**First Presbyterian Church, Tucumcari**

*The Church With the Holy Spirit Window*

**Sunday, October 4, 2020 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

**Hymns:**

**RH 525 Come, Ye Thankful People Come**

**RH 507 Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life**

**RH 456 All Things Bright and Beautiful**

**Call to Worship**

Come, children of the Light, come to worship your Maker.
**We were once in darkness, but now we are light in the Lord.**
Light produces the fruits of goodness, justice, and truth.
**May we plant seeds that sprout forth such gifts to the world.**
**Come, let us worship God!**

**Prayer of the Day**

God of Creation,
all of the world proclaims your praise,
from the highest heavens to the deepest recesses of the sea.
Make our voices true and faithful
as we join the voices of all of creation to sing your praise. **Amen**.

**Call to Confession**

**Responsive Prayer of Confession**

**Gracious God, who made covenant with our ancestors, we gather here today as a rebellious people. We want to act out your intentions for us, but we get sidetracked by the false glitter of the world. You tell us to honor Creation, but we use other people, animals, and plants for our own gain. You offer bread to every living creature, and we steal that bread from our brothers and sisters in the name of greed. You promise us new life, but we shrink back in fear, clinging to our death-dealing ways. Heal us, O Lord, lest we destroy ourselves and your world. We need your healing presence among us, that your good intentions for all of creation might be fulfilled at last.** (silence) Amen.

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

Hear this good news: God is at work in you. Live this truth: God’s grace is more than enough for whatever you carry. Know that you are forgiven, loved, and free.

**We will rejoice and be glad! Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Psalm 19:1-14**

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
**Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.**There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;
**yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.**

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
**Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hidden from its heat.**

The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the decrees of the LORD are sure,
making wise the simple;
**the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear,
enlightening the eyes;**the fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring for ever;
the ordinances of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.
**More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.**

Moreover by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
**But who can detect their errors?
Clear me from hidden faults.**Keep back your servant also from the insolent;
do not let them have dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.**

**Presentation of Offering and Offertory**

**Time out for Teaching: “Unity and Uniformity”**

This morning Christians all around the world are observing World Communion Sunday. The very word “communion” is supposed to mean something. It refers to the activity of the Lord’s Supper, which is our way of drawing as close to Jesus Christ as we can get. We use a lot of different words that try to describe that unity with Him:

Communion, Community, Common, Koinonia. You can hear in the word “communion” the word “union?” So the prefix, “comm-“ what does this mean to you?

Do you ever confuse the ideas of “unity” and “uniformity?” If you do, don’t worry. It happens to everyone and has for centuries. As a faith community, we are often trying to navigate how to live in “unity” and determining to what degree we are also be alike. There is no such thing as complete “uniformity” among us either.

In the early years of the church, when Constantine was the Emperor, even though he had not yet converted to the faith of Jesus Christ yet, he recognized the power of God who had helped him win a war. Realizing that the Christians must be actually onto something, he commanded the bishops to get together and write a statement of faith that he thought would unify the church. Funnily enough, the bishops never could agree on the exact wording. And after that time, eventually, the east and west church grew divided. From thenceforward, the Orthodox Church reads the Nicene Creed one way and the Western Church (Catholics and Protestants) reads the Nicene Creed a different way.

So what is unity for us? Can we be one with the Orthodox church and with one another? Is the key to this the important celebration of Communion that links us first with Jesus Christ and then with one another? What do you think?

**Special Music “I Don’t Know How to Love You” performed by Emily Priddy**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Gospel Matthew 21:33-46**

33“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ 39So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” 41They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

42Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? 43Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. 44The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

45When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. 46They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

**Philippians 3:4b-14**

4bIf anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

7Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. 8More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. 10I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

12Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Sermon: “God Loves the Rejects” Rev. Amy Pospichal**

Philippians is a short letter but packs a powerful punch. Paul says he is writing to them while in chains, which tells us this probably means he is in prison at the time. Philippians is a little like a love letter from Paul to a church whom he holds very deeply in his heart. He praises them for being so faithful to God and faithful to him for his work as an evangelist.

But his pride and joy in them will not keep Paul from also sharing with them what he knows about Jesus Christ and His grace. Last week, we heard a passage from chapter 2 of this letter. This morning, you just heard a passage from chapter 3. It truly displays his ability to communicate the largeness of Christ’s power, and nothing else he has ever achieved in life is rubbish in comparison.

**Music: [Geddy Lee](https://www.rush.com/band/geddy-lee/%22%20%5Co%20%22Geddy%20Lee) and**[**Alex Lifeson**](https://www.rush.com/band/alex-lifeson/)
**Lyrics:**[**Neil Peart**](https://www.rush.com/band/neil-peart/)

If we burn our wings
Flying too close to the sun
If the moment of glory
Is over before it’s begun
If the dream is won —
Though everything is lost
We will pay the price,
But we will not count the cost

When the dust has cleared
And victory denied
A summit too lofty
River a little too wide
If we keep our pride —
Though paradise is lost
We will pay the price,
But we will not count the cost

And if the music stops
There’s only the sound of the rain
All the hope and glory
All the sacrifice in vain
If love remains
Though everything is lost
We will pay the price,
But we will not count the cost

**Service of Holy Communion (we will eat and drink after we finish the Lord’s Prayer)**

**Invitation**

This is the table that links heaven to earth, Jesus to us. He is our host. As we receive this meal, know that Jesus wants us to be one with Him, and wants us all to be one in each other, in fellowship with believers in every time and place encircling the world.

**Words of Institution**

On the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat. This is my body broken for you.”

And when they were finished eating, he took the cup, blessed it and gave it to them, saying, “Take and drink. This is my blood shed for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

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.**

It is right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise for you looked upon all your hands wrought and called it good.

You smile upon purple mountains soaring above wildflower plains where grasses raise their backs to meet your Spirit’s caress

You send clouds scuttling across reflective waters and set stars to wink upon the earth in deep, knowing delight.

You call the tune for dolphins dancing in the play of waves.

Birds sing in full-throated praise and children giggle as they run free in your image.

Despite your created goodness, we use our freedom for ourselves alone without regard for your intentions for all.

Still, you chase after us to save us from sin’s harm, freeing us to give us a new world flowing with milk and honey.

When we chase after other gods, you call us back, through cries of prophets, which we ignore, until at last you send your own child to be for us the goodness we refuse.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the choir of creation and all the saints of all times and places who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**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.**

Blessed are you, O Christ, for coming to us as a little child to live baptized in the muck of our fallen world.

Embodying God’s desire to bless all people you spoke peace to an empire, and were a blessing to all people.

When threatened with the terror of crucifixion, you did not keep silent but stood up to turn the bread of human affliction into manna from heaven, and to turn the bitter dregs of sin into the cup of joyful celebration.

Praised be you, Holy Spirit, blowing through time to enliven your people, the church, to live as Christ’s body, in God’s ministry of repairing our broken world.

Hover over us now with in the breaking of bread and in the celebration of this cup, that our eyes may be opened to recognize you among us and in all who share in this feast. Knit us more closely together in the fellowship of your sovereign Way.

We offer ourselves, our lives, our resources,

To be your hands reaching into the world

With your unfathomable compassion.

Fill us like breath fills flutes

**To be instruments of your peace.**

Where there is lack of regard for your creation

**Prod us to speak up.**

Where people fail to see the dignity of others,

**Open blind eyes.**

To those who hunger

**Give bread.**

And to those who have bread

**Give hunger for justice.**

Your church luxuriates in the comfort of faith;

**Send us to be your servants to the world.**

The sick suffer forgotten in pain

**Heal their hurts in body, mind, and spirit.**

We have solicited our prayers

And others needing our prayers weigh heavy on our hearts

So we offer these, our prayers to you:

***{Name those for whom you are in intercession before God}***

Gather all these prayers and praise And join them with those of all the saints And with our Great High Priest who taught us to pray, saying . . . The Lord’s Prayer

**Communion**

**Prayer after Communion:**

Help us rise in your resurrection power from this table where you, the Ruler of the Universe, have served us by your own hand, that we may extend your arms of peace to a world at war. This we ask through Christ, in Christ, with Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit May all honor and glory and dominion be yours Now and forevermore. Amen.

**THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

**Holy Communion is Next Sunday!** Being World Communion Sunday, you are encouraged to bring textiles representing your nationality or cultures you have visited. If you want to dress up in a way depicting the count

**Social Distancing and Personal Protection.** Please respect one another’s space, observing the 6-foot distancing between one another. Please remember to wash your hands on the way out today. If you need a protective face covering, please notify the pastor and she can help you.

**Rummage Sale Donations:**  If you desperately need to make a donation to the church for the next Rummage Sale, please ask Marge McKenzie if we have room in our storage space off-site.

**Alternatives to Church Events** – Anyone who would like to meet for a meal outside at a local restaurant, or gather at someone’s home for fellowship, or go for a walk together, please call the pastor at 575-708-0860. Other suggestions for how we can still fellowship with each other, are welcome.