**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, July 15, 2018, 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

**Prayer of the Day**

**Call to Confession**

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

**Assurance of Pardon**

The God of creation does not begin work only to abandon it. The good thing that God has begun in you will continue until the day of Christ’s return and, then, eternally. Hear and receive in your hearts and minds to forgiveness of all your sins, consolation for all your griefs, affirmation of your gifts, and hope for your tomorrows. All of this is true and possible, through Jesus Christ- our Savior and Lord!
AMEN.

Let yourself live and believe this good news:
**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 24 (please see bulletin)**

**Prayers of the People**

We rejoice in you, O God,
all the earth rejoices and sings glory to your name;
we sing praise and glory to you, O God.
As Christ’s beauty shines forth,
we praise your great salvation
and celebrate the merciful love that reconciles us to you.

As the new week dawns around us,
we pray for the welfare of the earth:
for the healing of the climate;
for the preservation of the beauty and balance of nature;
for the lives of the creatures whose very being sings your praises.

As Christ calls us into renewed discipleship,
we pray for the needs of your people everywhere:
for the forgiveness and redemption of the sins that bind and wound us;
for the deliverance of those who face chaos, despair, and sorry;
for the comfort and courage of all who mourn or face death.
We pray for the lives of the nations:
keep watch, Sovereign,
and teach us to work for justice and lasting peace.

We bless you, O God,
and we join all peoples in praising you,
in the name of Jesus our Savior, our Lord. Amen.

**Time out for Teaching: The Weight of Glory**

CS Lewis wrote a sermon called this. It’s actually a pun, for in Hebrew the word for glory is the same word for “weight.”

The Psalm we just heard about the King of Glory. Would that also mean that the King of Glory is very “heavy??” No, but seriously.

What is “glory?”

Doxology is a word many of us know.

It is literally two Greek words: Doxa = Glory and “Logos” = Words/Wisdom

When we sing the words of the doxology in worship that is what we are saying:

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.

That is what we are doing with that song. We are glorifying God by saying it, “Glory be to…” which is basically what, do you think?

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians says today: “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.”

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Mark 6:14-29**

14King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." 15But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." 16But when Herod heard of it, he said, "'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

17For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. 18For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, 20for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. 21But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. 22 When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." 23And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." 24She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." 25Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." 26The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. 27Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, 28brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. 29When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

**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.

**2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19**

1David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim.3They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart 4with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. 5David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

12bSo David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; 13and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14David danced before the LORD with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. 15So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

17They brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the LORD. 18When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts, 19and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

**Sermon: Keep Dancing!**

If you’re invited to a dinner party, don’t accept the invitation unless you’re sure there will not be a beheading.

King Herod the Great had four sons. After he died, his kingdom was divided among them and the King Herod we hear about today is one of those four sons. He married his brother’s wife. John the Baptist warned them that it was wrong. Herodias hated John for saying that. I guess you could say that Herod’s marriage started off on a dysfunctional note. And, at his own dinner party, his own birthday, we witness how bad things can turn out even worse for ignoring God’s prophets. Herod’s wife was being the party pooper. Herod knew in his heart that following her request would be bad, but he could not resist the pressure as a man to keep his oath in front of all those people. This story is one of passions and promises which collide in just such a way that they invite evil into that party and destroy everyone’s good time with tragic, grisly results.

It seems like there’s always got to be someone to wreck the party.

King David, on the other hand, shows us a different way to handle the party poopers. In his story, he’s victorious! He’s King and the Ark of the Covenant (that is the Lord’s house) is coming to Jerusalem finally to rest in its rightful place. He knows that his wife Michal is out there somewhere, hating him with all her heart, even though she loved him once. She had helped him escape her father when Saul tried to kill David. I would say she had some serious issues, as evidenced by nearly 15 different instances of her name in the Old Testament. King David wasn’t exactly perfect himself, by the way! Sadly, some of the more positive female role models get a lot less airtime than Michal does. But in the midst of all the celebrating and dancing in this story, the author takes up precious ink and papyrus to make mention of her here, looking out at David, despising him as he dances and celebrates. She is a party pooper who can’t get over her resentment.

We’ve all got party poopers. Sometimes they hate seeing others having too much fun. Sometimes they have something they’ve got to prove that spoils their ability to just enjoy the life God gave them. Sometimes our party poopers are people who tell us something is impossible and we shouldn’t bother trying, or who say “we’ve never done it that way before.” Our party poopers are the ones who try to rain on our parades. Our party pooper might not be a person but our circumstances in life which paralyze your faith and makes it difficult to accept the freedom and hope granted us in Jesus Christ.

So what do we do? Well, King David kept on dancing. He knows he has enemies, and Michal is just one of them. At least he had thousands of other supporters and their dancing is not just any kind of party. It was a party for the Lord.

David dressed in a linen ephod, considered to be the garment of a priest, as he led the 30,000 in dancing and leaping and celebrating. Many have said that his clothing indicated he was performing priestly duties like a Levite, clearly making this event not just a big sock hop, but a huge gathering of a multitude of worshipers! Why stop dancing if a few people don’t like it? If we are dancing in worship of God, and we’re leading others to worship God, then we just can’t stop it.

As people of faith, we have to keep on dancing. And our faith has to be danced out in order to let others know of God’s goodness to us all. We cannot shrink away from it as Herod appeared to do when he just allows the party poopers to ruin his birthday. Rather, we keep trying to work it out, in the face of onlookers. The Rotary Club recently did this. When someone smashed up our solar lights that lit up the T on Tucumcari Mountain, we just knew as a club that this had to be fixed. We weren’t going to let party poopers ruin something that had become a source of pride and joy for our city. So yesterday morning, with permission from the new land owners of course, we went back up there and set up new lights, and allowed other people (non club members) to join in this dance.

We are called in faith towards a kind of perseverance, to keep on dancing even when the party poopers stand by. It’s a perseverance that spells participation in God’s work to heal the world. It’s a perseverance that gives us permission to respond to change, flexibility and grace when faced with dilemmas. We’ll never fully rid ourselves of party poopers. It’s not our job to do so. We just keep on dancing. Amen.

**Announcements:**

**It is Potluck Sunday!** Please stay after to continue our worship by sharing a meal with us today.

**Meeting Rescheduled:**  Due to illness, last week’s Session meeting had to be postponed until this week, Tuesday, July 17th at 5;30PM.