**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, July 14, 2019, Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

**Prayer of the Day**

Lord who knows our every need,

You have brought us abundance and joy when we have seen scarcity

May we know once again of your abundance

In our worship today

And that our hearts will fill and overflow anew with strength in faith

And gratitude in action.

In your mercy,

Amen

**Call to Confession**

Some people say the great addiction of our age is busy-ness. Being busy confirms our importance in the world. Sitting still leaves time to consider the things we have done and the things we have left undone. This is hard work, but it is necessary for our relationship with God. Let us open our hearts in prayer.

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

**Assurance of Pardon**

All things are held together in our Lord Jesus Christ. That includes every one of us. No matter what has happened in the past, those who turn to God are forgiven. This is the Good News that brings new life.

**ALL: We thank God for it.**

Friends, Believe the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 82:1-8 (please see bulletin)**

**Prayers of the People**

O Lord, we lift up our souls to you.
We trust in you, because you are always faithful to your covenant.
You never leave your people alone.

So we pray for the people on our hearts who are in need.
We pray for those who are sick,
for those who suffer or struggle,
and especially for those who are lonely or hopeless.
We pray for those we have lifted up by name…
O Lord, we put our hope in you.

Teach us to serve you, loving God,
and make us faithful to your call.
Open our hearts and minds to know your truth,
and shape our actions to live into your covenant.
Hold us gently, in your eternal mercy.
Set us free from sin and look at us only with your love.

We dedicate our efforts, skills, and interests to your work,
in this congregation and everywhere we go.
Let our lives show your good news to the world, O Lord.
Let us feed, serve, and lift up your people in need.
Bind us to each other as your beloved people,
called together in Jesus’ name.
We pray together as he taught us, saying:
*The Lord’s Prayer*

**Time Out For Teaching: Meet Amos**

Who is the prophet Amos? Amos was a southern Israelite, of the southern kingdom of Judah. He lived during a time when the Northern Kingdom, known as Israel, but sometimes called “Samaria.” However, the Northern Kingdom was in turmoil and the northern Kingdom was about to fall to the invaders from Assyria, who eventually conquered them, took people away into exile, and moved foreigners into the Northern Kingdom to occupy their homeland.

So Amos, a southerner, is told by God to travel to Israel and tell the King to watch out. But Amos says, I am but a shepherd and a dresser of figs.

Who knew that a man who thought he was just a shepherd and agriculturalist would also figure so significantly in our Biblical history? Amos is told that he must go speak to the king because of a number of sinful activities have been happening in the marketplace. One of the activities was pressing the finger to a scale so merchants could overcharge people.

**Prayer for Illumination**

God, you have come to us again and again,

Calling us to listen

And follow you.

We face many fearful things in this life

And you continue to bear us up

Like on eagles’ wings.

Bear us up again

With the strength and staff of your holy Word.

Amen.

**Amos 7:7-17**

7This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. 8And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; 9the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

10Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. 11For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'" 12And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; 13but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

14Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, 15and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' 16"Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac." 17Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be parceled out by line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.'"

**Colossians 1:1-14**

1Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 4for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel 6that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. 7This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, 8and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. 11May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully 12giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Gospel Luke 10:25-37**

25Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" 27He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." 28And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

29But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' 36Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" 37He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

**Sermon: The Transporter**

 Frank had only 3 rules he lived by in order to make a living. 1- Don’t change the deal. 2- No names. And 3 – Never open the package. He made his living as a “transporter,” but what he transported were mostly clandestine.

 But when he had to transport a 110-pound package and it began to squirm in his trunk, he broke rule #3. He opened the package. It was an Asian woman, a victim of human trafficking. This is how the 2002 movie, “The Transporter,” begins. *The Houston Chronicle*, in its review, said, “It’s junk with a capital J. The sooner you realize that, the more quickly you can settle down to enjoying it.” Action with little story. Brain Candy. But still, what interests me about this film, is the beginning. He opened the package and the remainder of the movie we see danger and repercussions as a result.

 He opened the package because he thought his cargo might need a drink of water. Perhaps he had his own personal interests at stake. But I prefer to think that this hardened criminal might have been moved to compassion to break #3, that maybe he wanted to give this woman a little relief with a drink of water.

 This compassion is what drives the Samaritan to break the rules of society. We have heard the story of the Good Samaritan so many times. Let us remember though, that Jews tried to avoid the Samaritans. They were foreign, unclean and unwelcome. And yet, Jesus uses a Samaritan as the unexpected hero. For, even though he didn’t fit into Jewish society, nor follow Jewish Law, he saves this poor and frightened man along the road. Not even the priest nor the Levite had the level of compassion this Samaritan had, for it spilled over enough to turn into action. Jesus is telling this parable to highly-educated young man here, who thinks that there is something more that he must do for eternal life. And what more is there one might do? Follow that 2nd greatest commandment to love our neighbors, that is, to show them mercy.

 This parable takes place along the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, a busy road between cities, famous for its criminal element. The Samaritan and the man who got beaten up there, stripped of his cloths and valuables, were not next-door neighbors. They didn’t live in the same neighborhoods. They were travelers on a busy road. Yet, the Samaritan does for this guy what Jesus himself does for us all. He binds up his wounds, transports him, gives him safe lodging, then – the final Christlike act – he pays for all that’s needed to heal him. He takes on the troubles and the cost of healing this scared and beaten man.

 The curious young man to whom Jesus was speaking surely knew about that dangerous road. Surely he remembers traveling it himself for high holy days in Jerusalem. And he could imagine how it would feel if it were just his luck to have a Samaritan stop to help him. Stripped of everything, terrified, beaten up, what labels we bear, no longer matters, as long as someone shows us mercy.

 Mercy is what the Samaritan transporter had for that poor guy. V 33 says he was moved to pity, which the Greek word specifies has something to do with our lower intestines. Literally, the verb contains the word “gut.” It evolved from a philosophy assumed that when we are moved to pity or compassion, it happens deep down inside our bodies at a gut level. I suppose it’s a little like that for me, when my compassion is deeply moved, it’s as if the whole body feels something, the heart becomes full. However, it must have felt for that Samaritan, that’s what moved him to action, not just thoughts. He became full of emotion for the guy.

 That’s what happened to a small community in rural Pennsylvania. The people of Unionville Presbyterian Church and their pastor, Annalie Korengel were moved to compassion because of the epidemic of opioids in their community. Their hearts finally and fully broke one day after she had conducted her 5th funeral in just a 7-day period, all of them were young people who had overdosed. She and the funeral director had to sit down and process it all. According to the Spring issue of Presbyterians Today, “drug overdose rates are rising in rural areas, surpassing rates in urban areas.” (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/pt-0319-rural/>) What did Rev. Korengel and her church do? Well, a small church with limited resources could have more easily passed by it, except they had seen so much sadness, they were moved and filled with compassion. They started a bereavement group for parents, which meets twice a week and is well attended from neighboring towns. Rev. Korengel is now a police chaplain, where she can go be with these families in crisis.

 God chooses the church to be the Transporter of mercy. Like Frank, we will know our neighbors if we open the package, look inside with mercy, and participate in the journey. Like Annalie Korengel’s church, we learn who our neighbors are by the way we are moved to compassion for them. And, like that Samaritan, the ones God sends us might take us by surprise. Don’t be afraid to break rule #3. Open the package. Amen.