**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, January 27, 2017, 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

**Prayer of the Day**

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

**Prayer of Confession**Thank you, Lord, for hearing our prayers.  
**Guide us in the true way of life as we follow you today. Amen.**

**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 19(please see bulletin)**

**Prayers of the People (add Gavin, Patti Dobson’s Nephew)**

Let us pray to God saying:  
God of Wisdom, **draw near to us**

Ever-present God,  
we look around the world and we see places where people cry out to you:  
in places torn by the ravages of war,  
in countries demolished by natural disasters,  
in areas of rural Kentucky where there are no jobs,  
in families across our state who have been devastated by opioid addiction.  
Help us bear your light into the places in the world that need illumination and healing.  
God of Wisdom, **draw near to us.**

Gracious God,  
give us a gentleness born of wisdom  
that we might go out into the world and serve as your ambassadors.  
In order to do that, bless us with the wisdom needed to do so –  
a wisdom that is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield,  
full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.  
God of Wisdom, **draw near to us.**

God of all mercy and grace,  
give us the courage to seek you out,  
to search our hearts for your truth,  
and to be guided by the stories of scripture.  
Since our hearts do not rest until they rest in you,  
lead us to the pastures of your protection,  
that we might be faithful members of your flock.  
God of Wisdom, **draw near to us.**

Healing God,  
we pray for those among us this day who need your love:  
for those who struggle with depression’s grip,  
for those who journey with physical disabilities,  
for those who are lonely,  
for those who are hopeless,  
for those who are addicted,  
for those who are angry and bitter,  
for those who are broken and battered,  
and for those we lift up to you in silence this day…  
God of Wisdom, **draw near to us.**

Giver of Hope and Truth,  
hear us today as we pray the prayer you taught us to pray, saying: **Our Father…**

**Time Out for Teaching:** **“With God’s Help”**

If you have been a part of this church for more than 2 years, please raise your hand. 5 years? 10 years? How about 20 years, even if it was off and on? More than 20? For those who have been here for a short time, you might not realize that this collective gathering is still getting to know one another better. Did you know that in 2015, we had about 35 members (about 25 regular attending) and we had 7 funerals that year? The next year, 13 people joined the church! That’s exciting, and also has been a spiritual challenge to interweave us, for it was as if we were a very different group.

We are still small, bearing our wounds, as well as our very best gifts God gave us.

Our reading from 1 Corinthians today seems to recognize the wide diversity of people who confess faith in Jesus Christ – people of many colors, shapes, sizes, backgrounds. Also a diversity of gifts people bring with that. Can you think now for a moment – what different roles do we see happen in our church, official and unofficial?

(I seat minimum: decorators, organizers, those who discern God’s will for us – that would be our Elders, people who take care of others, those who imagine new projects for the people, cooks, dishwashers, and more. Hands and feet, strong stomachs, generous hearts, strong backs. Historians, note takers, fixers of broken things. Chefs, chair and table movers, planners of dinners. Visionaries, discerners of God’s will, gift givers.)

**Prayer for Illumination**

***We submit our hearts to your will, O Lord,***

***As we seek your Word in Scripture today.***

***Remove the things that blind us to your Word made Fresh,***

***So we may live your Word made Flesh.***

***Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart***

***be acceptable to you,***

***O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.***

**Luke 4:14-21**

14Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. 15He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

16When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 18"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, 19to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." 20And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

**Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

1all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. 2Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. 3He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

5And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

8So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

9And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

**1 Corinthians 12:12-31a**

12For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.

**15**If the foot would say, **"Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,"** that would not make it any less a part of the body.

**16**And if the ear would say, **"Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,"** that would not make it any less a part of the body.

**21**The eye cannot say to the hand, **"I have no need of you,"**

nor again the head to the feet, **"I have no need of you."**

22On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31But strive for the greater gifts.

**Sermon: Hanging Out**

The situation of the church in Corinth was dire. They had become fragmented, frightened, uncomfortable with the diversity of their church congregation. They had come from many walks of life, different levels of education, different cultural values, maybe even different color skins and religious backgrounds. Yet, in spite of their different ways and perspectives on their faith, God had brought them together, by the work of the Holy Spirit. If it weren’t for the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives, they probably wouldn’t be hanging out together at all!

We celebrate diversity in the church today, for it is both a joy and inevitable about our contemporary world. And so, Presbyterians tend to celebrate diversity. If you crack open the Presbyterian Book of Order, one of our charges is to ensure that all our church councils, from our own church of Elders and Deacons, all the way up to the national denominational committees and commissions, reflect the diversity we have in our church, along all different lines - ethnic, gender and abilities. It is not because of Equal Opportunity Employment laws. It is because we confess that God’s mercy is deep and wide, and that many voices speaking through our can help us hear a fuller expression of God’s will for the Church.

The hard part is discerning God’s will, together, in love, out of the many voices.

The Church in Corinth was struggling. They had many different voices but the unity and the love had waned. Maybe they were just weary of conflict, or frightened and unable to know how to include one another. Paul offers them many ways throughout 1 Corinthians on how they can consider reconciliation through the Cross. Here, he simply tells them they have stopped valuing each other, they have stopped seeing themselves and each other as useful. “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” or “I have no need of you.”

How sad it sounds to me, to believe we don’t belong to Christ’s Body! And equally sad it is, to think the same of someone else! Paul reminds them that they actually NEED each other, they cannot carry on together as the Church if they begin to think they don’t. How sad it is when just one person thinks he is the church, or when someone feels that they don’t fit in. This is the good news. Not only do we truly need each other, the church cannot exist without each and every one of you. You are the product of God’s miraculous work of faith, which draws you together in a fellowship that is unique in all the world, a fellowship of many kinds of people from different walks of life.

Paul reminds us that just like in any other body, the hands cannot exist without the ears and heart and lungs.

This message from Paul is really for those of us who believe that the Church is the Body of Christ. It’s for those of us who believe already that Jesus Christ formed the Church, gave it to the world as an example of God’s Kingdom alive and well. It’s for those of us who know that there are fruits of faith that can be borne in a church when people come together to worship, do mission, and talk about what we believe. One in Christ Jesus, we believe in the power of God’s people to celebrate the Church in the world.

You bring the gifts God gave you, every Sunday and for many of you, every day (even losing sleep sometimes!), and you become an essential part of God’s Kingdom. Your vote today at our meeting matters. If you’re not a member, your ideas matter to us! Those who have agreed to serve as Elder and Deacon – each of you matter. There are always more opportunities to be the hands, the feet, the strong backs, the brainiacs, note takers, fixers of broken things.

The Good News is, in order to stick together as the Body of Christ, all we need to do is remember to be grateful for one another’s presence. And, to say to each other: “I have need for you.” And “Because I am a (casserole chef, chair and table mover, knitter, medical professional, financial planner, fundraiser – whatever you are!), I belong to the Body.” For a few years now, friends both old and new ones, God has been weaving us together with new threads, in order to hang together well, to be the picture of Christ’s Body. We need each other. Thanks be to God for the gift of each other! Amen.

**Announcements**

**Final Call to Annual Congregational Meeting:** Today is the Day! We will be electing new people to the Office of Elder and Office of Deacon right after the service. Do you wish to be nominated to a position of Elder or Deacon? Please ask someone to nominate you during the meeting. Non-Members are welcome to stay and observe.

**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

**Annual Congregational Meeting**

**Agenda**

**January 27, 2019**

**1. Call to Order/Quorum/Opening Statement**

**2. Receiving the Annual Report to the Congregation**

Financial Report

All other reports

**Action Items:**

**4. Election of Officers**

Nominations from Committee

Nominations from the Floor

**5. Approval of Pastor’s Terms of Call**

**6. Prayer and Benediction**