**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

*The Church With the Holy Spirit Window*

**January 2, 2022 Second Sunday After Christmas**

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

**RH 496 Jesus Shall Reign Wherever the Sun**

**RH 176 We Three Kings of Orient Are**

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

**BH 411 Arise, Your Light is Come!**

**Call to Worship**

What are you looking for?
**A better job, a bigger house, a smaller car, my cell phone.**
What are you looking for?
**A vacation spot, a quiet moment, my coffee mug.**
What are you looking for?
**Peace, wholeness, love, acceptance…**
What are you looking for?
**You, Jesus, we are looking for you, but we are too busy to realize it.**
Let us worship the One in whom all things are possible.

**Opening Prayer**

Christmas God,
because you came to us as a helpless little baby,
we are reminded that each of us, young and old alike, are your children.
As we enter this new year, help us to enter it with joy, expectation

Acceptance of your Son our Savior.

Ground us first in the power and grace of your Spirit,

So that we know that we need nothing more than what you offer to us

Through Jesus our Lord, the Newborn King of all Creation! Amen.

**Call to Confession**

Christ has been born and has come before us.
Now let us come before him and confess that which we have done
that is contrary to his peaceful kingdom on earth.

**Confession
We are told by your holy word to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. But too often we clothe ourselves with hurtful garments; we clothe ourselves instead with stubbornness, selfishness, impatience, rudeness, and apathy.
Help us to clothe ourselves with love that the peace of your son might rule in our hearts. This we pray in your merciful and forgiving name. This we pray in your good and gracious name.***~silence~* **Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**Hear the Good News of the Gospel:
God has broken into our broken world and saved us from ourselves.
With God’s help, we are now able to put on clothes of righteousness and justice.

Friends, in the name of the Jesus Christ, you and I are forgiven!
**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 147:12-20**

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!

**Praise your God, O Zion!**

For he strengthens the bars of your gates;

he blesses your children within you.

**He grants peace within your borders;**

**he fills you with the finest of wheat.**

He sends out his command to the earth;

his word runs swiftly.

**He gives snow like wool;**

**he scatters frost like ashes.**

He hurls down hail like crumbs-

who can stand before his cold?

**He sends out his word, and melts them;**

**he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.**

He declares his word to Jacob,

his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

**He has not dealt thus with any other nation;**

**they do not know his ordinances.**

**Praise the Lord!**

**Offering**

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

**Time out for Teaching: “Having a Healthy Diet”**

 So, today we are going to have a very special supper. Have you had supper here before?

Let’s go behind the big table and I will show you what this supper is about.

Standing here behind the table, what do you see? (people, windows, light, the candles…)

What do you see on this table?

When we eat dinner at our homes, do we have these fancy brass plates and cups, and a giant cross here? Why do we do it here?

What do we eat here? What do we drink here?

So, here we eat bread and drink juice. How do you like that? I like bread and juice! They are kind of like comfort food, right? I mean, maybe I could go for a cookie instead. But bread is really good because it is something that we could live on, if we really had nothing else to eat. And what do you think about this grape juice? Do you like that? It’s sweet, and if it tastes too sweet, at least it’s just a little tiny cup.

If we really had nothing else to eat in this whole wide world but bread and juice, I think that might be just about enough. That’s what we can also say about Jesus. When we eat of this bread and drink from that cup, we can remember that our God helps us feel strong every day! We can say thank you, God for giving us strength and for giving everyone else strength too. Let’s pray: Dear Jesus, Thank you for surrounding us with your power and strength. Remind us we have the strength to do right, to remember that you love everybody, including ourselves. Please help us to remember you are there to help us with our problems. Amen.

**Jeremiah 31:7-14**

7For thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,

and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;

proclaim, give praise, and say,

"Save, O LORD, your people,

the remnant of Israel."

8See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,

and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,

among them the blind and the lame,

those with child and those in labor, together;

a great company, they shall return here.

9With weeping they shall come,

and with consolations I will lead them back,

I will let them walk by brooks of water,

in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;

for I have become a father to Israel,

and Ephraim is my firstborn.

10Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,

and declare it in the coastlands far away;

say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,

and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

11For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,

and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

12They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,

and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,

over the grain, the wine, and the oil,

and over the young of the flock and the herd;

their life shall become like a watered garden,

and they shall never languish again.

13Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,

and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,

I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

14I will give the priests their fill of fatness,

and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,

says the LORD.

**Ephesians 1:3-14**

3Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. 5He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight 9he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 10as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, 12so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. 13In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

**Gospel John 1:1-18**

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

10He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. 15(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") 16From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

**Sermon “The Smallest Candle in the World” Rev. Amy Pospichal**

 Every Sunday morning, all around the world, people who love God gather together in churches, in storefronts, by riversides, in front of their TV screens and computers, cell phones, zoom meetings…and they watch the same thing. Someone lights a candle.

 On Christmas Eve, when they turn the lights down low, a candle is lit, from the wreath that signifies the arrival of our Lord, a baby in swaddled in cloth, a tightly-wrapped little gift who means salvation to the whole cosmos!

 That light travels – every Christmas Eve – from this rather small candle to another candle. And from that candle, it spreads as each of us pass it to someone else! We might have small candles here, but no matter! The light has the potential to just grow and spread.

 For each of us, we have one another, to share light with. It’s very hard to be that sole and lonely light. God gives us the gift of fellowship, the gift of God’s power and Spirit, to help shape our faith, in fellowship with one another. We humans, whether introverts, extroverts, Type As, Type Bs, or some of us wild types, we need each other. We all have experienced the difficulties – and at times joys and pleasures – of being isolated in a way. Ever since the start of 2020, we began to travel this new and strange path of uncertainty. Today, I believe we are still learning much and it can be hard for some of us to trust what people say anymore. It might change tomorrow! I especially am thinking of the impact of COVID-19, which continues to mutate.

 And during times like these, we are often searching for those little lights, shining in the darkness. Tiny lights that illumine their own particular niche, those who if fueled by God’s great love, will show us just what life in God’s kingdom should look like. Little lights, like my neighbor down the street, who diligently makes masks for people who may have lost theirs. She made one for me early last year. And, early this year, she made me another one when I lost mine. And she made it with little gold crosses. It’s the one you see on me often. Little lights, like those professionals who have essential jobs. They have had to continually figure and re-configure how to carry out their work – teaching, caring for those who are ill, first responders, social service workers, and many others. They have had to determine how to remain calm and compassionate. They have had to carry out their duties, at times also with their families at a risk. My sister in law is a 1st grade teacher and has described for me in great detail her ritual of cleaning herself up, changing her clothes, after coming home from work, in order that my brother and her younger son are not put at risk. There have been so many examples of those little candles, shining in the darkness. We look to these millions around the world who have decided to shine, at times had no other choice but to shine, and we are blessed enough to bask in their glow.

 Let us also remember to give thanks to God for them and to thank them. Our church has a lot of these bright and shining lights. In fact, I am really amazed at what percent of this congregation has been so very busy in the trenches, working overtime to keep their lights lit. I know that it is not easy. And I know that during that time, you were probably also somewhat invisible to the world, unless we already knew you, prayed for you, loved on you from afar. It’s hard to keep on shining, if it feels like no one is looking. I know this too.

 The most wonderful part about this however is, if it is God’s glow, then let God do the shining through you. God desires to work through you, so the whole world notices! For if we are shining our lights for God, then God wants to help you do that! We can shine a light on poverty in our city, shine a light on homelessness and hunger. We can shine a light on addictions. We can also shine a light on those persons who have made this world a better place to live, shine a light on those who worked away in the dark and fearful world, who felt like a solitary little candle at risk of burning out. But God’s Word, made Flesh to dwell among us, is indeed also that light. And as we enter this new year of 2022, let’s keep our lights burning bright, fueled by the very wisdom of our Lord, who is brighter than the sun. Our Savior, God’s own Son. Shine on, friends. No matter what dark oppresses you. For in God’s power, nothing not even the darkest night - can put out this light. Amen.

**Service of Holy Communion (please turn to RH 235 to sing in response to the Body and Blood of Christ)**

The Lord be with you.  **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts.  **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Good and gracious God,
we thank you for your presence among us,
that you would bring us the eternal Word made flesh,
that you would call us your beloved children,
that you would send your light into the darkness.
To you we ascribe all thanks and praise,
for you alone are our hope and our salvation.
Through the power of your speech,
you brought all creation into order;
all things have come into being through you;
not one single thing is exempt from your creation.

With all creation, with people in every time and place,
we join the everlasting chorus:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.  Hosanna in the highest.**

We remember how, on that holy night,
Mary and Joseph could find no place to stay,
so they found a manger and made their bed with the animals of the stable.
Through these marginalized people seeking refuge,
you made your presence known to the world.

We remember how the shepherds and the wisemen gathered
to worship the child who would redeem all of creation.
Their gifts were brought to pay homage to the true King.
We give you thanks for the gifts of this Table,
which are given to us to proclaim your holy and majestic name.

We remember how this child grew up,
growing in wisdom and in years,
embodying your goodness in word and deed,
healing people, comforting people, loving stranger and friend.

We remember how he gathered his friends on the night he was betrayed,
how he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying:
“take, eat, do this in remembrance of me.”

Likewise, he took the cup and, pouring it, said:
“this is the cup of salvation, shed in my blood, for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

For as long as we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the resurrection of our living savior until he comes again.

As we wait, watch, and wonder with the wisemen and the shepherds,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

We give thanks for your gifts of grace and goodness in this season of Christmas.
May this meal of remembrance transform us into your servants,
going out into the world to proclaim your resurrection
and to welcome all to partake in your reign of peace, love, and harmony.
As we prepare to live as your disciples,
hear us as we pray as you taught us to pray, saying:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.  Amen.**

**Receiving the Elements**

This is the body of Christ broken for you!

**Thanks be to God! Verse 1 of RH 235**

This is the blood of Christ shed for you!

**Thanks be to God! Verse 2 of RH 235**

**Prayer after Communion**

**\*Benediction**

**Prayer Requests:**

Amy (Glenna Gray’s daughter) chronic medical issues
Betty (Alzheimer’s) and Dolores (paralyzed) – Glenda’s sisters
Bill Assini – fell, broken rib, in a lot of pain

Dorothy Randals’ Family in their loss

Elmer Schuster - leg pain

Fay Birch – stage 4 cancer
Glenda Coles – awaiting shoulder surgery (early December)
Gloria Martinez (Teresa Gallegos’ sister) – healing after leg surgery

Jenna Morris – recovery from knee surgery (not much longer)
Lucy Jasper – Alzheimers/Dementia
Misty Tompkins and her family – stiff person syndrome, seeking experimental program

Victoria Sieglen and family – grief in loss of mother, Pat
People seeking jobs, and people seeking employees
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
Teresa Gallegos-Brake – high risk leg surgery and amputation

Tommy Morris – for health and strength
Travelers
All those suffering from COVID19

**Announcements:**

**May everyone have a safe Thanksgiving week.**

**Bible Study** will resume Thursday, December 2nd at 5:15PM. We are presently thinking of what to study next. Special Requests? Ask Amy 575-708-0860