**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

***The Church With the Holy Spirit Window***

**June 5, 2016 Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**11:00 a.m.**

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

**Prelude**

**Call to Worship**

I will praise God with all I have, because God has lifted me up.

**We have cried to God for help, and God has healed us.**

When we are at the lowest point, in the absolute depths, God has restored us to life.

**Weeping may linger for a night, but joy comes in the morning.**

Do not be silent; let us praise God!

**We will give thanks to God forever.**

**Opening Prayer**

It's a new day, O Lord,

And we rejoice in your presence.

We look forward to a good word from you,

A chance to commune with you at this table.

Open us also to the chance of reconciliation with you and your people,

As we gather in prayer to confess our sins,

That we shall be made new in you.

Renew us for your purpose. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**\*Opening Hymn**

**Call to Confession**

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

**Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Gloria Patri**

**Psalm 146:1-10 (please see bulletin)**

Praise the Lord!

**Praise the Lord, O my soul!**

I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

**When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish.**

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God,

who made heaven and earth,

the sea, and all that is in them;

who keeps faith forever;

**who executes justice for the oppressed;**

**who gives food to the hungry.**

**The Lord sets the prisoners free;**

**the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

the LORD loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the strangers;

he upholds the orphan and the widow,

but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**The LORD will reign forever,**

**your God, O Zion, for all generations.**

**Praise the LORD!**

**Offering**

**Time Out for Teaching: The Second Letter of the Alphabet is 'R'**

"Trusting in the gracious mercy of Jesus Christ,

Do you turn from the ways of sin...

Because of God's grace on us, we are free to explore the second letter of the Presbyterian alphabet - R. R is for repentance. Why does repentance seem necessary?

Repentance calls us to be honest with God about our sins – both what we have done and what we have left undone. And being honest with God also means we have to be humble and open to criticism. John the Baptist, with that voice crying out, "In the wilderness, prepare the way for the Lord, let every valley be raised up and every mountain laid low..." Interestingly, the Greek word, for "laid low" is the very same verb for "humbled" - and it means to be "flattened out." In the presence of God we can do nothing but be lowered, so we might be raised in Christ.

Repentance also means to turn around, to change our minds and hearts and turn towards God. This means automatically to turn away from what we have been doing, thinking wrongly. It is the way we become new creations in Christ. And as it says in the letters of John, "If we think we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us," implying that it is even a sin to think we have no sin. But, "whenever we confess our sins, we are cleansed of unrighteousness..." Then, we are able to be "in Christ" once again, reconciled, renewed, freed, so we can then as new creations, lead the lives God calls us to lead. Thanks to be God for repentance, the means to our own empowerment, the opportunity of a lifetime!

**Hymn**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**1 Kings 17:8-16 (17-24)**

8Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9"Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you." 10So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink." 11As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." 12But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." 13Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. 14For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth."15She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. 16The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

**Luke 7:11-17**

11Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. 13When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep."14Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!"15The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!"and "God has looked favorably on his people!"17This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

**Galatians 1:11-24**

11 For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; 12 for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. 14 I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. 15 But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. 18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; 19 but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. 20 In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, 22 and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; 23 they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God because of me.

**Sermon "Flipping" Rev. Amy Pospichal**

One of the most popular TV shows on Home and Garden television channels nowadays is about people who flip houses. It's fun to watch these professional architects and designers purchase houses that look like they are beyond repair, lost causes and - through sponsorships from the likes of Kohl water faucets and Behr construction equipment, a home becomes utterly transformed, into something you wouldn't even imagine. It's pretty cool. I think these shows are popular because people like to see the process of change, learn new decorating tricks, and naturally, who doesn't love before and after photos?

When you re-sell a house you've completely transformed, it's called "flipping." It's a business that costs a lot of money up front, a lot of hard labor, but it must be satisfying to see the fruits of your labor. Most of us don't have the time or money to flip houses, but it is nice to know something can be salvaged that no one thought was possible to save.

Sometimes we are the ones who need a good flip, and get re-purposed. We look back on times in our lives when we thought we - or someone else - was a lost cause, beyond saving. Maybe you think that of yourself even now. John Calvin referred to this state of sin and brokenness as "total depravity," which means that, no matter how much work you pour into yourself, no matter how much you do, you will never be completely rid of the impressions that sin or evil leaves on you. We are complicit, inasmuch as we try to do good, with the perpetuation of brokenness in God's world. From the thoughts that plague us with temptations, to our appetites which have leaked CFCs into the ozone layer. I guess this is why nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ can save us because we are definitely "fixer-uppers." But we're not alone. The Galatians were also "fixer-uppers" too.

At the time of Paul's letter, the house of God in Galatia was experiencing some serious problems with their faith foundation. They have fallen prey to false apostles claiming that, in order to garner God's love and favor, one must become circumcised. In the first chapter of Galatians, Paul shares with them the depths of his own mistakes, how wrong-headed he was about Jesus. How, so zealous as he was for the traditions of his ancestors, he violently persecutes the Church. He wants the Galatians to understand that even though he himself is circumcised, God found him in need of grace. He says, "I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. But [when] God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles..." In other words, it was grace, not his circumcision, that saved him. And it was through grace that Paul discovers God's purpose for him. Like flipping houses, God re-purposes Paul. Before and After shot: Once a persecutor, now an evangelist. A new creation.

Paul was a definite "fixer-upper." He shares his story of before and after with the Galatians so that they understand that it's not what they do that saves them, it is grace. God already loves them. God has endless power to change people. And so, when we respond to the revelation of grace, when we recognize that we need God to become better, we can then find out how God wants to use us.

Just this past month, a young man named Kevin Morton walked down the aisle and received his Medical Degree. A journalist interviewed him, and said, "Can you believe you are a doctor now?" and Kevin said, "No, not yet. It's crazy!" When he was 22 years old, he worked the night shift at an Arby's and while locking up at night, he was shot and left for dead. The trauma surgeon thought he didn't have much of a chance of survival. He was bleeding internally and had to be stitched up a little extra. The surgeon believes it was a combination of medical know-how and miracles. Kevin was saved. And he was so grateful he was changed forever. He was saved for a purpose. An ancient Rabbinic saying goes, "If you save one person, it's as if you saved the world."

We hear stories of transformation in other peoples' lives, not just so we can be entertained and amazed. Paul shares his story so that others understand God's power and plan, called him through his grace, for a special purpose. Paul isn't the only one who can claim this fact. We can all claim this for ourselves, set apart, called through grace, for a new and special purpose. They are to broaden our own imagination of God's power to change us all and make us vessels of grace. Jesus saves us with His grace, and you and I, embracing this fact, are changed forever. We are fixer-uppers. But we are not beyond hope. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**Service of Holy Communion**

**Invitation**

Friends, you are invited to this table where we encounter the living, Risen Christ. The heavenly banquet reminds us that God is with us always. This table is the intersection of heaven and earth, where together we meet Him, in reconciliation and grace. Here may we find strength and nourishment for our spirits and fed by God, we are then sent as His apostles into the world.

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

May God’s presence be with you!  
**And also with you!**  
People of God, lift up your hearts to the Holy One.  
**We lift them up to the One Who Lives.**  
With prayer and celebration, with lives lived in love, let us praise God in reverent silence and shouts of joy!

**We will praise God, waking and sleeping, singing and laughing, in thought and deed. Thanks be to God!**

Holy and Beloved God, the Source of Life, we offer you our thanks and praise! Your presence is felt within us all, like the warmth of the fire on a chilly spring morning – and your holy presence wraps around us, so that we can see you in all things. There are times when our vision falters – and then, you send your Prophets, who help us see you more clearly. There are times when we feel abandoned and alone – and then, you send your Word to hold us close to you, so that we can hear your heartbeat, and be comforted.

Together with those who are offering their eternal thanks and praise, with those who shout with joy, and those who love you in their innermost being, we sing our praises to you:

**Holy, Holy, Holy are you, Source of All. You fill all of creation and time with your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who walks in your Way. Hosanna in the highest!**

You offer us your Word, your Way, your Truth, your Life, beloved God. Your Love continues to be revealed in the person of Christ, who teaches us to pray to you, to love each other, and to teach, heal, and make disciples wherever you lead us. Christ lives in your Shalom, and calls us to live in peace and understanding.

As we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we speak the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on all gathered here, in body or in spirit. And pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and cup, that we too would be filled with your wisdom and discernment, your grace and love, your transforming light and your eternal life. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in your image in the world. When we gather at this table, may it be a taste of the banquet of Heaven to come, when Jesus returns in celebration and glory. Blessed are you, beloved God – beloved Christ – beloved Spirit – together the One Source of all that is and that shall ever be. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Distribution of the Elements**

**Prayer after Communion**

God of grace, you have given us all things, and you have fed us with Christ’s presence through this sacrament. We commit ourselves to you now, and we give ourselves to the work of your kingdom, which is upon us in Jesus’ life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

**\*Closing Hymn**

**\*Benediction**

**Announcements:**