**First Presbyterian Church Tucumcari**

**Worship 11:00AM**

**Sunday, May 27, 2018, Trinity Sunday**

**Call to Worship (see bulletin)**

**Prayer of the Day**

**Call to Confession**

Friends, we are made in the image of God, but that does not make us God. Though we often prefer to pretend we are perfect, when we ignore our sin we deceive only ourselves and there is no room for God’s truth to dwell in us. When we confess our sin, we experience the grace and mercy of God in the here and now. Before God, with the people of God, let us confess to our faults and our failings. Let us pray.

**Prayer of Confession (see bulletin)**

**Assurance of Pardon**

In the beginning, God planted goodness deep within creation—and through the grace of God, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, we are able to live as the Body of Christ, showing that goodness to the world.

Friends, live and believe this good news: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 29:1-11 (see bulletin)**

**Prayers of the People**

We give you praise, O God,  
because you are eternally victorious over death.  
In faithfulness you have raised up Christ for us,  
and your mercy knows no end.

God of life, we pray for those who are bowed down  
under the weight of hunger, injustice, uncertainty, or despair.  
You who provide every good thing,  
uphold your people.  
Open your hands wide  
and satisfy the needs of every living thing.

God of hope, we trust in your righteousness  
and depend on your love.  
Be near to those on whose behalf we call upon you;  
to those who face sorrow, illness, injury, or death.  
Fulfill our longings for wholeness, healing, and new life;  
hear and answer all who cry out to you.

Steadfast God, preserve us in your love,  
that we might speak your praise  
and bless you forever  
in the name of the holy one, the Risen Christ,  
who teaches us to pray as we say:  
*The Lord’s Prayer*

**Time out for Teaching: Meditation on the Trinity**

Three in one, one in Three. Which is it?

Of the same identity, of the same substance but different.

This is the blessed mystery of the Trinity.

**Prayer for Illumination**

God our Parent,  
your voice claims us as your people  
and calls us into new relationships  
with ourselves and others.  
By your Holy Spirit, help us hear your voice speaking to us  
through these words of scripture,  
and prepare us for your service,  
in Jesus’ name. Amen.

**Isaiah 6:1-8**

1In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. 2Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. 3And one called to another and said:   
     “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;   
     the whole earth is full of his glory.”   
4The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. 5And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

6Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. 7The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” 8Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

**Romans 8:12-17**

12So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — 13for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

**Gospel John 3:1-17**

1Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

11“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

**Sermon:**

So, what does the Son of God know about wind? Did he know how destructive it can be? Today Jesus compares the Spirit and those born of the Spirit to the activity of wind, that comes and goes. Okay, so here are some things we know about wind. It:

* Changes direction when you wish it wouldn’t
* Swirls the trash around in the dumpsters
* It topples patio furniture.
* Makes us more vulnerable to fires.
* Gets in horses’ nostrils and gets them excited.
* Ripples the native grasses
* Brings in walls of red dust and occasionally rain
* It flings open our car doors and slams them shut if we’re not careful.
* Keeps the mosquitoes away.
* Furthermore, there is never ever a good hair day.

So this pesky wind, is what Jesus is comparing to the Spirit. God’s Holy Spirit can make trouble for us, puts us in some difficult situations when God calls for us to do something difficult. Isaiah was in that situation. God calls him to go and be a prophet. Lamenting that he is not good enough to do this, God reassures Isaiah with hot coals to purify his lips. God’s Spirit reassures and encourages him. Paul also, in writing to the Romans, calls for them to not fall backward into a spirit of fear but instead to have courage. As Children of God, they have every reason to be courageous. The Spirit can certainly push us out of our comfort zones!

Now the Spirit is similar to that frustrating wind that comes and goes.

But unlike Tucumcari wind, we can trust God’s Spirit to intervene when something needs to be set straight. In our Book of Confessions, “A Brief Statement of Faith,” says, “In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.“ So, as children of the Spirit, in a broken and fearful world, our mission is to learn to trust God who seeks to fill us and use us.

Jesus teaches Nicodemus that faith is how you join God’s family. Nicodemus was a lead Pharisee, a teacher of the Law. And as a teacher, you would expect him to understand Jesus’ teachings. But “bless his little heart,” Nicodemus struggles to understand. The Pharisees understood that the way you joined God’s family – Israel – was to be born into it, and boys circumcised on the 8th day, and then follow the letter of God’s Law for the rest of your life. Faith, however, is what Jesus says is required in order to belong to God’s family. This was too simple and answer for Nicodemus and not very concrete. So, no wonder he’s confused.

Bless his little heart. As the Spirit called the Old Testament prophets, Jesus calls Nicodemus out of a hardened perspective to dream bigger and better of God. To know that God’s Spirit is free as the wind to inhabit the lives of those who have faith. To also know that the Spirit of God gives us courage, enables us to trust God even when the outside is chaos. Yet, a little like the wind which you cannot always see, the effects of the Spirit are visible in those reborn out of faith.

We might be more like Nicodemus than we’d care to confess, when our ability to think big about God fails. When we allow ourselves to get overwhelmed with life’s problems. When we think that we have to work hard enough to merit membership in God’s family. When we forget that faith alone is how we join God’s family. So when you hear that wind blowing again, let it remind you of the God’s faithfulness to you that can grant you courage to live and bear the visible effects of the Spirit with you. Amen.

**Announcements:**

No EEP tomorrow.

Everyone have a safe and blessed Memorial Day.

From 2-5 pm Wednesday, May 30th, there will be a ribbon cutting at Crossbow Medical Group.