**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, August 5, 2018, 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Call to Worship**

The scent of the Bread of Heaven has called us together

**For when we pray, a window to heaven is opened**

Let the joy of the feast to come fill you in this place

**For whenever we gather at this table, we are filled to overflowing with God’s love**

The Holy Bread we share with each other, for God’s gifts are for sharing

**In sharing with one another, we see the face of Christ. Let us worship God!**

**Prayer of the Day**

Lord, you are the Bread of heaven,

We gather not for ourselves alone but for your kingdom to be shown

On earth as it is in heaven.

May

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

O Lord our Shepherd, maker of heaven and earth,  
we lift up our eyes to the hills,  
looking for your mercy and forgiveness.  
You watch over us night and day,  
and yet our feet go astray;  
we slip, stumble, and fall into sin.

We confess that we do not watch for your guidance,  
trust in your protection,  
or offer your comfort to others.  
Forgive us.  
We need you to save us from the evil we bring on ourselves.  
We need you to guide us as we go out into the world  
and come back into your presence.

Restore us, we pray in Jesus’ name,  
for he promises your mercy from this time forth and forevermore(silence) **Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Let yourself live and believe this good news:  
**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 51:1-12**

Have mercy on me, O God,

according to your steadfast love;

according to your abundant mercy

blot out my transgressions.

**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,**

**and cleanse me from my sin.**

For I know my transgressions,

and my sin is ever before me.

**Against you, you alone, have I sinned,**

**and done what is evil in your sight,**

**so that you are justified in your sentence**

**and blameless when you pass judgment.**

Indeed, I was born guilty,

a sinner when my mother conceived me.

**You desire truth in the inward being;**

**therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**Let me hear joy and gladness;**

**let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

Hide your face from my sins,

and blot out all my iniquities.

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**

**and put a new and right spirit within me.**

Do not cast me away from your presence,

and do not take your holy spirit from me.

**Restore to me the joy of your salvation,**

**and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

**Time out for Teaching: Wicked Bad 2 Samuel 2:1-3ff**

So, based on what we know from these three lines, what is sin?

What happens after David calls Bathsheba to his house?

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Ephesians 4:1-16**

1I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

7But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people." 9(When it says, "He ascended", what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) 11The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. 14We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. 15But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

**2 Samuel 11:26-12:13**

26When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. 27When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

1But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD, and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. 2The rich man had very many flocks and herds; 3but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meagre fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. 4Now there came a traveller to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." 5Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; 6he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

7Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; 8I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. 9Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. 10Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. 11Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. 12For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." 13David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan said to David, “Now the Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die.”

**Sermon: You Shall Not Die**

It isn’t really my place to criticize…

But just between us, I am continually amazed that the Lord allowed the King, my husband, live. I may be “just a woman” but I was brought up very familiar with the courts of the King and with the Lord’s Law. I am more highly educated than most Jewish women of my time. My father was a great warrior of King David, and my grandfather none other than Ahithophel the Gilonite, who was a very close counselor to the King.

My name is Bathsheba and I know my way around the royal court. Many years have passed since King David took me as his wife and I provided the King a son, named Solomon.

But before you think that it was all wine and roses with us, let me too you a story. It didn’t start out that way.

I found out years after he married me and I became Queen of Israel (those other 6 wives had nothing on me!), that he actually spied me taking my ritual bath and that this is what led him to call me to his palace. When the king sends for you, you come. It mattered not what I wanted, only what he wanted. (mind you, I was married already, to one of his warriors, Uriah, whose name, by the way, means “The Lord is my light.”)

I was ashamed of what happened next. The king made me pregnant. The King committed adultery. And God knows he took advantage of me because he was the all-powerful King. I know my Torah. I’m very fortunate that God understands I had no choice and that God did not put me to death. But the story gets even worse before it gets better. I learned by word of mouth, in the royal courts, that not only did my King commit adultery, he committed murder. They word around the courts is that the King arranged it so that my husband Uriah would be killed in battle. Now that I know David more personally, I wouldn’t put it past him. When I learned of this, I was angry. He violated two, really three, of God’s commandments – adultery, deceit and murder. And, I was passed from being wife of Uriah to wife of King David. I have tried to see it on a positive side, for I have moved up in my social rank from a warrior’s wife to Queen of Israel. In some ways, I am better off now than I once was.

But I just cannot shake the feeling that the Lord could have punished David more severely. I still have rage inside me and I still think of what he did to me and what was taken away from me. I shall never forget the day when I was told Uriah was dead. I walked about in public with ashes on my head and wailing loudly! I loved Uriah and was ready to start a family with him. And when the Prophet Nathan confronted David about it, he did it using a parable and allowing David to draw his own conclusions about the sins he committed. I thought the parable was about me, the little ewe lamb, but he thought it was about Uriah.

I don’t think David has ever realized that he had offended me too, from the moment he saw me taking my bath. But he did repent before the Prophet, and God promised to put away his sin. To David’s credit, he was humbled by the words of the prophet. If God can do that for the King, who committed adultery, deceit and murder, then God can do it for just about anyone who repents. God did not say that all David’s problems were gone. He still lives with the consequences of his actions. We are still dealing with the repercussions of his choices, for in the House of David we’ve seen terrible things happen to his children – jealousy, rape, murder and more. We shall never escape the ripple effect of his sin, nor any of our sins. But God has forgiven him. And, depending on how you see things, sometimes this life we live in the royal court can feel like we are cursed with the effects of our sin. But we have the choice – and the better way is to realize we are lucky to be alive. To live and learn is a gift from God. We are free of the guilt but always called to learn from our mistakes. We all have a choice in life – to see our mistakes as either a curse or way to learn about God’s graciousness towards us. On that day, Nathan the Prophet said to him, “The Lord has put away your sin. You shall not die.” God’s gift to David and to all of us is the chance to live even after we have royally screwed things up. My name is Bathsheba, the Queen, the mother and advisor to the good and wise future King Solomon, and he shall be wiser than his father David. Amen.

**Service of Holy Communion**

**Invitation**

At this table, we remember the life, death, and resurrection of our savior who bids us to go out sharing Good News and practice acts of forgiveness with ourselves, our neighbors, and our enemies. This table is for those who feel certain and those who feel frightened. This table is for those who feel filled by the Spirit and those who are seeking to be filled. This table does not belong to the Presbyterian Church, it belongs to Jesus Christ—and it is he who invites all to share in the bread and cup of peace, love, and life everlasting.

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with You

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them unto the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Our souls long to give you thanks and praise, O God,  
just as the deer longs to quench its thirst in springs of water.  
When reality itself was thirsty for you, Living God,  
you poured out the living water of your presence;  
through day and night, you called creation into being.  
We join our souls, hearts, and minds  
with the multitude of your creation  
singing praise and thanksgiving for your good works.  
We put our trust in you,  
and we give thanks to you, our help and our God.

From the depth of your compassion to the depth of our sin,  
you sent your Beloved, Jesus the Christ,  
to show your faithfulness every day,  
to sing your song of joy every night,  
to teach us your ways, O God of our life.  
When it appeared that your strength forgot him  
and our enemy Death claimed the victory,  
you were yet present  
and made the grave itself a spring of living water.  
We put our trust in you,  
and we give thanks to you, our help and our God.

In your righteousness, O God,  
pour out your strength upon us again.  
As we gather around this meal of bread and cup,  
draw us near to you  
and lift us up with the lightness of your Breath in us.  
Send forth your Spirit of light and truth to lead us,  
and bring us to the place you dwell in all people and places.  
Then let us worship in joy and gladness,  
in spirit and truth,  
in song and service,  
with all your people in every time and place.  
We put our trust in you,  
and we give thanks to you, our help and our God.

We pray through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  
who prays with us as we say together:  
**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Distribution of the Elements**

**Prayer after Communion**

Lord Christ, you have

Poured out your Holy Spirit upon us  
in the sharing of this meal,  
So you have united with each other through you,  
and with all who magnify your name.  
Sustain us with your presence  
and keep us faithful to the end,  
singing with joy and confidence of the life eternal you give.

Amen.

**Announcements:**

**Women of the Church:** Tomorrow evening the Green Chile Gals are meeting after work for their monthly fellowship meal at the church. We’re doing it potluck style. Invite a friend!

**Deacons Fund:**  We are trying to revive the traditional First Sunday of the month to remember the Deacons’ Fund. The Deacons Fund sends flowers to our members in the hospital, makes purchases for funeral dinners and more. Please consider opening your heart to how we care about the flock!