



JULY 2020

THE FIRST PRESS

From Tom's Study

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." – Matthew 13:44 ([The NRSV](#))

Deb and I are immersed in financial decisions and stress (I am probably the primary stressor) as our new home in Poncha gets close to completion, and hopefully we will be moving in by the middle of July. Paying rent, construction loan, finalizing a mortgage; "Ugh"! Somedays it is hard to know whether it is all worth it, and what is really the faithful choice to make about housing and the costs related to having a place to call home. At the moment it is hard to call all the issues around housing a treasure, worth all of the costs. I am sure that will change after getting settled in and all the financial dust gets settled. "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

In Jesus' teaching, through parables, he related the Kingdom of Heaven to a treasure worth selling all a person has, and going and buying the field that holds the treasure. In the next parable he compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a pearl of more value than can be understood, but the Kingdom of Heaven is of even greater value.

When you think of a treasure what comes to mind? Your home? Your investment portfolio? The yet to be won lottery? Your favorite belongings? Heirlooms passed down to you from previous generations? Your closest relationships? What do you truly treasure?

Jesus' teaching suggests to us that our true home in God's Kingdom is of more value than any of our earthly treasures. In considering how Jesus used parables New Testament Scholar C. H. Dodd wrote: "A parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt of its precise application to tease it into active thought."

When we allow our minds to start thinking about treasure, buried treasure, pirates' hoards, sunken treasure, ancient treasure we start having vivid ideas that tease us into considering the truly astounding nature of God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is an amazing gift offered to us freely, a gift beyond our understanding, or grasp. Seeking God's Kingdom is a pursuit worth our time and energy, our consideration and passion. As we continue to move through this strange time of pandemic, let us take some time to consider the reality of God's Kingdom, and the astounding news that God's Kingdom is our true home. What does that truth actually mean for the living of our daily lives? May God bless our ponderings!

Christ's Peace be with you - Tom



Sermon Information

July 2020

July 5 – 5th Sunday after Pentecost – Communion

Scripture Reading: Psalm 103:1-5, Matthew 13:24-33, Matthew 13:34-43

Sermon Title: “The Kingdom of God”

Synopsis: If you were going to describe the Kingdom of God to a friend, what images would you use? How would you attempt to put flesh on the idea of God’s Kingdom to someone who asked you? Jesus began three parables in a row with the phrase, “The Kingdom of God is like or comparable to” . . .The Kingdom of God is a great mystery to us the Creation, but Jesus aims to give us insights into the nature of God’s Kingdom. What do we learn from these parables and how do they impact our lives and our life together?

July 12 – 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture Reading: Psalm 105:1-4, Matthew 13:44-53

Sermon Title: “Knowing a Treasure, New or Old”

Synopsis: As Jesus continued to describe the Kingdom of God he used images like treasure, a pearl, and a net. He concluded the discussion by pointing out that the Kingdom of God includes some from both the old and the new. In our lives it can be challenging to know when the old is what we need or when the new. Jesus makes it clear that both are important. In other words we need to have both roots and wings, new and old in our lives.

July 19 – 7th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture Reading: Psalm 74:9-11, Matthew 13:54-58, Matthew 14:1-12

Sermon Title: “The Plight of the Prophet”

Synopsis: In these passages we hear of the very difficult nature of providing a prophetic voice in the world. At the best, Prophets are rejected, at the worst they end up dead. As followers of Jesus don’t we all have a role in being a prophetic voice in the world? Where has God placed you, so that you can speak with a prophetic voice? What injustice has God placed on your heart to speak about?

July 26 – 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture Reading: Psalm 143:1-2, 9-10, Matthew 14:13-21, Romans 8:31-39

Sermon Title: “Compassion that Leads to Generosity”

Synopsis: When Jesus looked out at the crowd he had compassion for them. Jesus set a beautiful example for us. When we look at the people of the world does our heart and mind start with compassion or some other response? Jesus’ compassion led to a pouring out of healing and generosity. Compassion begins a chain of blessing. How aware are we of our own sense of compassion?

IN-PERSON WORSHIP RESUMES?

At their June meeting the session approved in-person worship resuming tentatively on Sunday, July 19th. Until the 19th and then continually moving forward we will always live-stream the service as well. As we look forward to the possibility of opening again on the 19th several hurdles need to be overcome:

- Upgrade the church's internet service
- Upgrade the computer and video/broadcast software in the sanctuary
- Have volunteer teams in place for greeting and cleaning

We are hopeful that by the 19th we will be able to overcome these three hurdles, the first two being in process already. We will not be able to return to in-person worship until these three hurdles have been overcome.

Some things to consider as we prepare for in-person worship:

- If you are a compromised person we encourage you to continue to worship with us on-line
- We will all need to wear masks
- We will need to practice social distancing
- Initially there will not be fellowship, nursery, or Sunday school
- We will not have congregational singing
- The service will be shorter
- We will need to have lots of grace for each other and the process
- We will need a trained greeter team
- We will need a trained cleaning team
- We will continue to pay attention to how having in-person worship impacts the Covid-19 infection rate. Already churches are becoming hotspots across the country. We will be paying attention to this closely as we make final decisions about in-person worship.

How can you help us?

- Pray for all the details to come together so we can open safely
- Take seriously your own health realities
- Let Cindy Dykins know if you are willing to be a greeter
- Let Cindy Dykins know if you are willing to be on the cleaning team. The Sanctuary, bathrooms, door handles will all need to be cleaned after the service or each service depending on how many services we end up having.
- Have grace for the awkwardness of social distancing in worship and needing to limit our conversations with one another
- Pray

We continue to be grateful for your patience as we take seriously the specific demographics, needs, and limitations related to our congregational situation. We truly want to love our neighbor well through this time and the decisions we make personally and corporately. With these challenges before us, Hilary and I very much look forward to seeing your faces in worship in the near future. Thanks for praying.





FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Building on what Tom told us in his June 14th sermon, that "God calls us to be people who wade into the messiness of other people's lives," I want to let you all know how He has opened another door to expand our ministry to those in need in our community, but first some history:

Many years ago Al Johnson and Charlie Tucker entered into an agreement with the U.S. Forest Service that our church could use the wood from trees the Forest Service cut down to deliver to people in the community who could not afford to buy firewood. Once a year Al and Charlie assembled volunteers from the church to haul and split the wood, and then the two of them would deliver it throughout the winter to those in need.

Five years ago the Johnsons moved to Arizona, and John and I agreed to store the remaining wood on our property. Around the same time the youth ranch north of BV was doing fire mitigation and offered the church the wood from the trees being cut down. Again a crew of about 20 volunteers spent 3 days hauling and splitting wood, enjoying the camaraderie of working together.

Our Firewood Delivery Team has used that wood to help those in need stay warm during the winter, and I'm excited to tell you that we're being offered the opportunity to expand the team into doing more than just delivery. Terra Firma Forestry, a local tree cutting firm, contacted the church to see if we could donate the wood from the trees they cut to those in need. With the amount of wood they can bring us, we'll be able to keep many more people warm through the winter.

John and I can store the wood, and I'm hoping to have a work day around the end of August to split what we've accumulated, adhering to the health guidelines in effect at that time. Lunch will be provided, and if what's happened in past years is any indication, all who participate – man or woman, adult or teen – will have an exhilarating day and go home knowing they have helped make someone else's life less messy.

So guess what?! As your Volunteer Coordinator I'm asking you to jump on board to expand the ministry of the Firewood Team. If you would like to split wood, have a wood splitter you can bring, or can help with lunch, please call or email the church. I will get in touch with you later in the summer with the final details.

Please help me make this partnership with Terra Firma work!

Hugs from afar!

Cindy Dykins

Looking for a place to serve?





YOUTH MISSION RUMMAGE/YARD SALE

SATURDAY, JULY 25

Our mission trips may have been cancelled for the summer, but our intent to support youth mission for next summer is still there. PLUS, we want to help you get rid of all that stuff you cleaned out during stay-at-home time! We'll take most things but we CANNOT TAKE: computers or electronics of any kind, exercise equipment, mattresses, VHS or cassette tapes. Any questions about what we can take, call or email Hilary. If you would like to help with the sale, please let Hilary know!



MEET OUR NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Lexee Barrera, our new administrative assistant is also new to Salida. She is very excited to serve the church as it's administrative assistant. Slowly, but surely, she looks forward to meeting, getting to know, and helping all the members of the congregation and the Salida community in any way she can. When she's not in the office you'll more than likely find her at Riverside Park juggling and standing on her hands!

CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER

We encourage all of us to get on the phone and regularly check-in with folks. You might even call someone you have never called before.



CONTINUING COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Like restaurants around the country we are open for take-out. Stone Soup, the Food Pantry, and SOS continue to offer support to our neighbors who are experiencing food shortages, or help with other financial emergencies. We are grateful for your support that allows us to continue to be a part of the emergency services for our county.



Notes From the Office

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORK DAY



I am taking a poll, to gauge support for a First Presbyterian Church/Chaffee County Habitat for Humanity work day (or two) this summer.

Currently, a home is being built in Poncha Springs in partnership with the Salida School District. Changes have been made on the build site to comply with Chaffee County Health Department COVID-19 rules. Currently, Habitat is limiting the number of volunteers to 6, in addition to their staff. They hope to increase this number to 10 later in the summer. Masks must be worn by all volunteers, and tools cannot be shared. Volunteers can sign up for a morning or afternoon shift, or work a full day.

If you want to help, but construction is not your thing, groups projects are available at the Habitat ReStore. Another way to support the building effort is by providing food for our hungry Presbyterian workers.

If any of this sounds like something you are interested in, please email me at bartonamycm@gmail.com, or call me at 719-221-0610. When you reply, please let me know which of the three ways you are willing to help (construction, ReStore or lunch) and your schedule for July and September, i.e. are you only available on Saturdays, or can you participate on a weekday? If weekdays work, which day of the week do you prefer (Tuesday - Friday)? Are there weeks during the months of July and September when you are unavailable?

The need for affordable homes around the world is great. While we may not feel safe traveling outside the county this summer, we can make a difference for one family, right here in our own backyard.

Thanks,
Amy Barton



THANKS FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We realize that times of unknown, like this one, make financial giving even a greater gift of faith. Thanks for stepping out in faith continuing to support the ministry of First Presbyterian. You can now give on-line at the church's website. Check it out – www.salidapresbyterian.org

Notes From the Office

CALLING ALL ANIMAL LOVERS!

We are looking for people who are willing to temporarily house pets for men and women who need to use the winter shelter. If you are interested, please contact Tina Connett at tinaconnett@comcast.net or 970-988-4801. She will contact you to make sure that it will be a good fit for you and to set up coordination details for the upcoming winter shelter season. Thank you!



Thanks,
Tina

WINTER SHELTER

We hope to make the shelter a permanent source of assistance to people in our community. Toward that end we are looking for a dedicated home for the shelter, and on-going financial support for the shelter. Thus we would appreciate your continued prayers, ideas and support as we work to establish a permanent shelter in our community for people who chronically or unexpectedly find they are experiencing homelessness. If you have an interest in getting involved, if you have ideas or resources to share please reach out to Tom Abbott, Beth Sanders, Cheryl Walker or Hal Walker. If you would like to make a donation you can write a check to "Caring and Sharing" putting "winter shelter" in the memo-line. Or you can use this link to give on the go-fund-me page: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/salida-colorado-overnight-winter-shelter>



Notes From the Office

WORSHIP WITH US THROUGH FACEBOOK LIVE

As July begins we will continue to broadcast a worship experience through Facebook Live, each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. We are grateful that Liz, Danny, Kat, and members of the band have begun to participate in our weekly worship services. Thank You!!! If you have access to the internet you can tap into this worship experience even if you are not a normal Facebook user. You can also watch the broadcast at the church website on YouTube:



www.salidapresbyterian.org by about 12:00 on Sundays. Don't forget to tell your friends about this experience.



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Tom continues to host a Bible study on Monday nights at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome. If you need a Zoom Link please connect with Pastor Tom.

VIRTUAL COMMUNION

We will share in Communion during our July 5th worship service. Whenever you choose to tune-in make sure you have bread and juice available, so that you can join with the rest of the community in celebrating the Lord's Supper.



COORDINATED PRAYER TIME

If you can carve out the time, we invite each person to take 15 minutes a day and pray for our community and our world. If you want to coordinate your time with others we suggest praying from 12:00-12:15 p.m. each day.

REGULAR UPDATES

We will continue to regularly reach out through e-mail and the phone tree to let you know of opportunities to gather on-line, or to share resources you might find interesting. Also please reach out to Tom or Hilary at the church. They continue to hold down the church office Mondays through Thursdays from about 9:00 a.m. to about 5:00 p.m. Lexee is in the office Monday through Wednesday most often from 8:00 to 4:00. Don't be afraid to call or stop by to introduce yourself. Burma continues to volunteer some hours on Thursdays.

PRAYER REQUESTS

As you go through the month we ask that you keep Ned Dixon; Jerry Cannon; Bob Parker; Carolyn Miller; Barbara Jones; Jerry Wassel; Joan Michaud; Gaylene's Mom, Edith DePaul; Theodore Andrews; Marcelyn George's daughter-in-law, Sandie; Marshall and Lydia Hamilton, Delaine DuPrey's family; Polly Reed; Dellann Strom's friend, Viann; Kay Hutchings; Clay Sanders; family of Doris Larson; Suzanne Morphew and family. We know this is not an exhaustive list, that there are so many more. Please call or email the church if you would like someone added to this list.



—STAYING— CONNECTED

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Liz Riley, Choir Director, Pianist: emusic1955@gmail.com
Lexee Barrera, Administrative Assistant: office@salidapresbyterian.org



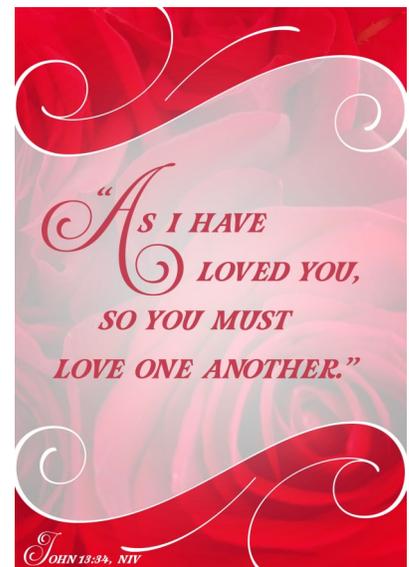
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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY-9:00 AM-5:00 PM

FRIDAY/SATURDAY-CLOSED





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Seeking to love our world in the Spirit of Jesus Christ

OUR VISION: God's dream for the world, nothing less.

OUR MISSION: Growing disciples of Jesus through knowing God,
loving each other, and serving the world.

7 Poncha Blvd.

Salida, CO

81201

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED