



**First Presbyterian Church**  
**Las Cruces, New Mexico**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Thanksgiving In-Gathering<sup>1</sup>**  
**November 19, 2023 - 10:30 A.M**  
*Enter to worship – Leave to serve*



PRELUDE

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| "Thanksgiving"  | Elmer Samuel Hosmer (1862-1945) |
| "Thanks to God" (Tack O Gud)(Swedish hymn tune of 1910) | Lani Smith (1934-2015)          |
| "Sing to the Lord of Harvest" (Hymn tune of 1581)       | Healey Willan (1880-1968)       |

\*\*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

What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven—and the future starts now! God is keeping careful watch over us and the future. The Day is coming when you'll have it all—life healed and whole. (1 Peter 1:3-4 *The Message*)

CHORAL INTROIT                      "Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers"                      Llangloffan

**ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP                      Rev. Nick Koontz  
(Psalm 27)

Leader: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

**People: Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.**

Leader: Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

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<sup>1</sup> During the singing of the Hymn of Assurance, you are invited to come forward to place your food offerings in the baskets on the Chancel. These gifts will be used to continue our support of the Casa de Peregrinos Food Pantry.

**People:** I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

HYMN OF PRAISE #367 "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" St. George's Windsor

**\*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

O Lord, may we never forget the infinite blessing of your willingness to hear our prayers, and that you are always present with us. Thank you for bringing us through life's storms and through the dry, questioning seasons of our lives. This day, may we hear your grace and feel your mercy as we come before you in worship, and in response, may we bend and bow to your will and purpose for us. Help us, Holy Spirit, to worship in truthful and joyful expectation. Lord, we know that we are here today because you brought us, and have something special for us, some message of grace and hope. May we receive, and not reject or deny, your gift of love, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught His disciples... **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 "Lord, Have Mercy upon Us" Kyrie Eleison  
Chancel Choir

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)**

O Lord God, there is no blessing we could ask but that you are able to give, have promised to give, and have already given to countless multitudes, all unworthy and guilty like us. Help us to be more able to receive your mercy and grace. May we be conscious of our sin. Soften our hearts to bewail our folly, ingratitude, pride, unbelief, rebellion, and corruption. Give us hope against our guilt and shame, a love that excites toward holy obedience, a joy that is our strength, and faith in your Son, who loves us and died for us. Help us to be humble in our need for your mercy and grace, and strive to live continually as on the brink of eternity.<sup>2</sup>

**TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION**

**ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY**

**Leader:** While it is true that we have sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's love in Jesus Christ. To all who humbly seek the mercy of God, in Jesus Christ, all our sin is forgiven.

**People:** **Thanks be to God; all our sins are forgiven and gone. Amen.**

**Leader:** What does Scripture teach and declare about God?

**People:** **We declare that Jesus is Lord. His resurrection is a decisive victory over the powers that deform and destroy human life. His lordship is hidden. The world appears to be**

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<sup>2</sup> from *The Valley of Vision, A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*, edited by Arthur Bennett, 1975.

**dominated by people and systems that do not acknowledge his rule. But his lordship is real. It demands our loyalty and sets us free from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us. We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ in every sphere of life. Jesus is Lord! He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord!**<sup>3</sup>

HYMN OF ASSURANCE #350 “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning” Keep Your Lamps

**At this time, you are invited to come forward to place your food offerings in the baskets on the Chancel. These gifts will be used to continue our support of the Casa de Peregrinos Food Pantry.**

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES Debra Smith

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

CALL TO PRAYER “In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful” Be Ever Thankful  
Chancel Choir

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM “Come! Let Us Give Thanks” John Purifoy  
Jacob Dalager, Trumpet  
Leah Mathe, Conductor

### **PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS Dr. Janet Loman  
Psalm 27:1-8, 14 Matthew 25:14-29

Psalm 27:1-8, 14 (New Revised Standard Version)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh— my adversaries and foes— they shall stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident. One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! “Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, Lord, do I seek. I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

Matthew 25:14-29 (New Revised Standard Version)

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<sup>3</sup> from *A Declaration of Faith*, 177th General Assembly (PCUS, 1977).

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave!

You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

|               |   |                 |
|---------------|---|-----------------|
| SERMON        | Using What I’ve Been Given  | Rev. Norm Story |
| *CLOSING HYMN | #336 “We Gather Together”   | Kremser         |
|               | *Please bring your In Giving gifts to the baskets during this hymn* |                 |

**GO IN GOD’S NAME**

|                     |                                    |                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| *BENEDICTION        |                                    |                    |
| *CHORAL BENEDICTION | “Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise” | Thankful Hearts    |
| *POSTLUDE           | Hymn Tune Improvisation            | Howard A. Smolleck |

*Lithurgist-Rev. Nick Koontz    Deacon Captain-Patricia Adu-Mensah  
Sound System-Rusty Smith    Video-Brent Brewer*

*Greeting Before Worship Service:*

*Rev. Nick Koontz-E    Sandy Abernathy-W    Linda Pearson-S*

*Greeting after Worship Service:*

*Rev. Norm Story-E    Rev. Dr. Nick Koontz-W    Debra Smith-S*

|                          |                       |                        |                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 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       |



**Please remember in your prayers:**

- Prayers for all those with seasonal illnesses, those facing medical challenges related to aging, and to all those traveling for the Thanksgiving season.
- We received a number of prayer reports sharing our congregation's prayers and gratitude for the strength, unity, and love at FPC. Thank you! Ministry is always a blessing when people are praying.
- Prayers for Linda Rosenbloom's family (Donna Mathis' sister) in her passing, for an unnamed friend in Maine who will be undergoing a mastectomy in early December, for Karma Bromwell's grandpa, Mike, as he gets heart surgery, and praises that Gene Harbaugh found that the spot on his kidney is not cancer.

***Continued Prayer List:***

Roger Jones, Jessica Stout, June Briggs, Dinus Briggs, Wayne & Marianne Maley, Rev. Jay Bishop, John & Melanie Grant, Linda Seaton's father, Shannon; Daughter of Bill & Virginia Haynes Rev. Marcus Burr, Mary Olberg Jean Rhodes, Rev. Dave Schreuder, Dale Cook and First Presbyterian Church of Deming, Jonathon West's mother, Fred Davis, Esther Smolleck's sister, Jeanine Krenzer and Clyde Treat, Dorris Hamilton, Norma Klein, Ann Miller all at The Heritage, 854 Lettuce Lane, 88001.

For prayer requests, call the church office, leave a written request in the purple boxes, or email [newsletter@fpc.lc](mailto:newsletter@fpc.lc) to get your request on the Church-wide prayer chain.

pray





## Happiest of Birthday's to you!!!

\* 11/20 Carol Goss

\* 11/23Valencia Owens

\* 11/25 Thomas Korang



\*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 Christian Education.

*Greetings*

Our Worship services are now available:

- 1) In-person, with Covid19 precautions
- 2) Live-stream on YouTube, First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM
- 3) Video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube

### Covid19 Precautions:

- Seating in the 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 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.

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



More information can  
be found on our website:  
fpc.lc  
CCLI License No. 540727

Tithes, gifts and offerings can be done in a variety of ways. Thank You  
for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

1. Cash or check in the purple offering box.
2. Check sent by mail.
3. Online at [fpc.lc/giving](https://fpc.lc/giving) or via the QR code to the right.
4. Using the app "Church Center."
5. Text 84321



**\*Church Office Hours are: Monday-Friday 11:00 AM-2:00 PM\***

## In The Life of The Church



**Salt & Light** will be off Wednesday November 22, 2023 in observation of the Thanksgiving Holiday. They will resume on Wednesday November 29, 2023. Happy Thanksgiving!!



### -Christmas Baskets-

The season of giving is upon us. The Deacons will once again be handing out food baskets. If you know a family or anyone who would like to receive a basket this holiday season please email Linda Ward at [lrwardps@gmail.com](mailto:lrwardps@gmail.com) or contact the church office with the name of the family and contact information. We Thank You all for your thoughtfulness, from all of us here at First Presbyterian Church.



Help us show of our wonderful Congregation!! If you have photos or videos you'd like to share, social media is a great place to let the community know about the great things happening here at First Presbyterian Church. Please like us and share your experiences with us on your pages!!

Mark  
your  
Calendar



"Los Pastores" a "new" old tradition will be performing on  
December 8<sup>th</sup> in the First Presbyterian Sanctuary at 7:00 PM



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**LOST & FOUND**

Please Check Often and Take What is Yours.





Our bins are filling up again!! Are you missing something? You may find it here in our Lost & Found. Come by the office and check out the bins during our office hours.



**Sunday, November 19, 2023**

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Larry Hicks in the Jones Hall Library, a series entitled “Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Pastor, Theologian and Martyr”
- 9-11:45 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 together in the Sanctuary, In-Gathering
- 11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall
- 12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

**Monday, November 20, 2023**

- 7:00 PM Bells of Praise rehearsal with Beth Thomas
- 7:00 PM Young Adults zoom Bible study with Dr. Janet Loman.
- 7:00 PM Storytellers

**Tuesday, November 21, 2023**

- 1:30 PM Movie Day for Youth Group, “Journey to Bethlehem”
- 7:00 PM Session

**Wednesday, November 22, 2023**

- 9:30 AM Staff Meeting, office will be closed during meeting
- 12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday Bulletin
- 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

**Thursday, November 23, 2023**

Office Closed- Happy Thanksgiving!!!

**Friday, November 24, 2023**

Office Closed

**Saturday, November 25, 2023**

**Sunday, November 26, 2023**

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Larry Hicks in the Jones Hall Library, a series entitled “Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Pastor, The Elogen, and Mortar”
- 9-11:45 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 together in the Sanctuary



11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall  
12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story