

# First Presbyterian Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico

17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

September 24, 2023 - 10:30 A.M

*Enter to worship – Leave to serve*



## PRELUDE

“For the Life That You Have Given” (Early American tune) George Lachenauer (b. 1933)

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending” Larry Visser (b. 1962)

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” (3 tunes) Robert W. Thygeson (1921-2017)

\*\*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

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

(Romans 5:1-2 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT “Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

RESTORATION

## ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Stephen Taylor

(Psalms 134 & 135)

Leader: Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord!

**People: Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the Lord. May the Lord, maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion.**

Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord; give praise, O servants of the Lord, you that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

**People: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing to his name, for he is gracious. For the Lord will vindicate his people, and have compassion on his servants.**

\*HYMN OF PRAISE #81 “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” AUSTRIAN HYMN

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

O Lord our God, how good it is to gather once again in your Presence and leave behind the stress of our busy lives and the corrupting influences of our world. Here, O Lord, may we hear your voice, bathe ourselves in your truth and promises. Here may we experience what it is to be the one body of Christ, truly a family united in love and faith. We pray that you will send your Spirit to still and comfort our troubled minds. Restore to us the peace and joy of your salvation, so that we may respond in faithfulness and obedience. May our passion and desire be to more fully know and walk with you. **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

#415 “Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy” RESTORATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole hearts and minds and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy, forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S LOVE AND MERCY

Leader: Friends, hear the Good News. Jesus died and rose again, overthrowing the powers of sin and death, and he did it for the sake of the world. We are enslaved no longer by the powers of darkness. We are set free to follow Jesus. Friends, believe the Good News, in Jesus Christ all our sins are forgiven.

**People: Believing and trusting the Good News, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free to follow Jesus. Thanks be to God.**

Leader: What does Scripture teach about the mission of Jesus Christ?

**People: God’s reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd’s life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and**

**victory over the powers of evil. ... The risen Christ is the Savior for all humanity. Those joined to him by faith are set right with God and commissioned to serve as his reconciling community. Christ is head of this community, the church, which began with the apostles and continues through all generations.<sup>1</sup>**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE                      #613 “O Lord, Our Lord”                      HOW MAJESTIC

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES                      Chibuzo Chilaka

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

CALL TO PRAYER                      “There Is a Longing in Our Hearts”                      LONGING  
Chancel Choir

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM                      “God’s Mercy”                      Zollene Reissner

### **PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS                      Dr. Janet Loman  
Matthew 20:1-16                      Romans 3:9, 21-28

Matthew 20:1-16 (New Revised Standard Version)

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not

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<sup>1</sup> The Confession of 1967, United Presbyterian Church, sections 9.08 and 9.09, current BOC PC(USA).

allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Romans 3:9, 21-28 (New Revised Standard Version)

What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“For There Is No Distinction”

Rev. Norm Story

\*CLOSING HYMN

#351 “All Who Love and Serve Your City”

CHARLESTOWN

### **GO IN GOD’S NAME**

BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL BENEDICTION

“Farewell, Good Friends!”

SHALOM, CHAVERIM

\*POSTLUDE

Hymn Tune Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck

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

**Please turn off all cell phones**

*Liturgist – Stephen Taylor*

*Deacon Captain – Divine Mboh*

*Sound System – Max Schroeder Video – Dina Schroeder*



#### ***A Special Invitation***

Please come to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the ministry of  
Rev. Norm and Kathy Story with Mary Martha Circle  
at Fellowship Time after Worship today on the Jones Hall patio

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:*

*Diana Howard – E    Chibuzo Chilaka – W    Sandy Abernathy – S*

*Greeting after Worship Service:*

*Chibuzo Chilaka – E    Rev. Norm Story – W    Stephen Taylor – 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; Salvation Army; La Casa domestic shelter; Casa de Peregrinos, emergency food pantry; 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](mailto: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.



9/27 – Judith Ames  
 9/29 – Cynthia Watkins, Linda Pearson  
 9/30 – Marsha Topley  
 10/01– Sarah Loman

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

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**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](http://fpc.lc) and click on the “heart” icon or [fpc.lc/giving](http://fpc.lc/giving) or scan QR code
- 4) Smartphone App: Church Center
- 5) Text 84321



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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.

**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](mailto:linda@fpc.lc) Rev. Norm Story e-mail: [revstory@fpc.lc](mailto:revstory@fpc.lc)  
Facebook: Look up First Presbyterian Church of Las Cruces

### 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  
10:30 AM Worship Service  
11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship (see announcement)  
12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

### Monday, September 25, 2023

*Watkins/Reeves Hall in use all week*

- 7:00 PM College & Young Adult Bible Study on zoom (see announcement)  
7:00 PM Bells rehearsal with Beth Thomas

### Tuesday, September 26, 2023

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

### Wednesday, September 27, 2023

- 9:30 AM Staff meeting, office will be closed during meeting  
12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday bulletin  
No Salt & Light this week.  
7:00 PM Choir rehearsal in the Sanctuary

### Thursday, September 28, 2023

*The Good News Newsletter will be published on Fridays. Please send submissions by Thursday evenings to: [scotty.benaway@sbcglobal.net](mailto:scotty.benaway@sbcglobal.net)*

### Friday, September 29, 2023

- 9:00 – Noon Youth Yard Sale in Watkins/Reeves Hall

### Saturday, September 30, 2023

- 9:00 – Noon Youth Yard Sale in Watkins/Reeves Hall

### Sunday, October 1, 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  
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

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](http://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](mailto:nkoontz@fpc.lc) with any questions or technical difficulties.



### 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, 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.



### DEACONS' HAMBURGER FRY OCTOBER 8

On behalf of all the Deacons, we would like to thank our congregation for your generous support of our missions. We are only able to carry out our mission by your donations.

Our only annual revenue-making event is the **BURGER FRY**. This year it will be outside after the worship service, on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. We will be grilling delicious hamburgers and hot dogs, and have all the trimmings.

Please consider making a donation to the Deacons and *absolutely* plan on joining us for this fun event.





## **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](mailto:drjml@me.com)

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

## **Yard Sale Donations Needed**



The Youth will be having a yard sale on Friday & Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> 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!

# **FALL BREAK ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH (6th -12th)**

*\*\* No Salt & Light on Sept 27th or Oct 4th \*\**

## **Wednesday, Sept 27th - Youth Night from 4 to 7pm**

We will prep Watkins Hall for the youth fundraiser sale.  
Pizza, friends, and Bible study included.

## **Fri and Sat, Sept 29th and 30th - 9am to Noon**

Youth fundraising yard sale!

## **Wednesday, Oct 4th - 8:30am to 2pm**

Meet at the church at 8:30am as we head out to the El Paso Zoo. Any youth that participated in the yard sale will have their ticket covered, otherwise it will be \$12. We will return to the church and have lunch and freeplay time, concluding at 2pm.

**Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> is World Communion Sunday**



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