**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

*The Church With the Holy Spirit Window*

**October 3, 2021 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Rev. Amy Pospichal, Pastor Marjorie G. McKenzie, Accompanist

**BH 181 Come Sing to God**

**BH 268 God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens**

**BH 322 Spirit of the Living God (Prayer for Illumination)**

**Green Book 22 We Are One in the Spirit**

**Call to Worship**

In the beginning, when God created, God looked at the world and called it good.
**Not only way back when, but even now, God is creating, calling us to join the work of making the world good.**
Earth and water and air, plants and animals and people, made from dirt and word and love.
**God gifts us all this and more, so that we can glorify and enjoy God forever.**
Come, let us worship God together.

**Opening Prayer**

Show us your ways, O Lord!
Lead us in your truth, and teach us.
Open our eyes, minds, and hearts
to know your will and to follow it.
Reveal your vision for us,
and keep us focused and faithful to what you would have us do.
Bring us together to worship and work for your purpose,
and move us forward into your future. **Amen.**

**Call to Confession**

God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and God’s mercy endures to all generations. When we confess our brokenness, God’s grace offers us a glimpse of healing. Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, let us confess with open and honest hearts our failure to live up to God’s call. Let us pray.

**Confession
Creator God, you made us to live together with you. We confess that we are sorely tempted by the opportunity to be our own gods. We admit to you that we have tried shortcuts to wisdom—we think we know what is best, when really we know just enough to do harm to your creation and your beloved people. Forgive us for acting so arrogantly out of our limited human perspective. Forgive our disobedience, and give us ears to hear your word, and hearts ready to obey your will.  *~silence~*  Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**In the beginning, God breathed life into being, and every morning God’s mercies are new. Know that you, child of God, made in God’s image, are forgiven, loved and free. Believe and live the good news:
**God’s goodness is planted more deeply than all that is wrong. Thanks be to God!**

Friends, Believe the good news of the Gospel.

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**\*Gloria Patri**

 **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.**

**Psalm 26:1-12**

Vindicate me, O LORD,

for I have walked in my integrity,

and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

**Prove me, O LORD, and try me;**

**test my heart and mind.**

For your steadfast love is before my eyes,

and I walk in faithfulness to you.

**I do not sit with the worthless,**

**nor do I consort with hypocrites;**

I hate the company of evildoers,

and will not sit with the wicked.

**I wash my hands in innocence,**

**and go around your altar, O LORD,**

**singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,**

**and telling all your wondrous deeds.**

O LORD, I love the house in which you dwell,

and the place where your glory abides.

**Do not sweep me away with sinners,**

**nor my life with the bloodthirsty,**

**those in whose hands are evil devices,**

**and whose right hands are full of bribes.**

But as for me, I walk in my integrity;

redeem me, and be gracious to me.

**My foot stands on level ground;**

**in the great congregation I will bless the LORD.**

**Offering**

**Prayer for Illumination BH 322 Spirit of the Living God**

**Time out for Teaching: Elements of Christian Worship – Light**

 Every Sunday, as we begin our service of worship, one of you takes responsibility for lighting the candles. Light is an ancient element of worship, both in Christian tradition and in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, which involved the presence of enormous lampstands to give light in that great big stone Temple.

What good is light in worship? Let’s start with the basics.

What does light do?

Who is our Light?

Ancient church began with light, to not only shed light for them to see each other, for in some places they gathered to worship in the catacombs, ancient underground burial grounds. The light was also a means of reminding them of the first day of Creation, as the Lord said, “Let there be light!”

There has been an interesting movement in our denomination (now about 15 years old or more) called “More Light Presbyterians.” This movement has been known a lot for the inclusion of LGBTQ people in ministry and worship. But the concept is just what light is about: the idea that we need more light to be shed on God’s people, so we all see more than before.

**Job 1:1, 2:1-10**

1There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

2:1One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. 2The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 3The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." 4Then Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives. 5But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." 6The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life."

7So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

9Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die." 10But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

**Gospel Mark 10:2-16**

2Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" 4They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." 5But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. 6But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 7'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

10Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; 12and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

13People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." 16And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**Sermon “Come to the Table” Rev. Amy Pospichal**

 As the weather cools off and the mornings are a little more comfortable – and the mosquitoes are under control – I have discovered that I have a dog who daydreams. At least, it seems like he does. Bruce the 70-something pound pit bull loves going for walks. And it seems like whenever we walk around at Dunn Park, he stops for a moment, stands very still, and gets a faraway look in his eyes. Surely I exaggerate some. But he seems to be meditating on a certain smell, a sound I cannot hear, or is looking again for the jack rabbit we’ve seen before there. It also gives me a chance to stop and watch him, and try to imagine how it must feel to be him, in a place that probably most closely resembles doggie heaven.

 When we spend time with our pets, or with anyone in general, we can get to know what they think about, and try to imagine what things must look like from their perspective. It is refreshing to consider things from the point of view of someone so absolutely different from ourselves, and to realize the world is a completely different place to some people from the way we’ve always seen it.

When I lived in Austin, Texas, I attended a large downtown church located just a few blocks from the capitol building. Audley and Kathy were a couple in our church who were both blind. They traveled to and from church via city bus, with their service dogs and canes, crossing city streets and faithfully arriving every Sunday for church. They amazed me. They knew who I was by the sound of my voice after just meeting them a couple of times. They were keenly aware of their surroundings. And they often surprised me with their constant positive attitude.

It can help us expand our imaginations and compassion – when we try to imagine things from another point of view. Jesus is often trying to shed more light on things, to expand our horizons so that our own minds do not become prisons. Today, Jesus wants us to think of the kingdom of heaven from the point of view of a child. Jesus is concerned with the family. He expresses very clear views on divorce, declaring that it was a provision for those whose hearts are hard like those of the Pharisees. But, he tells his disciples privately, divorce proceedings have much bigger and painful repercussions than we want to think about. That’s when Jesus says, “Let the little children to come to me…” for it is to they whom the kingdom of heaven belongs. Okaaay, Jesus. We were just talking about divorce and now about children.

This is an important place in the story, for it breaks from one teaching on divorce and starts with a discussion on having a childlike point of view. It is a seam between two stories. We first have a story in which Jesus is interrogated about Mosaic Law on divorce, and then Jesus declares how we should all be more like children, when it comes to the kingdom of heaven. He didn’t exactly change the subject. He shifted the whole perspective. Let’s talk about something more important. Let’s talk about finding inside of ourselves that child of God, that child who belongs on Jesus’ knee. Who when God calls, comes running with joy and wonderment. And that is exactly what happens in the last piece of this story. Children are invited and Jesus takes them on his knee. This almost never happened with children, and his message was for us to learn from the children who come running to him.

Childlike wonder and excitement seem to be operative in this story. Instead of worrying about Mosaic Law and the hardness of heart which leads people to divorce, let’s talk about the joy of belonging to the Lord. Rather than getting all bent out of shape like the Pharisees, let’s come and sit on his knee and let Him hold you a while. Instead of arguing from the perspective of our hardness of heart, let’s imagine the openness of a child’s heart.

But you have to be ready to answer Him when he calls. Let us all be just a little more filled with wonder, with the hope of a child, set aside the things that cause hurt and division. And let us laugh. Let us stand in the glow of the sunrise with our dogs and/or with each other and absorb God’s Love. This life we have is far too precious to sit and wait in the shadows for a better day. That day is now. The Kingdom of Heaven is now. We can find it here, when we come to the table and let our Savior serve us. He wants to feed His children, so that, when we are filled with every good thing at His table, we can turn around, with the innocence of His children to serve the world.

On this World Communion Sunday, we are aware of God’s children who are starving for food and hope around the world. The Wall Street Journal reported recently that COVID has led 1.1 million children in the world to lose one or both of their parents. As we approach this table today, remember the hunger of others, imagine what this world must look like through their eyes. And remember, come to this table today, wide-eyed with wonder, for Jesus is here to receive you all. Amen.

**Service of Holy Communion**

**Invitation**

This is not my table.
This is not our church’s table.
This is not our denomination’s table,
or an American table,
or a table reserved for the wealthy or well-connected.
This table is reserved for sinners,
for the poor,
for those who are cast out,
for those who hunger and thirst.
This table is reserved for all the baptized.
This table belongs to Jesus Christ.
Come.

**Words of Institution**

**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 Him our thanks and praise**

We praise and thank you, Lord,
because you do wonderful things.
In Jesus Christ, you make your salvation known
for all people,
completing the faithfulness you promised
to the house of Israel,
which you remember still.

Through these gifts of bread and cup,
we join all the earth in praising you.
Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
as we share in this meal.
As you feed us,
make us instruments of your praise
and servants of your faithfulness.

Keep us faithful in Christ’s service
until he comes at long last to establish justice and plenty on the earth.
We pray with and for all people,
joining in the prayer Christ taught, saying…
*The Lord’s Prayer*

**Receiving the Body -** the body of Christ, the bread of heaven

**Receiving the Blood –** the blood of Christ, the cup of salvation

**Prayer after Communion**

God of glory, in this holy meal
you show us your will for every meal.
In Christ’s strength, let us live and work
for the day when all tables are filled with your abundance
and surrounded by your people in peace.
In Jesus’ name. Amen.

**\*Benediction**

**Prayer Requests:**

Amy (Glenna Gray’s daughter) chronic medical issues
Betty (Alzheimer’s) and Dolores (paralyzed) – Glenda’s sisters
Boy from Atlanta, and his mother – 2 more weeks of medical treatment in Arizona

Family of Clay Schuster, who are recovering from COVID

Dorothy Randals – at Autumn Blessings, for strength and comfort
Elmer Schuster - leg pain, final dental surgery
Fay Birch – stage 4 cancer, grief at loss of husband, Larry
Glenda Coles – shoulder surgery (likely to be on 10/8)
Gloria Martinez (Teresa Gallegos’ sister) – needing leg surgery

Hannah Mericle - stroke

Jenna Morris – injured knee, doctor's visit end of the month
Lavone Bond – for good health!

Lissa – Glenda’s granddaughter (high risk pregnancy)
Lucy Jasper  – Dementia
Lynn Hawkins – still seeking a home closer to her doctor

Family of Marlon Terry
The Nava Family – has COVID

Odelia Moya - hospitalized with COVID, not doing well
Pat Sieglen – health and strength; please pray she can go home
People seeking jobs, and people seeking employees

Family of Rudy Pacheco
Ruth Johnson – for general health
Sarah Hittson's daughter Marie - surgery
Schools, students, teachers and families
Sharon and Wayne Huffman – general health
Shay – Julie Sursa’s daughter
Susie – still seeking a car, planning for EMS school
Susan – Susie’s step-daughter, seeking a career change in criminal justice

Tammy Lucero – 1 round of chemo, thanksgiving for successful surgery
Travelers
All those suffering from COVID19

**Announcements:**

**October Bible Study:** Rev. Amy is looking at starting up a brief, Fall Bible Study. Try to make time for an evening, weekly study of 1 Corinthians. This wonderful, 16 chapter letter discusses life together as a Christian community and how we can live our lives in light of the grace of Jesus Christ. Stay tuned for more details.

**No October Rummage Sale:** This fall, the Presbyterian Women will not be having our usual Fall Rummage Sale. However, we plan to have a sale and could use your help. We will be selling items through Facebook and eBay. Please let Marjorie McKenzie know if you are able to help us make it a success!