**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, February 14, 2020, Transfiguration of the Lord**

**Call to Worship (please see bulletin)**

**Prayer of the Day**

Holy Spirit, blow your presence through this place.

We praise you in the company of the saints above and beside us

For all that they have done in your service

For all that we are trying to do in your service.

For those whom you shall send in your service after us.

Strengthen this house of faith,

That nothing shall ever stand between us and you

And your mission never be interrupted.

Through Christ, the only Son of God we pray,

Amen.

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession (please see bulletin) (please see bulletin)**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, Believe the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 50:1–6 (please see bulletin)**

**Prayers of the People**

With our whole hearts, we praise you, Lord.  
We lift up our alleluias as people who gather to sing and proclaim,  
As people who gather to confess and to remember Your redeeming work  
As people who gather read and tell of your mighty works,  
of your faithfulness and  
of your grace.

All glory belongs to you, God.  
You are gracious and compassionate.  
You provide for us all that we need,  
Remembering your promise to hear when we call,  
To answer when we knock, and  
To reveal yourself when we seek you.

You have revealed your power to us in so many ways:  
You heal the sick  
You calm the frightened  
You bring peace to the grieving  
You change the course of our lives

We ask that you reveal you power again today for those on our hearts and minds….

We lift these names to you. To you they are much more than names-  
They are your precious children  
They are parents, sisters, brothers, children, bosses, employees, aunts, uncles…  
They are yours. You know every detail of their lives, far better than we do.  
You know their needs.

We can trust you with our prayers,  
not only because we know you have the power to answer,  
but because we have seen that you are faithful and just.  
The promises we claim today are the same as those your  
people have claimed across the generations

Through your Son, you have redeemed your people.  
You bring beauty and good from what we -in our brokenness and ignorance –  
have intended for evil.  
And in time, you will redeem the world,  
Bringing an end to death  
And the beginning of an eternity of worship  
When every tribe, tongue and nation will sing songs of praise

Until then, we wait.

Help us not to spend our days looking up at the sky.  
Send your Spirit that we might see the world as you do,  
Fill us with your compassion for those in need  
Of shelter, of a friend, or of an advocate  
Send us to the brokenhearted, the discarded  
and those who are hungry for the transformation only you can bring.

While our hearts cry Come Lord Jesus,  
let our hands reveal your presence in the world we inhabit.

We ask these things in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray saying  
Our Father, who art in heaven….

**Time Out for Teaching: Why Join A Church? (re-printed from 2018)**

So today I want to talk about church membership. One of the obvious benefits/joys of belonging to a church is you get to have a voice and a vote in choosing your leaders, and maybe even be given a chance to become and Elder or Deacon yourself.

Another joy is when you join, the congregation makes a promise to support you and pray for your journey through life.

I got to witness yesterday the first gold medal won in the Winter Olympics so far. It was by the youngest Olympian since the 1920’s – Red Gerard, a snowboarder from Colorado. With him there were 18 family and friends cheering him on. He’s the youngest of 7 kids.

That’s what a church looks like at best. An extended family who supports you and cheers you on.

But we do that already, even for those who have not joined the church rolls. So why join a church? Would anyone like to venture a guess?

A public declaration of faith does the Body good to hear and witness. In a day and age where few people want to join formal structures and who claim that a personal faith is private, it helps us in our own faith journeys to hear others state what they believe. Church is a participatory place and being there, physically present, with others who are able to talk about what they think and believe is healthy and good practice.

We claim membership in a Body that is diverse in points of views. We proclaim the fullness of God’s kingdom by joining up with others who we might not otherwise have considered our friends or family. But in a church, we are bound by something much more important than secular politics or even just special hobbies or interests. It is the Blood of Christ which binds us as family. We provide each other with a diversity of Christian role models.

**Prayer for Illumination**

God our Parent,  
your voice claims us as your people  
and calls us into new relationships  
with ourselves and others.  
By your Holy Spirit, help us hear your voice speaking to us  
through these words of scripture,  
and prepare us for your service,  
in Jesus’ name. Amen.

**2 Kings 2:1–12**

1Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. 3The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?” And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent.”

4Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho. 5The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know; be silent.”

6Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” But he said, ”As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on. 7Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. 8Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

9When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.” Elisha said, “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.” 10He responded, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.” 11As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. 12Elisha kept watching and crying out, “Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

**Mark 9:2–9**

2Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 4And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” 6He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” 8Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

9As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

**2 Corinthians 4:3–6**

3And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake. 6For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**Sermon: Peter Tells All**

Hi. My name’s Peter. My family calls me Simon. I have something to tell you. Something finally makes sense to me. It was a few years ago that our Lord Jesus found me, my brother, and James and John – they were brothers – down on the beach of the Sea of Galilee, and he called to us to become fishers of people. We had no idea what we were in for when we dropped our nets and walked away with him.

Jesus was gifted with the Spirit of the Lord. He could teach better than any Scribe I’d ever seen. He could tell demons to go away and they obeyed him. He could heal people, and he didn’t have to be in the same room with them. We knew he was truly special. And then one day…

Even though he had other disciples besides us, he asked three of us to travel up a mountain with him. We figured he just wanted to pray together because we did that a lot. But this time, it was different. Much different. Before we knew it, our Lord Jesus was suddenly bathed in heavenly light, glowing so brightly we could barely see, his clothes shone brighter than the sun. And even though it was so bright, we couldn’t take our eyes away off him. It was terrifying and fascinating all at once!

And to add to it, standing beside him were two other figures, who we knew were Moses and Elijah. Until that day, we didn’t even know what they looked like, for they had been dead long ago, but there they were. It was the Spirit of the Lord helped us recognize them. Then, out of the clouds, God’s voice, like music, declared Jesus to be God’s beloved son. Before we knew it, it all went away, Moses and Elijah, the shining light, the cloud - gone.

I remember it like it was yesterday.

The whole thing was perplexing, frightening, and revealing. Jesus stood there with the two greatest prophets in history, talking with them, as if they were old friends, as if they knew each other as like family. But what was even more perplexing, was that Jesus made us promise that we wouldn’t tell a soul, not even my brother Andrew, about what we had just seen. It bothered me. I wanted so much to hold forever that momentary glimpse of heaven. I also wanted to tell someone about it. Jesus didn’t want me to do anything but hold that moment in my memory and be patient. Everyone who knows me knows I have trouble with patience! He knew me better than I know myself. For he often admonished me for being impatient and brash and opinionated.

For a while, we had to keep this secret to ourselves. Can you imagine how that felt? The three of us would exchange glances sometimes, especially whenever Jesus would mention the suffering and death of the “Son of Man.” We would whisper amongst ourselves, wondering how we could ever hold the secret. But then we would realize, even if we did tell someone, the transfiguration of our Lord would be so hard to describe, let alone explain, to someone who hadn’t seen it with their own eyes. We got to see - just for a moment Jesus’ true nature, his hidden identity. We got to see him in a whole new light.

What a secret we had to keep!

It wasn’t until after Jesus died, and then three days later returned from the dead, resurrected, that that secret moment finally began to make sense. The Son of God dead. The Son of God then risen from the dead, a Resurrected Body. And I knew it was possible. I still wonder, “Why me?” Why did Jesus want us to know his secret? After all the silly mistakes I’d made before that time and since, I am humbled that the Lord allowed me to see what I’ve seen. I still make mistakes, he continues to give me the honor of having the keys to his church. I will never be perfect like him. Now we know that we can live because life is eternal.

As for keeping that secret, I have learned that it can take a lifetime to know someone, especially the one who has defeated death. And He knows me so well. He teaches me to be patient in getting to know him and his flock. Sometimes we have to wait on the Lord, and as the Lord said that day, “Listen to him!” I know. I beheld His glory. It is real. Amen.