**Frenchtown Presbyterian Church**

PO Box 114, 22 Fourth St. Frenchtown, NJ 08825

 908-996-2227

 Website: www.frenchtownpres.org

Pastor Cell - 609-303-0500

**Worship 9:30AM**

**Clerk of Session**

Kathy Skerbetz – 908-720-6533

**Session (Elders)**

Maureen Breiner Bill Penyak

Shari Bethman Bjellquist Paul Pfisterer

Jennifer Campbell Tonya Reese

Gayla Gerhardt Carl Stokes

John Fiebig Kathy Skerbetz

**Board of Deacons**

Carole Barrett Barbara Kerekes

Sharon Beck Lorraine Sellitto

Debbie Godown Eileen Warkala

Ken Gerhardt Amy Verecha

**Pastor**

Rev. Dr. Merideth Mueller-Bolton

pastormerideth@gmail.com

**Church Secretary**

 Lea Raymond

 office@frenchtownpres.org

**Financial Manager**

 Mary Ann Hampton

 finance@frenchtownpres.org

**Music Director**

 Hugh Sung

hughsung@gmail.com

**FRENCHTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**December 10, 2023**

**Welcome to all who worship with us this morning!**

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

 **God Gathers Us in Love**

Call to Worship

Leader: The God of Love offers hope to a weary world.

**People: May our hearts be open to receive the good news.**

Leader: The Lord of Light shines through the darkness. **People:** **May our eyes be open to see the Light.**

Leader: Let us worship and sing; let us praise the God of Love and Light.

 **People:** **May we reflect the love with which we are**

 **surrounded.**

Advent Candle Lighting

\*Hymn #100 “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

 **God of tenderness and love, breathe your grace into our lives. Forgive our wandering ways, and guide us along your paths of peace. When we lose our way, and forget the reason and purpose of this season, carry us back to you. Call us out of the darkness, and show us again the bright Light of your love. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness

\*Passing of the Peace

Gloria Patri#113 Refrain: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

 *Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

**God Speaks to Us Through God’s Word**

Scripture Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

 *Hymn #90 Refrain: Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.*

 *Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

Scripture Reading John 8:12-19

Sermon “A Strange Unearthly Light”

**God Calls Us to Respond**

\*Hymn #107 “Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn”

Invitation to the Offering

Please consider donating online using our QR code (aim your phone’s camera here, then click on the link that appears):

Offertory - Choral Anthem “The Promised King of Heaven”

Prayer of Dedication

\*Doxology #108 vs 6 “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Reception of New Members - Cliff Dunham and Martha Torma

 \*Affirmation of Faith - The Apostles Creed (unison)

 **I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

 **I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.**

\*Fellowship Hymn: #306 v.1 “Blest Be the Tie that Binds”

 Prayers of the People and The Lord’s Prayer

**God Sends Us Out to Reflect God’s Love**

\*Hymn #79 “Light Dawns on a Weary World”

Charge and Blessing

Benediction

Benediction Response #92 “While We Are Waiting, Come”

 *Light through the darkness, come.*

 *Light through the darkness, come.*

 *Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel;*

 *Light through the darkness, come.*

Postlude

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

We are a body of believers in Jesus Christ the Lord that strives to be a living reflection of God’s love. We come together to confirm our individual faith while spreading the message of hope and love by serving those in need through mission and outreach.

**NEWS AND EVENTS**

**EVENTS DURING THE WEEK** –**Dec. 11-17**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

 AA Meeting 6:30am

 Card Games, 1-4pm in Fellowship Hall

 AA Meeting, 8pm

**Wednesday**

 Food Pantry Meeting, 2pm

 AA Meeting 7:30pm

**Thursday**

 AA Meeting 6:30am

**Friday**

 Alanon Meeting 12-1pm

**Saturday**

 Saturday Women's AA Group Meeting 9am

 Susan Rake Memorial Service 1pm

 AA Meeting 7pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

Sunday Morning December 24th – 9:30am regular worship service

Christmas Eve - 7pm Candlelight Service

**Poinsettia Orders**

Flower Orders due **TODAY.** $8.50 Red or White. Order forms are available at the back of the church. Flowers can be picked up to take home after the Christmas Eve Service.

**Angel Tree**

Angel Tree tags are now on the tree in the Rotunda. When choosing a tag, don’t forget to enter your name, telephone number and email address for the tag number you are taking on the sign-up sheet. The gifts must be dropped off at the church, in the rotunda, by WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20. Please wrap the gifts(s) and attached the Angel Tree tag. If you have any questions, contact Debbie Kacerek Cooley at 908.995.7770 or by email FPCPantryon4th@gmail.com.

**Christmas Cantata**

Join us this afternoon at 2pm for a musical celebration of the Christmas story by Lloyd Larson, “A New and Glorious Morn!” This is a fun cantata that tells the Christmas story through music featuring favorite carols and some original music. This event is free.

Help with donations of finger food snacks for after the Cantata would be appreciated!  Contact Sharon Beck if you can help at 908-752-3822.

**5th Saturday Event at FPC**

FPC 5th Saturday event will be a Coffee House and Open Mic night on December 30th from 7p-9:30pm. There will be scheduled performers as well as Open Mic time. Local art will also be on display. Admission is free with Pantry Donations encouraged. Light snacks, refreshments & dessert will be served.

**End of the Year donations**

The end of the year is approaching quickly. Please make sure all donations intended for 2023 be received by December 31, 2022. All donations after that date will be credited to 2024 - No Exceptions. Please contact the church office at 908-996-2227 if you have any questions.