis Mitchell

THE RESPONSE

CAROL #60*

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS

L: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Hallelujah!

P: Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Hallelujah!

L: O Christ, splendor of God’s eternal glory, the mighty Word, sustaining the universe: renew our lives by your presence.

P: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Christ, born into the world in the fullness of time for the liberation of all creation: release all into your promised freedom.

P: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Christ, begotten of the Father before all time, born in a stable at Bethlehem: may your church be a sign of hope and joy.

P: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Christ, truly God and truly human, born to a people in fulfillment of your promises: fulfill our desires in you.

P: Lord, have mercy.

L: O Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, child of wonder and splendor, mighty God of all ages, Prince of Peace: may the whole world live in peace and justice.

P: Lord, have mercy. (Silent Prayer)

(Unison Prayer)

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into the world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Teach us to proclaim the birth of your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Unison)

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.

CAROL #31

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

THE GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory

“Joyous Christmas Tidings”

arr. Bill Ingram

Bell Choir

Hymn #592 (Hymnal)*

“Doxology”

Prayer of Dedication*

CAROL #40*

“Joy to the World!”

BENEDICTION*

POSTLUDE*

“In Dulci Jubilo”

J. S. Bach

Organ

***ALL WHO ARE ABLE MAY STAND**

Welcome to Worship at The First Presbyterian Church
Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service
December 24, 2015 - 11:00 p.m.

THE GATHERING

SILENT MEDITATION IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Noel Suisse

Louis Claude D'Aquin
Organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Please sign the red "friendship pads" found at the end of each pew by the center aisle. Note the names of those worshipping around you as you pass the pad back. We encourage you to greet each other after the service.)

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

The grace of God is with us now.

The Savior of the world has come.

Give thanks for the gift of grace from God:

Shine in our lives, Lord Jesus Christ.

CAROL #41*

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)*

God our Savior, we confess that we are not people of peace. You came to show us mercy, but we are not merciful to others. You came to establish justice, but we fail to seek what is right. Forgive us, God of grace. Let your light shine upon us to deliver us from evil and lead us in your holy way; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON*

HYMN #579 (Hymnal)*

"Gloria Patri"

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS*

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

CAROL #22

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9: 2-7

Pew Bible pg. 638

ANTHEM

"On the twenty-fifth December"
(Fum, fum, fum!)

Spanish,
arr. Laurence Davies
The Chorale

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2: 1-20

Pew Bible pg. 58

SERMON

“Past Perfect”

Rev. Suzanne Schafer-Coates

THE RESPONSE

CAROL #25

“Away in a Manger”

THE GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory

Noel: *“Une Vierge Pucelle”*
(*A Virgin Pure*)

Nicolas Le Begue
Organ

Hymn #592 (Hymnal)*

“Doxology”

Prayer of Dedication*

CAROL #40*

“Joy to the World!”

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise. [The Minister continues.]

God is praised for the history of faithfulness shown to God’s people. The congregation then joins the celestial choirs and all the faithful of every time and place to sing:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The prayer continues with thanksgiving for the life and work of Jesus Christ. The Words of Institution are recalled. The elements are set apart for their sacred use, and we offer ourselves to God’s service. Then, this response:

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died,

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again.

The presence of the Holy Spirit is sought, as well as God's blessing on our lives. The prayer concludes with a Trinitarian doxology.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

**Albert Hay Malotte,
arr. Donovan Klotzbeacher**

THE COMMUNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Please come forward by *the center aisle*. At the front, take a piece of bread and dip the bread in the cup before eating. Those unable to come forward will be served in their seats.

CAROL #23* *"Angels We Have Heard on High"*

LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES*

Great God, as you came at night when all was still, so enter our lives this night. Illumine our paths with the light of Christ's presence, that we may clearly see the way before us, the truth to speak, and the life to live for him, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING CAROL #60* *"Silent Night, Holy Night"*

*All join in singing "Silent Night." As the lights are turned down, the candles are lit signifying the birth of the Light of the World, our Savior Jesus Christ. **PRE-SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN SHOULD SHARE A CANDLE WITH AN ADULT. PLEASE PASS THE LIGHT BY PLACING YOUR UNLIT CANDLE IN THE FLAME OF THE CANDLE HELD VERTICALLY BY THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU. PLEASE BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO DRIP WAX ON THE CARPETING AND PEW CUSHIONS.** By passing the light in this manner, we avoid dripping wax!*

BENEDICTION*

(Please return your candle to the box in the Narthex as you leave.)

POSTLUDE*

"In Dulci Jubilo"

**J. S. Bach
Organ**

ALL WHO ARE ABLE MAY STAND*

Ushering for the 8:00 p.m. service are Joan Fraser, Ken, Anne, Sarah & Abigail Gordon and Jeff & Diane Yeager *and* for the 11:00 p.m. service are Jack & Sue Britton, George Conley and John & Brenda Kirkenir.

Thanks to our communion servers, Cassandra Khazem and Pat Scott and to Jo D. Andrews and Rev. Schafer-Coates for preparing the communion.

The Flowers in the chancel tonight are the beautiful Christmas poinsettias. They have been given to the Glory of God, in memory, in honor or as a gift of gratitude by many wonderful people. (Copies of the list are in the Narthex). **Please note:** Poinsettias may be picked up tonight after the 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service or on Sunday, December 27 after Worship.

We pray God's warmest blessings upon you for a joyful Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year. Our church provides many opportunities for spiritual growth and Christian service in our community and the world. This is a wonderful congregation.

We invite you to join us!

Thank you to all those whose gifts, creativity and labor created the beautiful Christmas decorations and Nativity scene!

Sunday, December 27, 2015

10:30 a.m. Worship Service followed by Coffee Hour
No Sunday School and No Youth Group

11:00 a.m. Meadow Lakes Worship Service

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Louis Mitchell
Parish Associate	The Rev. Suzanne Schafer-Coates
Associate Pastor Elect	Hannah Lovaglio
Cranbury Presbyterian Nursery School, Director	Janice Parker
CPNS Closed: 12/23 through 1/1/2016	(609) 655-8663

The First Presbyterian Church
22 South Main Street Cranbury, NJ 08831

Telephone: (609) 395-0897

Email: FirstPresOffice@comcast.net

Website: www.cranburypres.org

Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Church Office Closed: 12/25, 12/31, and 1/1/2016

Office Hours: 12/23, 12/28, 12/29, 12/30 will be 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon