

First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Bible Presentation Sunday

September 17, 2023 - 10:30 A.M

Enter to worship – Leave to serve



PRELUDE

“We Gather Together to Ask the Lord’s Blessing” Gregg Sewell (b. 1953)

“Fight the Good Fight “ Roger C. Wilson (1912-1988)

“When There’s Love at Home” (19th Ct. American Hymn) Roger C. Wilson (1912-1988)

**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 repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:17-13, 21 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT

“I Come with Joy”

DOVE OF PEACE

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Alonzo Brewer

(Psalms 8 & 9)

Leader: O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

People: When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

Leader: The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

People: I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

*HYMN OF PRAISE

#409 “God Is Here!”

ABBOT’S LEIGH

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

Lord, we praise you this morning for the love which grants us freedom and for the grace which allows us to dwell in peace. We praise you for the sun that shines upon our endeavors, and for the moon and the stars at night which remind us of your glory. We thank you for the many good things that you have bestowed upon us. Help us, O God, in this time of worship and beyond, to have hearts that exalt in your grace. May we have lips unafraid to proclaim your praise, and minds focused on living according to your glorious and living word. We ask through Christ Jesus our Lord, who taught his disciples to pray, **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 #551 “Lord, Have Mercy”

LAND OF REST

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Lord Jesus, I sin. Grant that I may never cease grieving because of it, never be content with myself, never think I can reach a point of perfection. Crush my envious spirit, command my tongue, trample down my pride and self-righteousness. Give me grace to be holy, kind, gentle, pure, peaceable, to live for your glory and not to please myself. Deliver me from attachment to things and desires unclean and unworthy of a beloved child of God. According to your grace, help me search the shadows of my soul, that I may cast myself on your steadfast loving mercy. Lord, help me, for your presence alone can make me holy, devout, strong, and happy. Abide in me, gracious God.^[2]

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S LOVE AND MERCY
(from 2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

^[2] taken from Rev. Charles Spurgeon, (1834 - 1892).

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: Let us declare what we believe using the Theological Declaration of Barmen.

People: **Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.... Jesus Christ is God’s assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins, so in the same way and with the same seriousness is he also God’s mighty claim upon our whole life. We reject as false doctrine that there are areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ.¹**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

#300 “We Are One in the Spirit” THEY’LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Debra Smith

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

PRESENTATION OF BIBLES TO THIRD AND SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

3rd grade

Asaah Phalaagae

Obakwe Modise

Oona Burruss

6th grade

Alonzo Brewer

CALL TO PRAYER

#822 “When We Are Living”

SOMOS DEL SEÑOR

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM

“I Live To Sing Your Praise”

Arr. C. Harry Causey

PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

¹ From “The Theological Statement of Barmen of 1933”, written by a group of church leaders in Germany to help Christians withstand the challenges of the Nazi party and of the so-called “German Christians,” a popular movement that saw no conflict between Christianity and the ideals of Hitler’s National Socialism.

Matthew 18:21-33 Romans 14:1-4, 7-12

Matthew 18:21-33 (New Revised Standard Version)

Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’

Romans 14:1-4, 7-12 (New Revised Standard Version)

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.” So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Waiting and Hoping for Grace”

Rev. Norm Story

*CLOSING HYMN

#733 “We All Are One in Mission” ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

“May the Lord, Mighty God” TRADITIONAL CHINESE MELODY

*POSTLUDE

Hymn Tune Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck

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

Please turn off all cell phones

Liturgist – Alonzo Brewer

Deacon Captain – Patricia Adu-Mensah

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 Fellowship Committee.

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

Greeting before Worship Service:

Dennis Thomas – E Sharon Rooney – W Chibuzo Chilaka – S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Rev. Norm Story – E Debra Smith – W Alonzo Brewer – S

Please remember in your prayers: Jessica Borchert Stout, daughter of Beth Thomas; Rev. Jay Bishop; The Grant family; Mary Olberg; Wayne and Marianne Maley; Dorris Hamilton; Clyde Treat, and Norma Klein at the Heritage; Rev. Marcus Burr; all who feel isolated in these troubled times; Salt & Light Ministry; Presbyterian Church (USA); Deacons' Ministries; Tent City residents; Casa de Peregrinos, emergency food pantry; Missionaries Doug and Sherry Barron, CRU headquarters in Orlando Florida.

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

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.



9/19 – Mel Parish

9/20 – Sharon Rooney

9/21 – Olivier Heubo, Aileen C. Sanchez

9/23 – Rosa Taylor

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

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

- 1) Cash or check in the offering (purple boxes in the Sanctuary)
- 2) Check sent by mail

- 3) Church website: fpc.lc and click on the "heart" icon or fpc.lc/giving or scan QR code
- 4) Smartphone App: Church Center
- 5) Text 84321



!THGIN SDRWKCAB

Salt & Light – “Backwards Night!” Wednesday, September 20, 2023

4:00-7:00 PM Grades K-12th

6:10 PM - Salt & Light Dinner,
\$5.00 suggested donation for dinner, but any amount is appreciated

Menu: Pancakes, lil smokies, and fruit cocktail for dessert

Please call the church office with a reservation by Monday at 526-5559
between 9am-2pm to let us know that you will be joining us for dinner.

- We are also accepting donations if you would like to sponsor a child. Contact information:
Karen Candusso saltandlight@fpc.lc or 575-618-9474

Instant Church Directory

In addition to our always-available paper directory, we now have our church directory available online and in a phone app, "Instant Church Directory."

The website (instantchurchdirectory.com) can be found on the church website homepage and the app can be found on both the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store for free. Once accessed, please sign in using your email as listed in the directory. Note that this service is accessible to those listed in the directory, but locked from prying eyes outside the church. Also note that it allows you to upload a picture of yourself, and that the application serves as a great contact list for getting in touch with your church family. Reach out to Nick at nkoontz@fpc.lc with any questions or technical difficulties.

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

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, September 17, 2023 "Bible Sunday"

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Catie Brewer in the Jones Hall Library. We are viewing a series entitled, "Beginnings of Judaism"
- 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, September 18, 2023

- 6:30 PM Storytellers of Las Cruces in Jones Hall fellowship
- 7:00 PM College & Young Adult Bible Study on zoom (see announcement)
- 7:00 PM Bells rehearsal with Beth Thomas

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

- 3:00 PM Listening Prayer, a reflection on Scripture in Jones Hall Parlor.
Contact Marsha Topley with questions
- 7:00 PM Session meeting in Jones Hall Library

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

- 9:30 AM Staff meeting, office will be closed during meeting
- 12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday bulletin
- 4:00 PM Salt & Light (see announcement)
- 7:00 PM Choir rehearsal in the Sanctuary

Thursday, September 21, 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 Library

Friday, September 22, 2023

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

Saturday, September 23, 2023

Sunday, September 24, 2023

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Catie Brewer in the Jones Hall Library. We are viewing a series entitled, "Beginnings of Judaism"
- 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

CCLI License No. 540727



Ways to Help – Fellowship

We all enjoy fellowship time after church on Sunday, a time to mingle with friends and meet new ones. The Congregational Life and Outreach Support team is looking for people willing to host the following dates:

- October 1, 22, and 29
- November 5, 12, and 26
- December 10, 24, and 31

Families, friends, and Session committees are all wonderful hosts,
and the sign-up chart is in Jones Hall.

There is a page of instructions in the kitchen area to help with set-up.
Thank you for helping out with this important and fun part of our church life.



COLLEGE AND YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

“The Promises of God”

Trace with us salvation history and the amazing ways in which God chooses individuals and groups to be part of the divine plan. From Abraham to Jesus and on to the early church -- and still today -- God is choosing the unexpected so that we can better see the divine love and power in action. We too are called by God and given the promise of blessing and new life.

Join us each Monday at 7:00PM on Zoom!
Please email Janet for the link at drjml@me.com

(NO PREPARATION REQUIRED)
WE ARE HOPING TO SEE YOU!



The Youth will be having a yard sale September 29th & 30th from 9-12 in Watkins Hall! Any and all donations are welcomed. Items can be dropped off at the church office. If assistance is needed to pick up, or transport heavy items, please contact Karen Candusso at 575-618-9474 or call the church office at 575-526-5559.

Thank you for supporting the FPC Youth!



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.

In-Betweeners
Friday, September 22nd

At 6 PM on our regular fourth Friday, we'll be getting together for a planned potluck dinner in Watkins Fellowship Hall. After dinner, First Presbyterian's new Director of Family Ministry, Rev. Nick Koontz, has agreed to speak. This will be a great opportunity to get to know him and hear about his work.

Please contact the Ames, 575-526-3247 or jkames@q.com, by Monday, September 18, to let us know that you're coming and what category of dish you would like to bring.