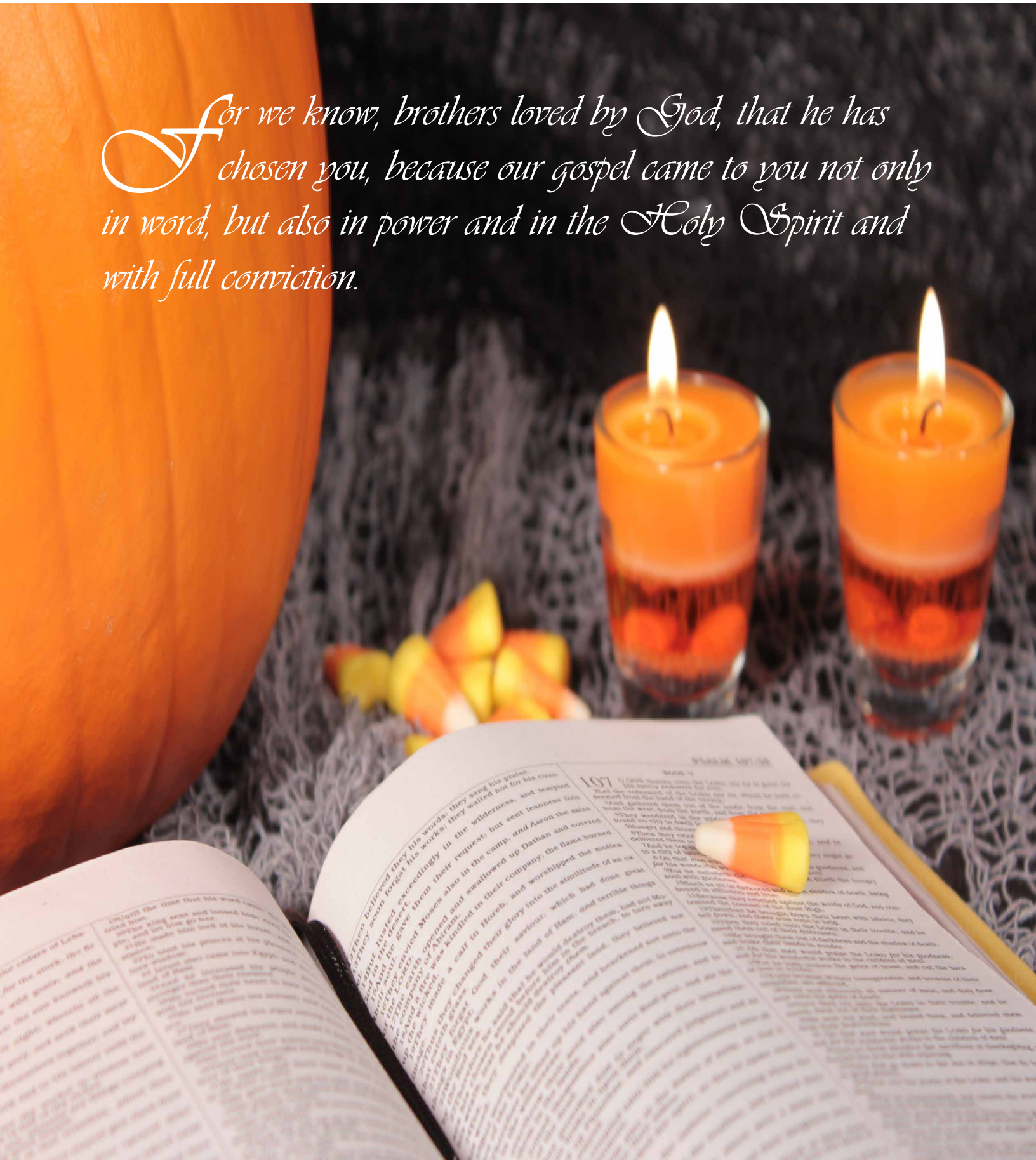


# FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2020 OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

*For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.*





A photograph of a church building with a brick facade, a white gabled roof, and a stone wall in the foreground. Pink flowers are visible in the top left corner. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular background.

# Hello & Welcome

**T**he Church is not a building. It is a gathering of people brought together to experience God's love and purpose.

God designed the church for YOU – you belong here. Are you ready to experience a community of people doing life together? To find out, come worship with us on Sunday mornings.

**Our Mission:** To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people know Jesus Christ and grow, share and serve as his disciples.

**Our Vision:** To provide an inviting and welcoming church home that attracts people of all ages and encourages positive growth, while creating an exciting and dynamic approach as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for worshipping with us! We are happy to welcome you into this household of God.

# PASTOR'S LETTER

## What is the Gospel

Pastor Robbie Carnes

**W**hat is the Gospel?

It is easy to think that discipleship is the institutional function of passing on theological (what we know about God) and ecclesiastical (how we run the church) information so that the Church can consistently be doing quality ministry and be a strong spiritual community throughout the generations. While this is important, if we seek to make disciples of our church or tradition, the answer to the question, "What is the Gospel?" becomes, "Support the church!" Whereas, if we seek to make disciples of Jesus the answer to that question becomes a journey for an eternity, the mustard seed of faith, the pearl of great price.

The easiest answer to the question, "What is the Gospel?" is that God saves sinners. At first that might seem trite, however unpacking this little phrase gets us surprising places. First, the Gospel is something that God does, not us. [Romans 5:8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us]. If the Gospel is God's instigation and all we need to do is accept God's faithful goodness to us through Jesus, then the Gospel means freedom. [Galatians 5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery]. Freedom from what? From our own efforts to be acceptable.

From our own strength to do good. From our limited capacity for wisdom and vision and imagination. We are free from striving in our own power and we learn to rely on God's strength.

Second, if the Gospel is about God saving us, then we must have something to be saved from. For some of us, this can or has meant a drastic change in our lives. Where we were once one thing, we have now become something entirely different. Jesus has given us a way to become new. [2 Corinthians 5:16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!] There are many different images of what that could mean in our individual lives. We are freed from the slavery of the flesh into the life of the Spirit. We are accepted into the people of God and given a new citizen in God's Kingdom. We are adopted into God's family whereas we once were orphans. Through the community of faith and the power of the Spirit we can be freed from bitterness, grief, guilt, and bad habits and truly experience a new and meaningful life.



Thirdly, the Gospel is about God saving sinners and sinners mean us.

Romans 3:23-24 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]. This means all of us are guilty of wrong doing toward God, ourselves and others. Through Jesus, God saves us from the spiritual guilt of our sin and teaches how we might live ethically with each other. However, we have all sinned against each other and it accumulates tragically throughout history, compounding year after year and we, as individuals act against each other without recognizing the harm that is done. We sin against each other ignorantly and even our acts of mercy and our systems of benevolence can become tools of pain and injury. Not only do our actions need to be transformed, our entire world needs to be renewed, and Jesus promises to do it. [Revelation 21:5 And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."]

I would hope that this is a compelling explanation of what the Gospel is. However, it is nothing better than a good story unless it is tied to our own story. What does this mean to you? What freedom have you found in Christ? From what have you been saved? In what ways do you hope in the future, present and eternal?

When we begin to answer these questions, through prayer and intentional time with Jesus; through worship and Bible study, we begin to become disciples of Jesus. When we begin to grasp how Jesus loves us, we can begin to love others as Jesus loves them, sharing with them the goodness of God.

John 13:34-35 I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."





# WORSHIP

## SERMON SERIES

As we gather for worship in October we will continue to discuss two other elements of Discipleship; Prayer and Worship.

[Prayer](#) includes, adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication and we will dwell on how we might regularly include these in our regular prayers.

[Worship](#) is the primary purpose of the Church because it is what we call an eternal vocation; it is our job in heaven to worship.

In the middle of October we will leave the topic of discipleship and explore the book of 1 Thessalonians. Paul praised the church of Thessalonica and we can learn a great deal about who we should be as a church from Paul's letter to them. The two themes we will touch on in October are those of sharing and replicating our faith and pleasing God.

[October 4th we will celebrate Communion in a new way.](#)

After the online worship service, the congregation will be invited to come to the church parking area and receive the communion elements and a prayer from their cars between 10:45am and 11:45am. Those unable to come are invited to take the elements at their homes. We pray that this is an uplifting way to celebrate our Lord's death and resurrected life.

More information will follow regarding this and I hope that you might take advantage of this faithful fellowship opportunity.

## WORSHIPING IN THE SANCTUARY FOR OCTOBER

It is Session's plan to regather in the Sanctuary for worship on October 11th, 2021. Our service will begin at 10am. In order to provide a safe environment for the maximum amount of people Session is requiring masks to be worn by everyone in attendance and social distancing between household will be expected. Every effort will be made to provide a quality streaming service for those who choose to join us online. It is Session's hope that this will be a hope filled and healthy step toward the day when we can all gather as God's people in one place.

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting on November 8th directly after the 10am worship service for the purpose of voting on a 25 year parking lot lease agreement with the City of Fenton and electing Elders and Deacons for the upcoming year. Information regarding these two items will be posted in the membership portion of the church website as well as be available upon request from the Church Office. We are expecting to be able to worship in our sanctuary and hold our congregational meeting in person in that same room. For those who are unable to attend in person, a Zoom meeting will be established with the intention that those attending online can contribute and vote via the chat function. It is Session's hope that via Zoom this Congregational Meeting can include as many church members as possible.



There is no other name under heaven give among men, whereby we must be saved. - Acts 4:12

# “You are the Son of the Living God”

Pastor Lindsey Carnes

Who is Jesus? Who do you say he is? Let me tell you some of the answers I’ve heard or read. Jesus is my personal Lord and Savior. The Son of God. God incarnate. He’s my life, the song I sing, my everything. Buddy, brother, friend, homeboy. Rock, comforter, coach. Teacher. Example. The copilot next to me. The list could go on and on.

At some point or another we’ve probably all been told who Jesus is. Maybe you heard it from pastors, teachers, parents, friends, or prayer groups. Maybe you read it in books, Sunday school lessons, or on bumper stickers. Maybe you saw it on Facebook, read it on the internet, or heard it in a song. Some of the answers may have been helpful. Some were not. Some were just plain silly and some may have even been hurtful and destructive. Regardless, the question remains. Who is Jesus? Who do you say he is?

By now most of you know me well enough to know that I don’t intend to answer that question for you. I can’t. Each of us must answer it for ourselves. It is not, however, a theology or Bible exam. If anything, it is an examination of our own lives.

I don’t think Jesus is asking us to just parrot back the answers we’ve heard or read. Maybe that’s why he pushes the disciples to move from what they are hearing around them – John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets – to what they are hearing within themselves. “But who do you say that I am?”

This is not an easy question. I wonder if we sometimes too readily accept and settle for “Sunday Jesus” answers. You know,

the easy, feel good, sentimental ones. The problem is life isn’t always easy, feel good, or sentimental. It’s one thing to say who Jesus is on a Sunday morning, in relative safety and comfort. It’s a very different thing to say who he is outside of that. The question is never merely academic or abstract. It always has a context. Here’s what I mean.

- Who do we say Jesus is following the death of George Floyd and the increasing racial tensions in our country?
- Who do we say Jesus is this week when prominent female human rights leaders and activists are murdered in the Philippines and Iraq, amidst rapes in India that occur every 16 seconds, and in the face of continuing persecutions and hostage taking by the Islamic State in Nigeria?
- Who do we say Jesus is as COVID spreads, as people in our town still don’t have access to clean water, live amidst domestic violence, or work for a wage that cannot support a family?
- Who do we say Jesus is when a loved one dies, the doctor gives news we did not want to hear, and our life seems to be falling apart?
- Who do we say Jesus is when we are faced with decisions that have no easy answers, when the night is dark and the storms of life overwhelm us, when faithfulness means risking it all and taking a stand against a louder and seemingly more powerful majority?



Using the context of these few examples, what does it mean to say Jesus is my personal Lord and Savior, my example, or my brother and friend? What does it mean to say Jesus is my life, the song I sing, or my teacher?

Here's my point. Who we say Jesus is has everything to do with who and how we are and will be. In some ways our answer says as much or more about us than Jesus. It reveals how we live and what we stand up for. It guides our decisions, and determines the actions we take and the words we speak. It describes the expectations and demands we place on Jesus. It discloses the depth of our motivation for and commitment to following him, a motivation and commitment that will be challenged by next week's gospel lesson in which Jesus invites us to take up our cross and die with him.

Jesus' question isn't so much about getting the right answer as it is about witnessing and testifying to God's life, love, and presence in our lives and the world. It is less about our intellect and more about our heart. It is grounded in love more than understanding. It moves us from simply knowing about Jesus to knowing him.

In some sense there is no once and for all, finally and forever, answer. We are always living into the question. Who Jesus was when I was baptized at 16 is different from who he was when I was in my 30s or who he is for me today. Hopefully, who he is for me next year will be different from who he is today. It's not that Jesus has changed. I have. We are constantly engaging his question and in so doing we not only discover Jesus anew, we discover ourselves anew.

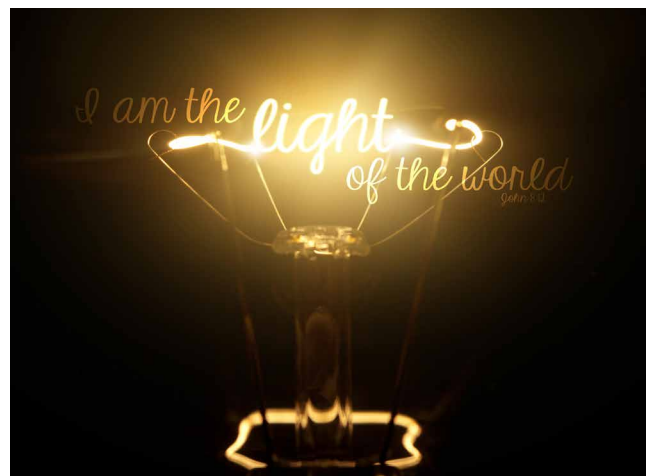
Sometimes we discover a disconnect between the "Sunday Jesus" about whom we sing and talk for an hour, and the life we live the other 167 hours of our week. Our words and actions

don't align. There is no congruity or integrity. I don't say that as a judgment about anyone but in acknowledgement of just how difficult it can be to recognize and live the truth that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

More than once I have fallen into the gap between my "Sunday Jesus" kind of answers and the circumstances of my life and world. Sometimes my answers were too simple, too small, too easy. They were no match for the complexities of life and the pain of the world. Other times my life has not reflected what I said about who Jesus is. Sometimes I kept quiet when I should have spoken up. Other times I was passive when I should have done something. Whenever I fell into that gap it has usually been because I was trying to play it safe. That almost never works.

There is nothing safe about the question Jesus poses. How could there be? There is nothing safe about Jesus or the life to which he calls us.

Jesus' life and presence among us call into question everything about our lives, our world, the status quo, and business as usual. That's why we ought not answer his question too quickly, too glibly, or with too much certainty. It's not a question to be figured out as much as it is a question to be lived.





# MISSION & STEWARDSHIP

World Communion Sunday  
October 4th



*“All who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves.” (I Cor. 11:29)*

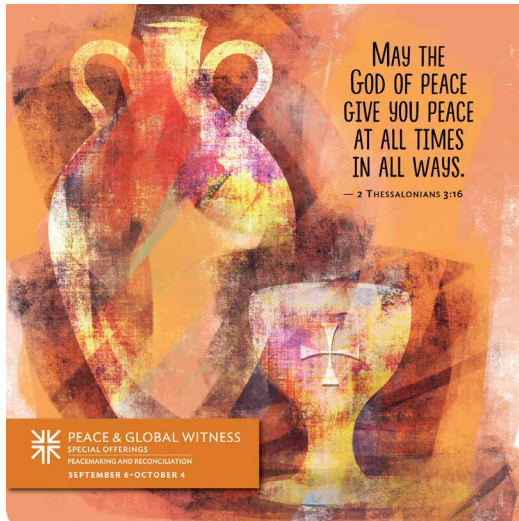
The first Sunday in October is designated as World Communion Sunday, which celebrates our oneness in Christ with all our brothers and sisters around the world. Paul tells us that we are to “discern the body” when we partake of Holy Communion, mindful that we note our relationship to all our brothers and sisters in Christ in the celebration. It is appropriate that World Communion Sunday is also a time when we receive the annual Peace and Global Witness Offering as a way of continuing the ancient Christian practice of sharing what we have with brothers and sisters in need.

Drive  
through  
Communion  
& Prayer



**October 4th we will celebrate Communion in a new way.** After the online worship service, the congregation will be invited to come to the church parking area and receive the communion elements and a prayer from their cars between 10:45am and 11:45am. Those unable to come are invited to take the elements at their homes. We pray that this is an uplifting way to celebrate our Lord’s death and resurrected life.

## Building God's House of Peace - Peace & Global Witness Offering



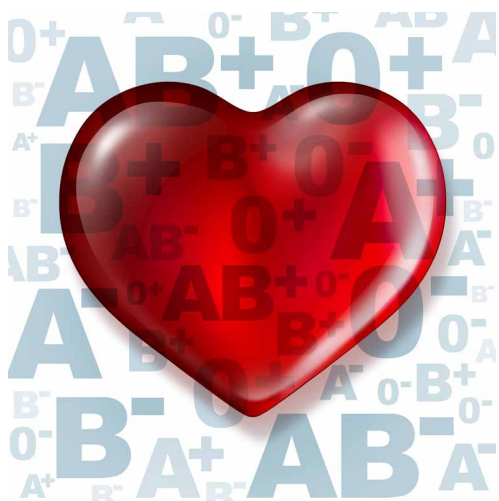
Congregations of many denominations extend the peace of Christ with a blessing during their service. “The peace of Christ be with you (and also with you).” It is a blessing offered and a blessing returned in kind. The peace of Christ is part of what our faith offers to us. Extending the peace of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith—a witness to what it means for us to be building the household of God.

In God’s house, there are people of every background. In God’s house, there are people of every race, age and gender. In God’s house, people who are different from each other in almost every way live together and seek ways to bring about Christ’s peace in every part of our lives. We speak out and claim the truth in Second

Thessalonians, “May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways.” In our church gatherings, we practice offering Christ’s peace, trusting that the blessing offered will also be returned.

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate that Christ’s peace extends throughout all creation. We celebrate that we are all together at the table, in God’s house. We celebrate that we are offered what we need to continue the work of building the household of God with active peacemakers here at home and around the world.

25 percent of the gifts received will stay right here at the church to build God’s house. Twenty-five percent will support regional efforts in our mid councils, and 50 percent will go the Presbyterian Mission Agency for its ministries of education and partnership with active peacemakers all around the world.



## Blood Drive

First Presbyterian Church of Fenton is hosting a blood drive on Monday, October 26th from 11am to 4:45 with the Red Cross. Blood donation is a safe process and precautionary steps are in place to provide everyone with peace of mind. During the outbreak of the coronavirus Red Cross employees follow extensive safety protocols at each blood drive. If you want to donate please call Red Cross @ 1-800-RED CROSS or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) to schedule your appointment. If you wish to volunteer you can contact Jo Beardslee or Sherry Hunt.



# Let's Fight Hunger Together!



## 2020 Crop Hunger Walk

Hunger is one of the greatest injustices facing our world today, but it doesn't have to be... you can feed our neighbors here and around the world! Join Fenton 1st Presbyterian on October 4th for the Crop Hunger Walk. We will be social distancing and/or walking with family as we walk a route around the church. It is a very fun, family friendly walk to raise funds and awareness.

### Register online

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/fentonmi/Team/View/136789/Fenton-1st-Presbyterian>

Can't walk on October 4th? Sponsor our team at the same website. Every donation helps end hunger and save lives! Help us reach our goal of \$1,500.00 raised!

CROP funds fight hunger around the world, and 25% of the money raised is sent to the Fenton United Methodist food pantry, FISH of Linden, and St. Jude's School Lunch program.



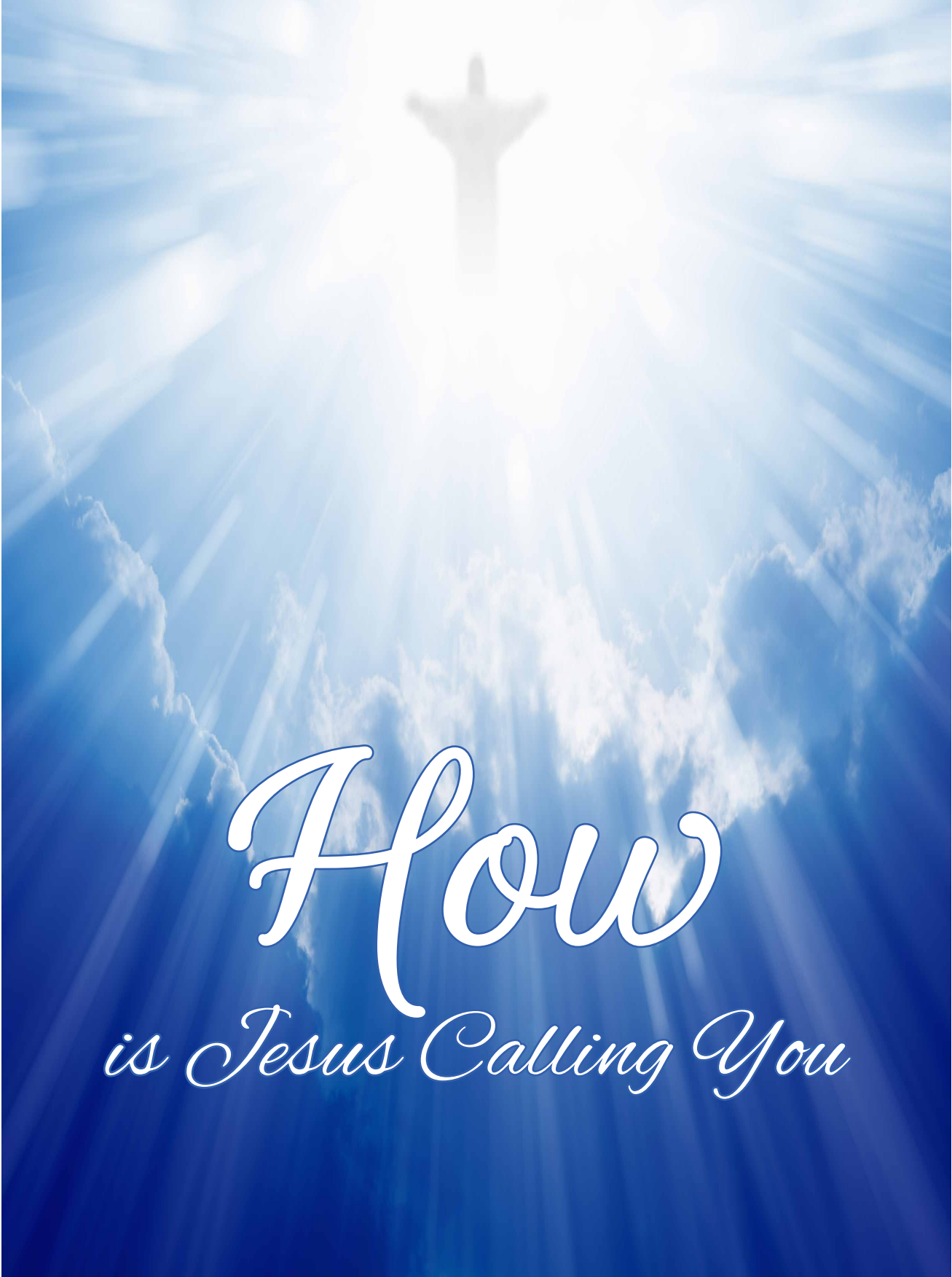
## Equal Exchange

### It's Equal Exchange time!!

The Holidays are just a few months away. It's time to think about what you'll need to buy so you can bake your treats.

Just a reminder, Equal Exchange offers organic coffees, teas, hot chocolate, baking cocoa, chocolate chips, chocolate bars, olive oil, and so much more. Stock up now, there won't be another order until next year.

A designated table will be set up in the entry way of the church beginning Monday, October 5th and will remain through Monday, October 19th. This table will contain information on the Equal Exchange program, as well as catalogs and order forms. Payment is due to the office when the order is placed. Please contact Kelley Sunman-Davis at [office@ffpc.org](mailto:office@ffpc.org) with questions.





# JESUS CALLS US

This year the Mission and Stewardship Committee has chosen the hymn, “Jesus Calls Us O’er the Tumult’ as the theme of the 2021 Stewardship Campaign. If you are not already familiar with this hymn we use it throughout the month of October in various ways and ponder together how Jesus is calling us in our present circumstances.

This hymn was written in 1852 by Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander, a talented poet and the wife of an Anglican Clergyman.

“Perhaps she was thinking of the contradictions inherent in being a comfortable Christian when she penned the verses to “Jesus Calls Us” one autumn evening in 1852. Her husband had spent the day writing his sermon for Saint Andrew’s Sunday. Over dinner they discussed the scripture Matthew 4: 18-20, in which Jesus called out “Follow me!” to two brothers fishing in the Sea of Galilee. At once, Andrew (the “First-Called”) and Simon Peter (the “Rock”) dropped their nets and followed Jesus. Inspired by this conversation, Mrs. Alexander wrote this hymn of discipleship. It was read to the congregation that Sunday following the sermon.

In the 1850’s, Ireland was recovering from a period of mass starvation caused by the potato famines of 1845-1849. Over a million people had died and another million had fled the country.

Mrs. Alexander made frequent visits to those who were still struggling to survive. She traveled the soggy moorlands, bringing food, clothing, and medical supplies to farm families. Once, she went every day for six weeks to tend a woman’s infected foot.

She also gave away the money she made from her hymn and poetry collections, once to fund a school for deaf children, another

time to the Derry Home for Fallen Women...

...Jesus calls us. Us? Yes! We are the ones called from our obsession with “the vain world’s golden store.” Jesus is motioning to us, calling us to follow him, demanding, “Christian, love me more!” We hear his plea, “Love me more than these!” whether we’re at work or taking our ease with our feet up. But are we ready? Isn’t this a little extreme? Can we be honest?

In the 21st century, it’s easy to feel bewildered by the “tumult of our life’s wild, restless sea.” On the evening news, we are stunned at the consequences of consumerism gone wild. The “vain world’s golden store” got us but good. We struggle to simplify the way we live, let go of our trinkets and toys, re-evaluate our relationship with the trappings of the good life. Still, Jesus whispers in our ears, “Christian, love me more than these.” (<https://askherabouthymn.com/what-hymn-of-discipleship-challenges-consumerism/>)

Even in the tumult of COVID, an Election Year and society turmoil, Jesus calls us. The Mission and Stewardship Committee would like you to consider in what way Jesus maybe calling you? To serve the world, to support your church to love your neighbor? In the month of October you will be receiving a Pledge Card in the mail. Would you please prayerfully consider how Jesus might be calling you to support Fenton First Presbyterian Church? Let us pray together that all of us might hear Jesus’ voice and be faithful to the call.

## Financial Review - August, 2020

Profit/ Loss	August	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Income:	\$24,780.60	\$239,709.75	\$252,210.78	\$360,341.58
Expense:	\$20,960.18	\$180,549.46	\$203,159.88	\$304,831.71
Net Income:	\$3,820.42*	\$59,160.29*	\$49,050.80	\$55,509.87

\*\*This does not include additional obligations such as restricted funds or mortgage payments, Board of Deacons, Faith & Femininity, Organ Fund, HVAC Fund, etc.

### Statement of Cash Flows July

Cash at Beginning of period:	\$112,813.35
Cash at End of Period:	\$114,769.60
Net Cash for Period (Increase)	\$1,955.25

Respectfully Submitted, September 10, 2020

Debera J Bard

Treasurer

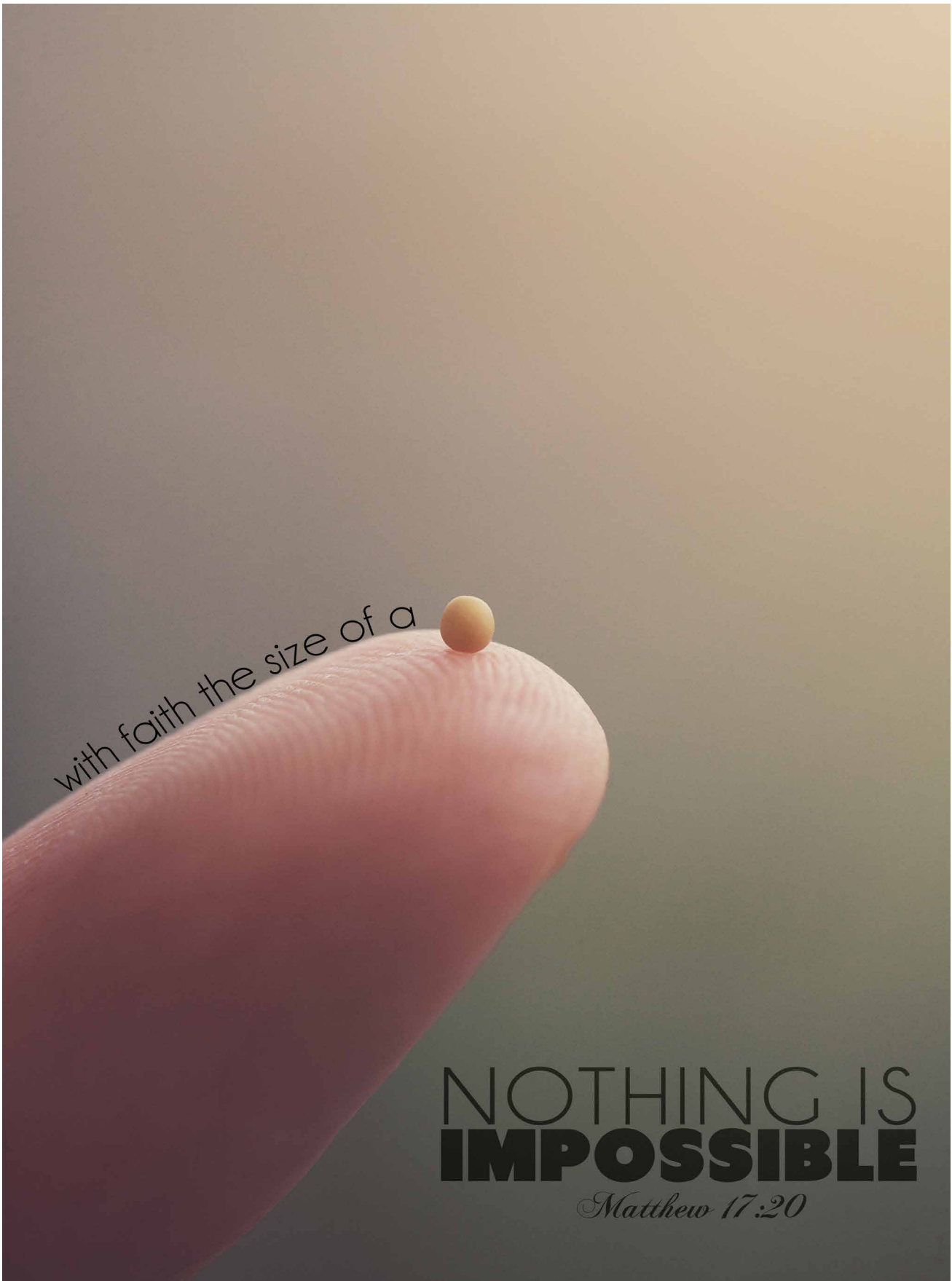
## Building Fund Report – August 31, 2020

<b>Building Account Balance:</b>	\$9,219
<b>Mortgage Remaining:</b>	\$168,287

Our monthly mortgage payment will be paid using (1) designated building fund contributions as they are received and, if needed to make the payment, (2) money from the operating budget. If more designated money is received than is needed to make the required mortgage payment, overpayments will be made to reduce interest costs and retire the mortgage as soon as we can.







with faith the size of a

NOTHING IS  
**IMPOSSIBLE**

*Matthew 17:20*

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## COVID Groups - Care of Vital Individual Disciples

Our Mission statement at FFPC is to seek to be a loving community of faith dedicated to help people grow, share and serve as disciples of Jesus. During the season of COVID it has been incredibly difficult to connect, and even more to continue in Christian Fellowship. The very thing that can see us through disaster is sometimes the first thing that we set aside. Therefore your church has a challenge.

The Christian Education Committee is seeking folks to host small groups, either in person or via zoom, to engage in Christian Fellowship and Spiritual conversation. Commit to gathering 4 times between now and before Christmas. This can be with a few households or just another individual. It can be in your home, on your deck, at a restaurant, or on Zoom - your choice (please follow Covid safety guidelines.)

**Meetings are as easy as 1, 2, and 3.**

**1.Meet together for a meal, a snack or coffee**

**2.Ask 4 simple questions that will be provided and begin a spiritual conversation**

**3.Share how you can pray for each other**

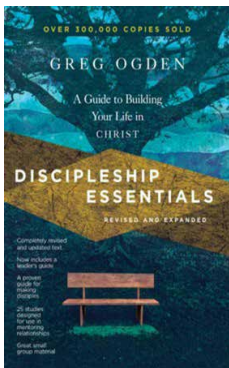
The questions are based on the theme of the week, either Grow, Share, Serve, and Community. The most important part of the journey is engaging in Fellowship and Spiritual discussion.

Christian Education Committee is excited to see how many small groups can form to discover who we are as a faith community. In January we hope to be able to answer the question, What next? Meaning how can we, as a congregation, continue to encourage and support one another on our faith walk, while also inviting newcomers to walk with us.

Prayerfully consider how you can be a part of a COVID Group and who you might invite to take this journey with you.

Contact Tina Ritchie [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org), Pastor Robbie [robbie@ffpc.org](mailto:robbie@ffpc.org), or the church office to host a group, or for more information.





## Sunday Morning Bible Study and Sermon Discussion

Join Zoom Meeting

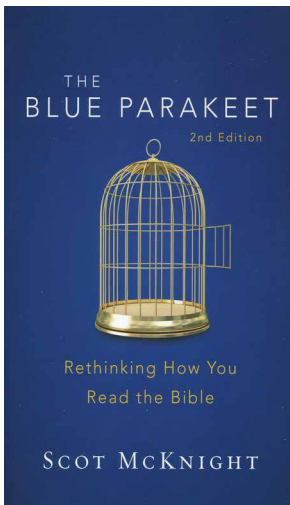
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81586041549?pwd=dXdsSUR3cUdocGJCRDRReEhPUND3UT09>

**Meeting ID:** 815 8604 1549

**Passcode:** 229105

**Dial by your location**

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) +1 929 436 2866 US (New York)



## Sunday Evening Group Study

“The Blue Parakeet.” Sunday Evenings at 5:00pm

McKnight challenges us to rethink how to read the Bible, not just to puzzle it together into some systematic belief but to see it as a Story that we're summoned to enter and to carry forward in our day.

This Group will meet BOTH at 4square and on Zoom. Come to 4square if you're able and comfortable with it, participate on Zoom if not.

Masks are required for in-person discussion at 4square: 205 Lincoln St, Fenton.

If you will continue to participate via zoom:

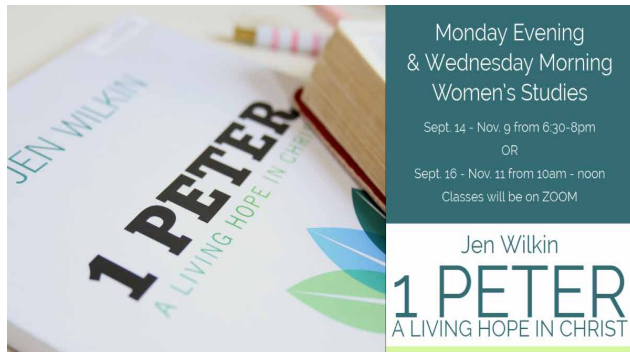
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82961241969?pwd=M0lPMmxYU001SnQ0Z3cwV3h5Z1phdz09>

Meeting ID: 829 6124 1969

Passcode: 017303





## Monday Evening & Wednesday Morning Women's Studies

1 Peter - A Living Hope in Christ  
by Jen Wilkin

Monday's through November 9  
from 6:30-8pm OR  
Wednesday's through November 11  
10am - noon

Classes will be on ZOOM. Participant workbooks are \$14  
Register by August 21 to [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org)

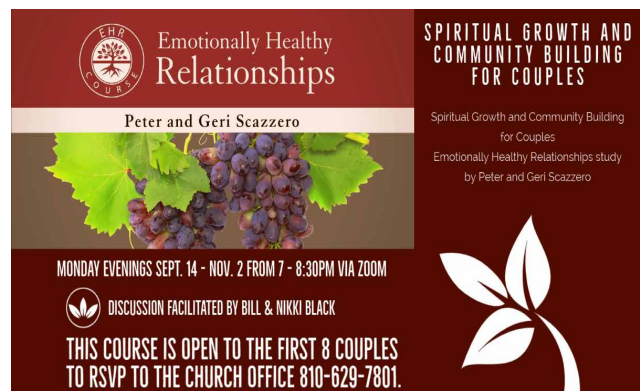
Our inheritance through Christ is imperishable, undefiled, & unfading. In 1 Peter, a man of faith and flaws and eyewitness to the life of Christ, challenges us to look beyond our current circumstances to a future inheritance. He shares his concerns on big picture issues for the early church, describes believers' true identity in Christ, and ultimately helps readers discover what it means to experience the Living Hope they have in Christ. Key themes of humility, submission, and identity in Christ guide the study of 1 Peter as participants are challenged to read the book in its entirety each week.

## Spiritual Growth and Community Building for Couples

Emotionally Healthy Relationships study  
by Peter and Geri Scazzero

Monday evenings through November 2  
7- 8:30pm via zoom

Discussion facilitated by Bill & Nikki Black  
This course is open to the first 8 couples to  
RSVP to the church office 810-629-7801.



The Emotionally Healthy Relationship course is being offered to build community among married couples while expanding relationship skills in all areas of their lives. It's not a marriage encounter, but rather an immersive study that teaches 8 practical Bible-centered skills that help break through relational roadblocks. The ultimate goal is to help us grow together into emotionally and spiritually mature followers of Christ by revitalizing the way we listen to and love one another—even in difficult situations.

Cost is \$29 /per couple for the course pack which includes a short daily devotional and a participant workbook.



## LOOKING AHEAD:

### Advent Reflections and Discussion

When: Wednesday evenings in December

Where: Via Zoom , and if possible, at church for those who feel comfortable to meet in person

Why: To discuss the challenges of the holiday season and prepare our hearts in joyful anticipation of celebrating the birth of Christ

Watch for study topic and other specific information coming soon!

**Financial Peace University** will be offered in January either via zoom or in person, covid dependent. Contact Jennifer MacLean @ 810-240-2301 for more details. Watch for class and registration information coming soon!



### Love & Logic Parenting Teens Course

Wednesday Evenings  
October 14-November 18  
6:30-8pm

Class meeting information will be provided to registered guests

\$35/family for materials – free for returning attendees!

Parents need help to teach their teens how to make decisions responsibly--and do so without going crazy or damaging the relationship.

Parenting Teens with Love and Logic empowers parents with the skills

necessary to set limits, teach important skills, and encourage decision-making in their teenagers.



# YOUTH GROUP

Creating space for youth to ask questions, encounter God and learn to live as disciples of Christ.

Allow, Meet, and Go!



## Wearing is Caring Mask Prep Mission Event Re-cap

13 youth and 5 adults assisted with this mission project on Sunday, September 13. Below is a recap from Annabeth Carnes, who is heading up the project:

With a global pandemic suddenly in our midst, school, like everything else, is going to be different. Our back to school drives are going to be different too, especially because masks are now an essential school supply. Many lower income families can't afford that many masks, and if they can, are probably going to be disposable and a recurring expense. That's where Wearing is Caring comes in. Wearing is Caring is my Girl Scout Gold Award **Project** (the Girl Scout version of an Eagle Project). My goal is to provide teachers and students in the Fenton Area School District with 1,200 reusable cloth masks on or before October 1st, the proposed

## Missing Youth Group Discussions?

Many of you shared that you are missing our discussion time, as does Ms. Tina! She will be scheduling random meetings after school once or twice a month for about an hour at various socially responsible venues. Watch your email and texts for the latest meeting place. As always, bring a mask and friends are welcome! Contact [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org) with suggestions on locations and topics!





## October 4, 1-3pm: College Care Packages and CROP Walk with sign making

We are blessing 10 of our young adults with care packages. Please drop off items in the bins located in the church main entrance through Oct. 4. Items requested are microwave popcorn, cereal bars, crackers, pens, mechanical pencils, erasers, highlighters, post-its, hot cocoa, tea, oatmeal, raman, candy, gum, and the like. Nothing says I love you like a package from home!

**October 25, 4-6pm:** Pumpkin Carving - Location TBD

**November 22, 1-3pm:** Fall Hike - Location TBD

**December 20, 1-3pm:** Ice Skating & Gift Exchange

Below are a few safety guidelines we ask everyone to follow during events:

- Friends welcome with a current parental consent form on file. See website under youth tab
- Due to covid considerations, activities for groups of 10 or more will be outdoors and require your own transportation.
- Bring a mask - they will be utilized where appropriate.
- Stay home if you are ill or have been exposed to anyone who is ill.
- Please contact Tina @ 810-701-4136 with questions or concerns.

## NEW THIS FALL!!! Middle and High School Girls study

### **Quest : Daring to Know the Heart of God by Beth Moore**

Led by Jennifer MacLean

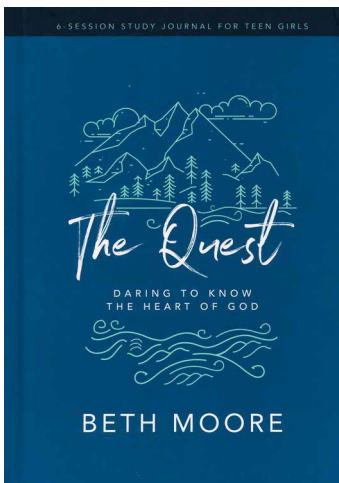
Zoom meetings on Sundays from 1-2pm

October 11 – November 15

Participant workbook - \$15 (Please see Tina if you need assistance)

RSVP by October 4 to Jennifer @ 810-240-2301

In this six-session excursion with Jesus, Beth Moore uses questions from Scripture to lead you into intimacy with the One who knows you best. Learn to dig into God's Word, respond to the questions of God, and bring your questions before Jesus.



**What's happening for the boys?** The Christian Education Committee is looking for someone to engage with our teen boys in creative discussions during activities through online gaming, fishing, etc. If you are interested or have ideas, please see Tina Ritchie or Pastor Robbie!

# CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY



## A Note from Ms. Tina

Dear Parents,

How are YOU doing? School has been in session for a month now and I'm wondering how you are coping with the stresses of your children learning at home? I heard from some of you last Spring that it wasn't so bad – this was merely a temporary situation. It was kind of fun in a way – no rushing or fighting in the morning to prepare for school; more time to play and relax together (how many movies did you watch?); and certainly getting more rest with extra-curricular activities cancelled. It might have even felt good to slow down a bit.

Now we've begun another school year and it's not so easy to cope this time around. Serious questions abound like "Is my child really going to learn anything online?", "How much is required of me to teach at home?", "What do I do about my job", or "How can I possibly manage handling everything that needs to be done at home while helping with school?" As parent, what is the appropriate role for you to take with learning at home?

For some simple guidance, read the following article [3 Powerful Reminders to Help Parents Manage this School Year](#) by Stephanie Thomas on September 21, 2020. Decide what you will not do, create connection and rhythm, and remember you are travelling through the wilderness so FROG - Fully Rely on God to help you because God is for your family!

Also, please remember that I am here to support you, listen, help problem solve, and pray for and with you!

Reach out any time via email [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org), text 810-701-4136, or call the church office 810-629-7801.

God's Peace and Guidance be with you,  
Tina Ritchie, Director of Christian Education

## 3 Powerful Reminders to Help Parents Manage this School Year

by Stephanie Thomas on September 21, 2020

### ***How are you doing these days?***

Okay, that was a loaded question.

Here we are in September, facing the most unprecedented school year of all time, and I'm asking how you're doing. Feel free to scream, cry, or laugh in response. You won't be alone.

The majority of parents I talk to are overwhelmed. When I ask friends how they're doing, I hear comments like:

"I hope I made the right choice keeping her home."

"At least you were given a choice!"

"I can't make plans to return to work because I don't know when or if my kids will go back to school full-time."

"My first-grader can't figure out anything on his own and my fourth-grader can't handle the boredom."

"I've lost precious hours I'd normally spend being productive—now I'm just sitting and supervising."

We're working, parenting, teaching, cooking, and restless in bed when we should be sleeping. After all, when else do we have time to think?

Well, fellow parents, today you are in for a treat. Knowing we all need some encouragement to power through, we've reached out to Mary Van Geffen, a Certified Simplicity Parenting Counselor & Professional Co-Active Coach.

She's an advocate for grown-ups and right

now, we really need one. I know I took so much away from our conversation—and I hope you will too!

### **3 Powerful Reminders to Help Parents Manage this School Year**

When it comes to parenting—and schooling—during a pandemic, Mary and I discussed a few strategies for easing the worried parent's mind:

**1. Create a to-don't list.** In a time where a parent's day is filled to the brim with obligations, consider making a list of anti-obligations. In other words: decide what you won't do.

Mary suggests letting go of comparison, saying, "Everyone is in this storm, but people are living in vastly different boats." And she's right. Some of us have flexible work schedules, some of us don't. Your neighbor might be managing one child's education while you're barely balancing four. And each of us—parents, teachers, and kids alike—bring to the table a unique blend of personality and aptitude.

Comparison gets us nowhere, so let's add it to the won't do, don't do list!

Also on Mary's anti-obligations list? Taking on the responsibility of your child's education. (Brace yourself because this next part might make you feel a bit sweaty).

She says, "Once we help students get fed, get online, and into their Zoom classroom, it's time to walk out of the room and let the chips fall a bit. If you need to stay, shut thine mouth. Grin and bear as much as you can. The teacher will reach out if there's a problem."

Sweaty, yes, but aren't we also breathing a sigh of relief?



Me? I'm no longer responding to shouts for help from across the house. As long as those little legs work, I'm expecting them to do their job and carry my kids to me, where they can ask for what they need in a calm, kind voice.

*What will you add to your 2020 Schooling To-Don't List?*

**2. Find ease in cultivating a positive, peaceful home.** Mary acknowledges right away—and we should too—that on-screen schooling puts young children in a learning environment that's just not developmentally appropriate.

Translation: little ones need to move and interact and when they don't, they struggle to learn. This is the reality you're swimming in five days a week if your kids are learning at home.

You'll help them learn best not by worrying so much about school, but by inserting yourself into the hours outside of school. Mary refers to this as the superpowers of CONNECTION and RHYTHM.

She explains, "Connection looks like you, self-regulated, giving your full presence a few times throughout the day—playfulness, a smile on your face, you delighting in them." Be careful, though, not to consider this another obligation. Connection, Mary says, can be as simple as, "you observing and appreciating what they're doing."

Rhythm works as an extension, by adding reliable moments of connection throughout the day's transitions. "It looks like alternating between two different predictable states of doing or being. Between effort and relaxation, small motor skills and large motor skills, stillness and movement, quiet and loud, inside and outside, together and alone, structured and self-directed," says Mary.

She likens rhythm to breathing—inhale and exhale—as a way to calm the body. You add to that calm by balancing out an otherwise screen-filled day. It can be easy, too. You might "have a set menu and time for snacks or say, 'We always play tag together during your first break,'" says Mary.

Remember to add rhythm to your own day as well. I take a long walk each morning while my husband feeds our boys breakfast. I listen to a podcast or call my mom and come back with my legs tingling from the uphill climb and my mind ready to tackle the day ahead at home. Rhythm at its finest.

**3. Remember: God is for your family.** When it comes to parenting through a pandemic, we're all newbies. Mary encourages us to be gentle with ourselves.

She says, "There's no proven script. No one has done this before. This is a Moses Moment—a moment of leading your family through something for which you have no experience."

Mary goes on: "When Moses led the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt, he had never been on that journey before. He wasn't equipped. It was God who showed up big time to part the Red Sea and rain down food in the desert. You just stay faithful to your values and to your belief that God is for your family and He'll show up in the midst of it all."

We can take comfort and rest in the knowledge that God is on our side.

We may not totally understand what's going on today and we sure don't know what will happen tomorrow, but He does. And Mary reminds me, as I'm working hard to be a good parent, that He's a good Father.

We understand that many families have no idea what lies ahead this school year. You're

off to a start (whatever that looks like for you) and we pray it's going as well as it can. But we know we're all going to face challenges we've never faced before this year. So we want to pray this prayer together over the rest of this school year. Pray it daily and trust God to remind you in this Moses Moment that He is for you and your kids—He is present and able to provide all that you need.

### **A Prayer for this Messy School Year**

*Dear God, Thank You for being on our side. Thank You for being with us in the middle of this messy school year. God, we trust you'll carry our fears, frustrations, stress, and questions as we walk the unpaved road ahead, together. Holy Spirit, help us to see*

*clearly what is best for our family, according to Your will. And as we navigate our unique path, remind us to not lose sight of those around us that may be struggling in the same or different ways. May we shine your light and love no matter what difficulties we face every day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



## “A Child’s 10 Commandments”

for teachers and parents to consider when guiding young people from [childrensministry.com](http://childrensministry.com)

written by Carmen Kamrath and Glynis Belec.

- 1. Thou shalt accept my youthfulness.** I need tender direction and loving leadership. Constant criticism and raised eyebrows make me feel foolish and inadequate.
- 2. Thou shalt accept my imperfections.** Please don't expect perfection whenever you assign a task to me. I really do learn by my mistakes.
- 3. Thou shalt accept my limitations.** My hands are small and sometimes I seem awkward and clumsy. Please be patient with me.
- 4. Thou shalt show me the way to go.** When I show off, I'm really asking for affirmation and reassurance. Could you please give me gentle guidance so my behavior doesn't become my attitude?
- 5. Thou shalt welcome me.** If I'm new to your class, please take the time to explain the routine and show the other children that you're glad to see me (even if you thought your class was big enough already).
- 6. Thou shalt expect the best from me.** Please don't have preconceived ideas about me. I have the tendency to live up to your expectations. Expect me to behave appropriately.
- 7. Thou shalt make the Word of God come to life for me.** Find creative ways to teach me about the power of God, the ministry of Jesus, and all of God's Word.
- 8. Thou shalt help me know and do what's right.** Nobody needs to show me how to sin (it comes naturally), but somebody please care enough to lovingly discipline me when I act inappropriately.
- 9. Honor my father and mother with good communication.** Talking to my parents could help you discover my fears, my joys, my problems, my talents, my weaknesses, and my strengths.
- 10. Thou shalt pray for me.** You know, you may be the only person in the whole world who talks to God about me. I need you to ask God to help me.



## LEADERS NEEDED

The Nominating Committee is looking for FFPC members to serve on the Session and Deacon Board in the upcoming 2021 year. Please contact Elder Jenn Wenzel (jenn720308@gmail.com) if you have a nomination or would like to be considered for leadership.

## CALLING ALL TECHIES

The Worship Committee is looking for additional sound and video technicians to help produce worship services and maintain our ability to stream live services. Willingness to learn is all you need to help in this crucial way. Please contact Jay Kirkey for more information (jaykirkey@icloud.com).

## WORKING FLAT SCREENS NEEDED

**Have you upgraded in the recent past? Have an extra working tv that you no longer need?** We are looking for flat screen televisions that can be easily hung on a wall. We are hoping to upgrade the technology within the church to assist us in furthering our ministry. If you have one that you would be willing to donate, please contact the church office at 810-629-7801 or office@ffpc.org. Thank you

## WE NEED YOUR HELPING HANDS

If you are willing to:

1) provide rides for small errands such as picking up a few groceries, prescriptions, or Doctor appointments or

2) do simple household chores for those unable to do them for themselves., then WE NEED YOU

You can now sign up on the FFPC website for Helping Hands.

Once you sign up, we can contact you to assist others needing help.

\*Those willing to drive a church member somewhere must complete a form and provide a valid driver's license and proof of current auto insurance. These forms are available in Fellowship Hall next to the sign up sheet or in the church office. We will help you complete the form. Contact Nancy Berger, 810-701-6556

If you have any questions, please contact the church office or Nancy Berger.





## Birthdays

Cherri Maxwell	Oct 1	Linda Wilson	Oct 16
Denise Morris	Oct 5	Ernie Miller	Oct 20
Julie Hussar	Oct 6	Fran Moore	Oct 21
Waverly Ritchie	Oct 7	Cynthia Rzepka	Oct 22
Peggy Fulcher	Oct 9	Frances Allen	Oct 25
Steve Sutton	Oct 11	Sandy Nelson	Oct 26
Gene Morrison	Oct 16	Nancy Nelson	Oct 29

## Anniversaries

Jonathan & Jennifer Wenzel	October 3
Mark & Julie Grams	October 5
Jim & Lin Savage	October 6
Denise & Matt Warba	October 6
Lee & Vicky Graham	October 7
Greg & Rebecca Ruppert	October 11
Craig & Tracy Williams	October 11
Gregory & Erin Bradley	October 15
Bill & Polly Sheppard	October 15
Larry & Mary Zimblar	October 17
Pat Tucker & Harry Clark	October 18
David & Terrie Fisher	October 21
Michael & Vanessa Skaff	October 21
Paul & Becky Joitke	October 28

# Happy Halloween





# WAYS TO GIVE

There are many different ways that you can give back to the Fenton First Presbyterian Church. **Together we can make a difference!!**



**Online Giving:** An easy and convenient way to give. Just visit the Presbyterian Mission Exchange link in the Giving section of FFPC.org website. A fast and SECURE way to give back.



**Church Giving:** You can give during one of our services by placing your check or cash in the Sunday offering plates. When giving cash, please complete a giving envelope so we can properly record your gift.



**Automatic Bank Pay:** You can set up payments through your financial institution by utilizing the bill pay feature. Simply use First Presbyterian Church as the payee and your name for your account information. Saves on postage!!



**Non-Cash Giving:** Assets or Planned Gifts



**Mail offering to Church:**  
Fenton First Presbyterian Church  
503 S. Leroy  
Fenton, MI 48430

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