

First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico
7th Sunday after Pentecost

July 16, 2023 - 10:30 A.M
Enter to worship – Leave to serve



PRELUDE

“In the Bulb There Is a Flower” (Hymn by Natalie Sleeth) John Carter (b. 1930)
“Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming” J. B. O. Clemm (1885)
“Come, Labor On” Franklin D. Ashdown (1942-2023)

**The Prelude functions like a curtain that separates our world from the worship place of peace and sanctuary. We enter prayerfully. We wait expectantly, listening for God’s Spirit and truth, which challenges us to return to the world equipped for faithful and useful Christian service.

* *Those who are able, please stand*

Please turn off all cell phones

WELCOME, GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDITATION IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT

“Let Us with a Gladsome Mind”

MONKLAND

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dinah Jentgen

(Psalm 119)

Leader: Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the

LORD. Blessed are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.

People: O that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

Leader: Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous ordinances.

People: Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise. I revere your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes. My lips will pour forth praise, because you teach me your statutes.

*HYMN OF PRAISE

#367 "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR

*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

Gracious God, what a privilege it is to carry everything to you in prayer! What a joy and comfort it is to know your love, your mercy, and your power to transform our situations. We are reassured by knowing that your promise to sustain us amid life's storms is not limited to our finite understandings or our human solutions. Eternal Father, in this time of worship and prayer, grant us respite from our circumstances. Please reveal to us new and more truthful perspectives, and give us glorious expectations beyond the boundaries of our own vision. May we, your beloved and blessed children gathered in prayer, bask and frolic in the assurance of your hope and promises. By your grace, this day, let us hear your voice anew and feel your mysterious and wonderful presence... **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**

PLEASE BE SEATED

CALL TO CONFESSION #800 "Sometimes a Light Surprises" SALLEY GARDENS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Gracious God, in Jesus Christ you have shown us a more excellent way, a way of love that is greater than all other ways. We confess that we have neglected love. We have failed to receive it, and we have failed to extend it. We tie it up with conditions. We make it conform to our terms. We have not accepted that it is boundless and beyond our reasoning. Forgive our timid responses to your great gift. Open us to love's possibilities, and expand our view of what love can accomplish. Help us walk renewed, faithful, and empowered new lives, blessed by the truth of your unrelenting love.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

(from 2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

Leader: Hear the Good News: "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has

passed away; see, everything has become new!" I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that our sins are forgiven.

People: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us a ministry of reconciliation." Let us live new lives of Christian unity, faith, obedience, joy, and peace!

Leader: Now cleansed from sin, what would God have us to do?

People: The Lord has told us what is good; and what does the Lord require of us, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

"Because He Lives"

William Gaither

God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus, He came to love,
heal, and forgive; He lived and died to buy my
pardon, An empty grave is there to prove my savior lives.

Because He lives I can face tomorrow, Because He lives
all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the
future, And life is worth the living just because He lives.

How sweet to hold a newborn baby, And feel the pride,
and joy He gives; But greater still the calm assurance,
This child can face uncertain days because He lives.

Because He lives I can face tomorrow, Because He lives
all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the
future, And life is worth the living just because He lives.

And then one day I'll cross the river, I'll fight life's final
war with pain; And then as death gives way to
victory, I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He reigns.

Because He lives I can face tomorrow, Because He lives
all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the
future, And life is worth the living just because He lives!

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Norm Story

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

- Children are asked to sit on the carpet squares in the front.

CALL TO PRAYER

"O Jesus, I Have Promised"

ANGEL'S STORY

Chancel Choir

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM

"A Sower Came from Ancient Hills"

SEACHRIST

- To follow text see Hymn #171 in Hymnal

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Dr. Janet Loman

Isaiah 55:6-9

Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23

Isaiah 55:6-9 (New Revised Standard Version)

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their

way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 (New Revised Standard Version)

And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Wasteful Sowing and Fruitful Harvest"

Rev. Norm Story

*CLOSING HYMN

#720 "Jesus Calls Us"

GALILEE

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION

"Because He Lives"

Because He lives I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future.
And life is worth the living just because He lives.

*POSTLUDE

Hymn Tune Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck

Rose: The rose on the communion table is to announce the birth of Maxwell James Steritz, born on July 5, 2023. He is the great-grandson of Carl and Bea Connor.

***Those who are able, please stand**

Please turn off all cell phones

Liturgist – Dinah Jentgen Deacon Captain – Divine Mboh

Sound System – Rusty Smith Video – Brent Brewer



Join us for a time of fellowship and refreshments immediately following Worship this morning in the Jones Hall Fellowship area. This is a time to welcome and greet new friends and old friends alike. Fellowship this morning is hosted by the Buildings & Grounds Ministry team.

Rev. Dr. Norm Story	Pastor	Rev. Pyong San Yu	Korean Congregation
Dr. Janet Loman, CP	College Ministry	Dr. Howard A. Smolleck	Organist
Karen Candusso	Youth Group Sponsor	Karen Candusso	Salt & Light Coord.
Beth Borchert-Thomas	Dir. of Music & Bells		

Greeting before Worship Service:

Thomas Korang – E Sharon Rooney – W Linda Pearson – S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Dinah Jentgen – E Rev. Norm Story – W Lyn Ames – S

Please remember in your prayers: Sandra Valencia; Melanie Grant; Ada Castle; Nancy T. Johnson; Mary Olberg; Florence Hamilton; Josie Fietze; Jean Rhodes and family on the passing of Don Rhodes; Wayne and Marianne Maley; Virginia Haynes and daughter Shannon; Jessica Borchert Stout, daughter of Beth Thomas; Rev. Jay Bishop; Dorris Hamilton and son Rio Hamilton; Clyde Treat, and Norma Klein at the Heritage; Rev. Marcus Burr; all who feel isolated in these troubled times; Presbyterian Church (USA); Deacons’ Ministries; all the homeless; school teachers; St. Luke’s Health Care Clinic; Missionary Donna Evans, Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Welcome!

We come together as a community at worship to experience the grace of God, who is present in our midst. This is a time to open ourselves to Him and to each other. Expect great things of God and His grace will come to you! Thank you for coming to First Presbyterian Church; we are glad that you are here. If you are not active in a church home in this community, we invite you to consider joining our fellowship and sharing in this ministry of Christ.

Our sacred space is not this building or this Sanctuary, but it is the fellowship we share, the hospitality we live, and the presence of God we see in each other.

For prayer requests during the week, call the church office to get your request on the Church-wide Prayer Chain, or e-mail Linda Ramirez at linda@fpc.lc

Our Vision: A place where Christian love is modeled

Our Mission: To be a place where Christian love is modeled through:

1. Understanding, celebrating, and sharing God’s Word.
2. Following obediently where God is leading us.
3. Leading, nurturing, and serving our community for Christ.

Greetings! Our worship services are now available

- 1) in-person, with Covid19 precautions
- 2) live-stream on YouTube search for: First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM)
- 3) video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube



7/16 – Steve Harbaugh
 7/18 – Alex Burr, Steve Loman, Winnie Quinzi, James Roegge
 7/19 – Lillian Brewer
 7/22 – Vanessa Medina
 7/23 – Linda Ward

(If we missed your birthday, please call the office at 575-526-5559 or email Linda at linda@fpc.lc)

**HOW
 YOU
 CAN
 HELP**

After Worship Fellowship: The sign-up board is in Jones Hall Fellowship area.



Make a difference!

Please bring a nonperishable food item every Sunday for Casa de Peregrinos, the emergency food bank. Baskets are located at each of the entrances to the Sanctuary. Thank you for your support.

Covid19 precautions:

- **Seating in West and South sections of the Sanctuary is unrestricted. The East section is reserved for those wishing to wear masks and social-distance.**
- Hand-sanitizer and wipes are located at each door.
- **A purple box** with slots for depositing your offering is located in each aisle. Please register your presence with contact information and any prayer requests on the small slip of paper in your bulletin and place it in the purple offering box in the aisle, so that if we need to do contact tracing later, we can contact those who were present.

Donations to support your church can be done in a variety of ways. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

- Cash or check in the offering (purple boxes in the Sanctuary)
- Check sent by mail
- Church website: fpc.lc and click on the “heart” icon or fpc.lc/giving or scan QR code
- Smartphone App: Church Center

- Text 84321



CHURCH CALENDAR

Call the church office 575-526-5559 for information on any events, or by the net: www.fpc.lc or by e-mail:

linda@fpc.lc

Rev. Norm Story e-mail: revstory@fpc.lc

Facebook: Look up First Presbyterian Church of Las Cruces

Sunday, July 16, 2023 Blessing of the Backpacks

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Catie Brewer in the Jones Hall Library. We are viewing and discussing "The Chosen" season 3.

9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall

9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary

10:30 AM Worship Service

11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall

12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

Monday, July 17, 2023

1:30 PM Storytellers in Jones Hall Library

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

3:00 PM Listening Prayer, a reflection on Scripture in Jones Hall. Contact Marsha Topley with questions

NO Session meeting in July

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

9:30 AM Staff meeting, office will be closed during meeting.

12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday bulletin

Thursday, July 20, 2023

The Good News Newsletter will be published on Fridays. Please send submissions by Thursday evenings to: scotty.benaway@sbcglobal.net

6:30 PM Deacons meeting in Jones Hall

Friday, July 21, 2023

Rusty Smith will be out, will be back on the 26th

6:00 PM In-Betweeners in Watkins Hall (see announcement)

Saturday, July 22, 2023

Sunday, July 23, 2023

9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Catie Brewer in the Jones Hall Library. We are viewing and discussing "The Chosen" season 3.

9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall

9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary

10:30 AM Worship Service

11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall

12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

Church Office Hours are: Monday – Friday **9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**



Socks and Undies

For many of you NEW underwear and socks are something that you normally aren't concerned about having and can easily be gotten; but to some their financial reality doesn't allow them to purchase underwear and socks at all, even if they are needed. The Deacons' mission is to collect NEW socks and undies for the underprivileged children. Plastic bins are located at each door of the Sanctuary to collect donations. So, next time you are shopping make sure to toss an extra package of underwear or socks into your cart. *All sizes are needed*, to help clothe a child.

This donation of NEW socks and undies will be given to the Gospel Rescue Mission for their back-to-school program. In the past years we have collected a bountiful harvest. Your support is greatly appreciated and God bless.



IN-BETWEENERS COMING UP!

On Friday evening, July 28th, we'll be getting together at 6 PM in Watkins Fellowship Hall. Dinner this time will be a planned potluck. After dinner, Lya and Jay Jordan will present an illustrated talk about her home country, the Seychelles Islands, located east of Africa and north of Madagascar.

Please let us know that you plan to come, and what category of dish (homemade or purchased) you'd like to bring, by Monday, July 24th. Contact: the Ames, 575-526-3247 or jkames@q.com.