**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

*The Church With the Holy Spirit Window*

**Sunday, August 9, 2020 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

**Hymns:**

**RH 371 Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know**

**RH 475 Amazing Grace**

**RH 85 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise**

**Call to Worship**

Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done.

**He remembers his covenant forever; the word he commanded, for a thousand generations.**

Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

**That they might keep his precepts and observe his laws. Praise the Lord.**

**Prayer of the Day**

God of Creation,
all of the world proclaims your praise,
from the highest heavens to the deepest recesses of the sea.
Make our voices true and faithful
as we join the voices of all of creation to sing your praise. **Amen**.

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

**O Holy One, we call to you and name you as eternal, ever-present, and boundless in love. Yet there are times, O God, when we fail to recognize you in the “daily-ness” of our lives. Sometimes shame clenches tightly around our hearts, and we hide our true feelings. Sometimes fear makes us small, and we miss the chance to speak from our strength. Sometimes doubt invades our hopefulness, and we degrade our own wisdom.**

**Holy God, in the daily round from sunrise to sunset, remind us again of your holy presence hovering near us and in us. Free us from shame and self-doubt. Help us to see you in the moment-by-moment possibilities to live honestly, to act courageously, and to speak from our wisdom.** *~silence~* **in Jesus’ name**. **Amen**.

**Assurance of Pardon**

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He has not dealt wit us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Friends, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God!**

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b**

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,
**make known his deeds among the peoples.**Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
**Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.**Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
**Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered,**O offspring of his servant Abraham,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

**When he summoned famine against the land,
and broke every staff of bread,**he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
**His feet were hurt with fetters,
his neck was put in a collar of iron;**until what he had said came to pass,
the word of the Lord kept testing him.
**The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free.**He made him lord of his house,
and ruler of all his possessions,
to instruct his officials at his pleasure,
and to teach his elders wisdom.

**Praise the Lord!**

**Presentation of Offering and Offertory**

**Time out for Teaching: “Living on Corona Time”**

I want to ask you a question. Raise your hands if the pandemic has you so addled that you have trouble remembering what day of the week it is. On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the worst, raise your hand if you are at about a 2?

A 5?

An 8?

God made time and blessed it, according to Genesis, by separating the lights in the sky from the dark. Time has been slipping by and yet, we no longer have the same routines that we used to have. We can’t really go lots of places. We don’t have the same kinds of activities and events by which we usually know the time of year and what goes on. I am used to saying, 4th Wednesday of the month is Dutch Treat Dames, first weekend in May and October is Rummage Sale…Next week would be about the time for the Quay County Fair.

 Time is still holy even when we have lost track of it. I would like to ask you what are ways that have helped you stay on track. For me, it is to make routine that I can live with, since very little out there is happening to tell me the time of year! We also have to think of creative ways to be the church, visit each other more or remember those who may be the most isolated.

**Prayer for Illumination**

Author of our Lives,
we praise you for writing us into your narrative of salvation.
As characters in this chapter of your story of creation,
help us tell the truth of your steadfast love and mercy
to all who have ears to hear. **Amen**.

**Romans 10:5-15**

5Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” 6But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) 7“or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

14But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

**Gospel Matthew 14:22-33**

22Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. 25And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. 26But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. 27But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

28Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” 29He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” 31Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” 32When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

**Sermon: “Beautiful Feet” Rev. Amy Pospichal**

St. Francis of Assisi is known for many things, but one of his most famous quotes is, “Preach the gospel and use words, if necessary.” Preach the gospel, and use words, if necessary. This is a reminder to us all that words are powerful things, but the gospel in its rawest form, doesn’t necessarily require words, but action. God uses us, not just our words and minds, but also our whole bodies, to deliver the gospel. And as they say, “actions speak louder than words.”

The reading from Romans ends with a very powerful line from Paul: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” He recognizes in that section of his letter that if it were not for those who travel to bring the gospel to others, those others might never have known the beauty of God’s compassion and grace. Paul has been discussing the fact that some of us rely on knowledge of the Law of God, rather than having faith in God. But before we rush to judgement here, Paul is not AGAINST God’s Law. He loves it like any good Pharisee. But he knows that it is not adequate for human knowledge, for it still calls for us to trust the Law as a sign of God’s love for Israel. But where things fall apart is when we humans attempt to fulfill the Law of God alone without faith or righteousness.

Paul is saying that Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s law, and is more perfect in human form as a gift to us than words in a book. This gift, Paul wants the Romans to know, is more tangible, palpable by the fact that God chose to make human form. The physicality of Jesus – God in the flesh – makes everything all the more real. As with the story from the gospel today as Jesus appears to the disciples on the water. And when he beckons Peter to come out and walk on the water too, and Peter begins to cry out in fear, Jesus grabbed him and said, “You of little faith. Why did you doubt?”

In retrospect, we may also see those times when we cry out to Jesus, and we realize it was due to our little faith that we doubt. All the more reason to remember that it is not just a thing in our minds that should call forth faith. It is our entire selves and experiences. Jesus was born in the flesh for the very purpose of giving us an “full body treatment” with the gospel. By grasping Peter’s hand to pull him up out of the water. By breaking bread on the beach and grilling fish after the resurrection. By fishing with them. By touching and healing others. And how beautiful the gospel is, when we appreciate it coming to us in many different ways. It is not just words on the page or a Law on stone tablets. It is a full-body experience of grace and salvation.

The Body of Christ and our individual bodies are sacred vessels of good news. “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” There is a song that echoes that line called, “How Beautiful.” Performed by Twila Paris, she sings of the beauty is the Body of Christ. Some of the words go like this:
“How beautiful the hands that served
the wine and the bread
and the sons of the earth.
How beautiful the feet that walked
the long dusty roads
and the hills to the cross.
How beautiful
how beautiful
how beautiful is the body of Christ.
How beautiful the heart that bled
that took all my sin
and bore it instead.
How beautiful the tender eyes
that chose to forgive
and never despise.
How beautiful
how beautiful
how beautiful is the body of Christ.
…How beautiful when humble hearts give
the fruit of pure lives
so that others may live.
… How beautiful the feet that bring
the sound of good news
and the love of the King.
How beautiful the hands that serve
the wine and the bread
and the sons of the earth.

What this song does is connect the fact that Jesus Christ used his body in many ways to serve us, when He walked this earth with his beautiful feet. And it reminds us that WE are the Body of Christ, and we carry on that gospel. How beautiful is the Body of Christ, in Tucumcari, New Mexico. I cannot help but think about a visit I made with Dorothy Randals this last week. She, Kathy and I enjoyed each others’ company, visiting and learning about each other. Then, Jina showed up with her handyman, Vince. Almost no time had passed before we were all trading stories about our families and loving each minute of it. How beautiful is the Body of Christ.

In times when it seems like so much ugliness surrounds us, and words seem cheap, we can find ways to share the beauty of God in our workplaces and homes. The beauty of Christ can shine through us, even if we don’t feel beautiful. Preach the gospel always, and use words when necessary. Be beautiful, friends, with Jesus as our example. Amen.

**THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

**Social Distancing and Personal Protection.** Please respect one another’s space, observing the 6-foot distancing between one another. Please remember to wash your hands on the way out today. If you need a protective face covering, please notify the pastor and she can help you.

**Monday Sabbath**. Rev. Amy is returning to her original practice of observing the Sabbath on a Monday, instead of Fridays, as Fridays are often busy times.

**Session Meeting:** Today after worship, The Elders are called to Session. Elders are welcome to bring a sandwich.

A song that I have been quite fond of for many years is a song performed by singer Twila Paris. It’s called “How Beautiful”. The words go like this: