

FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2020 DECEMBER NEWSLETTER



GOD
KING

REDEEMER
JEHOVAH

JOY
EMMANUEL
FATHER
GRACE
SON
TRUST
LOVE
BIRTH
HOPE
CROSS



Rediscovering



SON
JESUS
LOVE
GOD
LIVING
LIGHT
PRAY
ANNOINTED
GRACE
KING
FATHER

HOPE



FAITH

PEACE
GRACE
TRUST
TRUTH
SPIRIT
BIRTH
SON
KING
MESSIAH
SAVIOR
BLESSING



*In A
Weary
World*

PEACE
KING
CROSS
ALIVE
TEACHER
FATHER
MESSIAH
SON
PRAY

TRUST
PROMISES
PEACE
JESUS
GOD



LOVE
BIRTH
LIGHT
PRAY
LOVE

*Kelly
Sunman-Davis*



Hello & Welcome

TThe 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

Rediscovering Joy

Pastor Robbie Carnes

Psalm 126:3 *"The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy"*

In Luke 1:14, Zechariah, an elderly priest, is told by the angel of the Lord, that his wife(also up in years), will have a child and that they will have joy and be glad. Even as Zechariah stood face to face with the angel telling him that he will have joy, he doubts. As Christians, having no angel to back up claims of joy and gladness on the horizon, we can sometimes find ourselves like Zechariah struggling to remain buoyant in these choppy seas.

Christmas should be a season of joy. Not just the circumstantial happiness that comes with festivities, friends and family, but a deep abiding joy as we remember the birth of Jesus. For many of us these days, joy can be something that we have a memory of, but can't seem to grasp right now. This year hangs on us like a weight. Joy is like a weak muscle, withered from lack of use. How can we rediscover Joy?

Let us remember that real, unadulterated, lasting joy comes from Jesus. Every other source simply does not have the octane to power us through the high waters we can sometimes go through. When we find ourselves unable to grasp joy, we need to turn our attention to the source of real joy. As we learn more about who God is we find ourselves able to rejoice more and more.

Joy is meant to be shared. Depression and sadness are inherently isolating. Unworking this kind of darkness in our lives requires sharing life with others. Even as we are unable to gather in significant numbers, intentional personal connection with people, be it over Zoom, Facetime or a pen pal exchange gives us an avenue to share the joy we have in Christ. We help each other keep our candles light in the darkness.

As we experience God's joy and share it with each other we find our world begins to expand. We begin to see clearly God's fingerprint on creation, on other people in our world and our circumstances themselves. Joy begins to surprise us in everyday things. In a sense, Joy is a light in our souls, that when kindled and nurtured, can warm and illuminate the world around us.

In times like these, it can take a lot of work to find joy. We will always find it worth the effort as we refine the art of joyfulness. Don't give up learning more and more about who God is through study and personal devotion. Do something intentional to connect with the people you love. And allow your world to be expanded as you see more and more how God sees the world and is using you to redeem it.

Merry Christmas! And may the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Roman 15:13).

WORSHIP

SERMON SERIES DISCUSSION

On December 27th we will pick up our Sermon Discussion via Zoom directly after the worship service. Discipleship 102 will build on topics we discussed earlier in the year and develop crucial theological topics. We will be using the book “Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ” to direct our discussion.

- November 29th:** 1st Sunday of Advent, Hope
St. Andrews Day Celebrating our heritage and witnessing to fullness of Christ’s Church
10am Worship Service
- December 6th:** 2nd Sunday of Advent, Peace
10am Worship
- December 13th:** 3rd Sunday of Advent, JoyChristmas Joy Offering
10am Worship
- December 20th:** 4th Sunday of Advent, Love
10am Worship
- December 24th:** Christmas Eve
7pm Virtual Christmas Eve Service
11pm Outdoor Worship at the Millpond Gazebo
- 1st Sunday After Christmas Day**
10am Worship Service

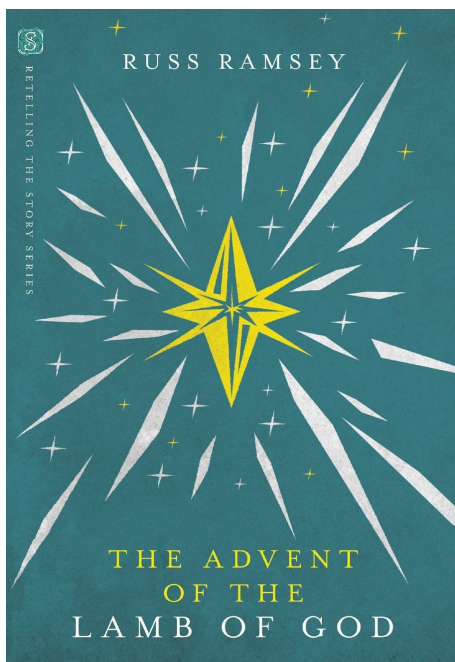
*2020 Advent
Devotional is
Now Available
Online at www.ffpc.org*

*A small number of hard copies are available.
Please contact the church office if you would
like to pick one up.*



Fenton First Presbyterian Church 2020 Advent Devotional

ADVENT SEASON



THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE IS INVITING YOU TO JOIN IN A CONGREGATIONAL COMMUNITY READ of the book *The Advent of the Lamb of God* by Russ Ramsey. This is a beautifully written book that is appropriate for all ages. There are 25 chapters, to be read one per day for Advent, and each chapter is only 5-8 pages. Each chapter highlights a different story from the Old Testament, culminating in the birth of Christ. Since many of us cannot meet in person or via zoom, a community read is a wonderful way to share in faith and fellowship, together apart. It is also a special way for families to share in the story of Christ's birth by reading this book together through Advent, whether physically together, over the phone, or via video. 20 books are available from the church office for \$7 each, or can be ordered from christianbook.com.

WEDNESDAY EVENING ADVENT REFLECTIONS AND DISCUSSION

What: A Weary World – Reflections for a Blue Christmas

Why: During the holidays, so many of us suffer for all kinds of reasons. We wrestle with chronic pain, broken relationships, unrealized expectations, fragile faith, and unexpected losses. Our grief and sorrow feel particularly acute when compared to the festivity and joy everyone else seems to be feeling.

This weekly time of reflection will allow us to discuss, process, and release the challenges of the holiday season. Then each Sunday morning worship will lead us into preparing our hearts to find Joy in celebrating the birth of Christ.

When: Wednesday evenings December 2 , 9, 16, & 23 from 7 – 7:45pm

Where: Via Zoom Zoom

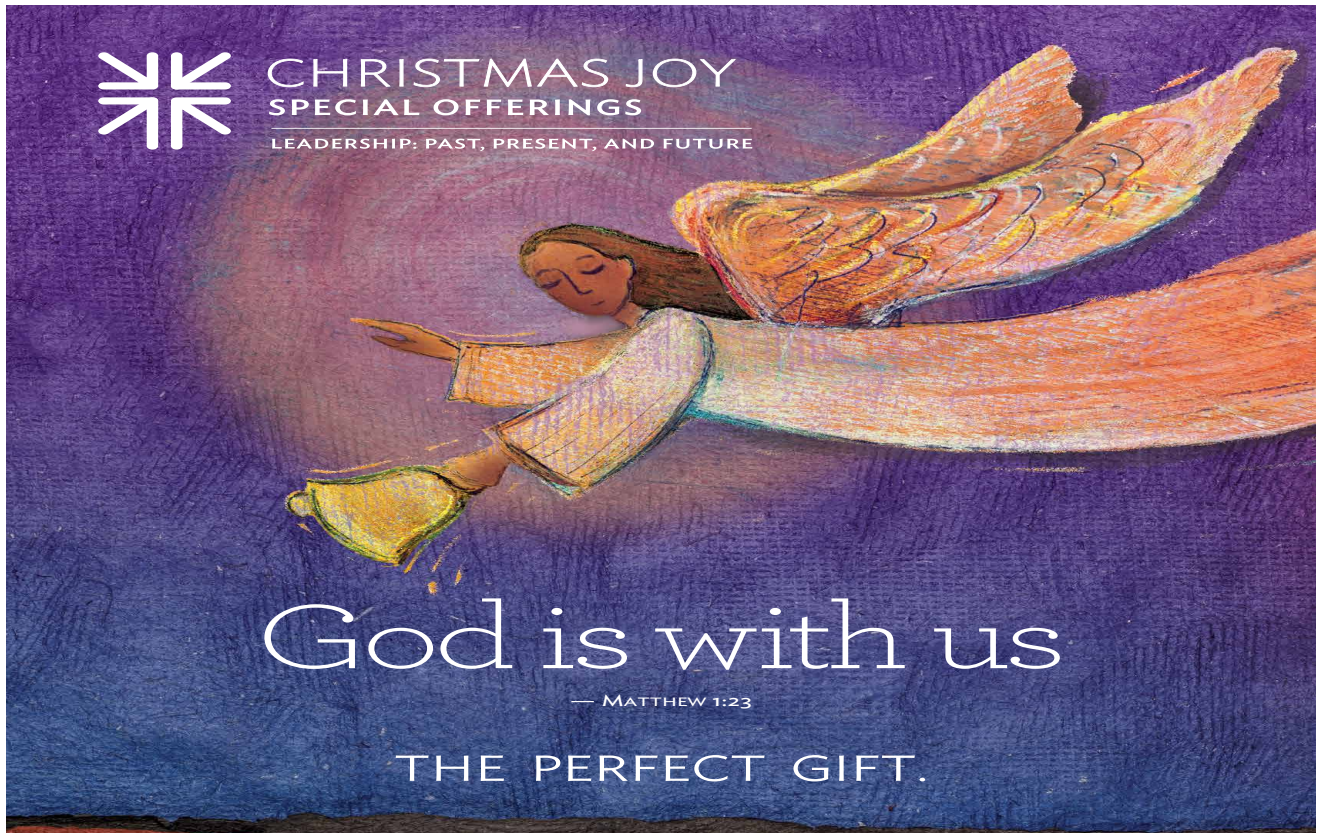
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83059215097?pwd=c21ZeFA5UDhKcnJFaGdKVFhkeDdSdz09>

Meeting ID: 830 5921 5097

Passcode: 298267

MISSION & STEWARDSHIP

Mission



Stewardship



2020 PLEDGE UPDATE

Currently we have 71 households that have pledged to the 2020 budget. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to the ministries of FFPC. If you have not already pledged to the 2020 budget please prayerfully consider how you might contribute in 2020.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

FINANCIAL REVIEW - OCTOBER, 2020

Profit/ Loss	September	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Income:	\$27,771.30	\$288,322.83	\$305,086.49	\$360,341.58
Expense:	\$26,540.76	\$229,534.97	\$251,348.46	\$304,831.71
Net Income:	\$ 1,230.54*	\$ 58,787.86*	\$ 53,738.03	\$ 55,509.87

*this does not include additional obligations such as restricted funds or mortgage payments.

Such as: Board of Deacons, Faith & Femininity, Organ Fund, HVAC Fund, etc.

Statement of Cash Flows	October	YTD
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$110,146.77	\$ 66,843.88
Cash at End of Period:	\$110,684.14	\$110,684.14
Net Cash Change:	\$ 537.37	\$ 43,840.26

(This includes \$33,880.00 Payroll Protection Program loan from the Small Business Administration)

Respectfully Submitted October 10, 2020
Debera J Bard, Treasurer


BUILDING FUND REPORT □ OCTOBER 31, 2020

Building Account Balance: \$9,200
Mortgage Remaining: \$163,856

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.

DEACON'S

The Ministry of Deacon is set forth in scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service. Sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies of structure, or anyone else in distress.



Deacon's Christmas Project Update

A HUGE thank you to everyone who sponsored a child this Christmas. With you help, we were able to brighten this Christmas for 12 families and 27 children. The children ranged in age from newborn to 13.

Just a reminder to have wrapped and labeled packages to the church lobby by Friday, Dec. 11th. If other arrangements need to be made for pick up, please contact Nancy Berger, Debbie Hoegland or Terrie Fisher.

Again 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.

Deacon Giving Envelopes are available in the New Narthex if you would like to contribute to the work of the Deacons in our congregation and community.

December

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: Study of Romans from the William Barclay New Daily Bible Study Series. Led by Pastor Lindsey, this class meets via zoom from 11am - 12:15pm

JOIN A JANUARY WOMEN'S STUDY:



MATCHLESS BY ANGIE SMITH, facilitated by Tina Ritchie via zoom

We live in a world where there's a lot of confusion about Jesus. Too often people want to shape Him and His message to fit their personal needs or agendas. So how can we know the truth?

In this 8-session search for truth the story unfolds of our matchless Savior—His mission, miracles, and message. Through Angie's signature wit and accessible style, she unpacks Scripture in a way that's easy to understand, regardless of how long you've been studying the Bible. This study will deepen your understanding of Jesus through biblical, historical, and cultural insight and help you see Him less as an iconic figure and more as an intimate friend.

Study books are \$14 each

RSVP to tina@ffpc.org or the church office by December 10!

Monday evenings January 4 - February 22 from 6:30 - 8pm *** **8 women must sign up for this evening study to take place!**

Wednesday mornings January 6 - February 24 from 10am - Noon

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY will be offered Wednesdays 7-9pm Jan 13-Mar 10 2021. These classes will be held either via zoom or in person, covid dependent. Contact Jennifer MacLean @ 810-240-2301 for more details.



11 HACKS TO SAVE MONEY OVER THE HOLIDAYS CHRIS HOGAN

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas—and it's not even December yet! This time of year, your wallet may feel emptier than normal. Between Secret Santa and the kids' parties at school, it seems like you're shelling out money left and right. If you're not careful, out-of-control spending will sabotage your bank account and leave you with a big mess to clean up once you've put away the stockings. Here are 11 hacks to help you save money—and stress—this holiday season. **Read more** <https://www.chrishogan360.com/retirement/hacks-to-save-during-holidays?>



THE GREATEST HOLIDAY GIFTS WE CAN GIVE OUR KIDS ARE LIMITS... mostly limits on ourselves and the other adults in our lives.

The limits we set with ourselves mostly involve curbing the natural inclination to do the impossible... make the holidays a perfect experience for everyone. We all know what happens when we attempt to make everyone happy.

The limits we set with the other adults in our lives involve taking good care of ourselves and our kids. Caution! Some of these may cause severe shock: **Read More** <https://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/email/newsletter/1413262926>

CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY



A Note from Ms. Tina

Dear Parents,

For those families who are attending church in person, there is no childcare or Sunday school at this time. HOWEVER, to make the worship experience easier for kids, the Christian Education Committee has replaced the cloth worship bags for children with take home “Busy Bags.” These are in zip-lock bags and are meant to be taken home. New Busy Bags will be available each week in the Narthex.

Additionally, I hope you are receiving the weekly emails of the video lesson from a “moment for household worship” during Sunday morning worship. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like some supplemental material on the topics. 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, text 810-701-4136, or call the church office 810-629-7801.

God’s Blessings be upon you,

Tina Ritchie, Director of Christian Education

YOUTH GROUP

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

Allow, Meet, and Go!



TEEN GIRLS STUDY

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

Led by Jennifer MacLean

Currently meeting via zoom Wednesdays through December 16. Contact Jennifer @ 810-240-2301 for more information.

HEY HIGH SCHOOLERS – YOUTH SUNDAY PLANNING IS UNDERWAY!

Check your youth news emails for zoom meeting information. We are considering a youth sermon series spread throughout the year. All ideas welcome! We will also try to continue our once a month after school discussions – that information will come via text. As always, bring a mask and friends are welcome! Contact tina@ffpc.org with suggestions on locations and topics.

IN LIEU OF YOUTH GROUP'S ANNUAL TRIPLE "C" NIGHT (Cookies, Cards, and Crafts), we partnered with our Deacon's to make HOLIDAY CARE PACKAGES consisting of cookies, a gift, card, and Advent Booklet for 19 of our members. Our Deacon's graciously delivered the packages the last week of November, just in time for Advent! Thank you, Deacon's, for helping Youth Group continue this tradition in a unique way during this time! Merry Christmas!!



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.
- Temperature checks will be taken.
- 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.

CONFIRMATION CLASS UPDATE:

Confirmands, Parents, and Mentors, Your Pastors and the Christian Education Committee want to recognize the hard work you put into learning about the church and the role you can take in sharing your gifts in God's kingdom to all people. Therefore, we will be wrapping up the class with final preparation of Statements of Faith and making your personal banners to be hung in the Sanctuary – all materials are available in the church office to be picked up. Also, make sure you have completed discussion on the Gospel of Luke with your mentor. Sharing thoughts on our faith and learning from one another is one of the most crucial parts of becoming a disciple. After all, our faith journey is one of continued relationship! Please check your email for more detailed information.

The following are important dates to remember:

Tuesday, November 17 @ 6:30pm via zoom: Meet with the Session, share your Statements of Faith, and 1 important thing you have learned about being part of the church. Mentors are asked to share what they have learned from their confirmand. The zoom link will be emailed to you.

Sunday, December 6: Personal banners to be returned to church for the following Sunday

Sunday, December 13 @ 10am: Confirmation Sunday

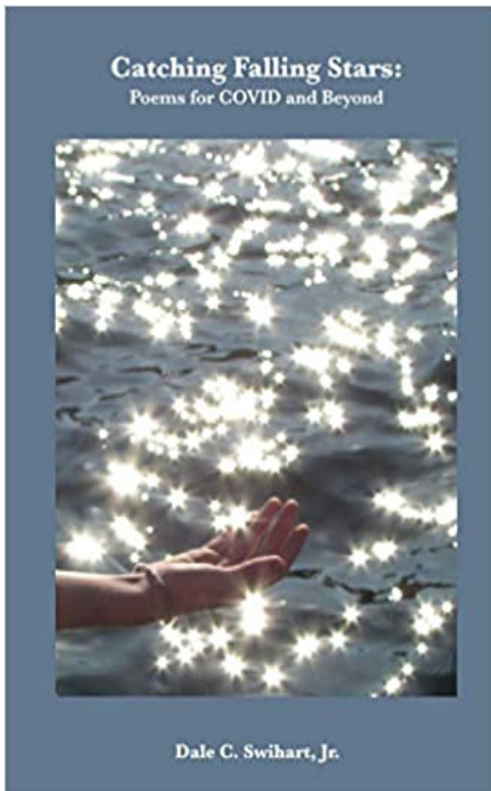
Please contact Pastors Robbie or Lindsey, or Tina Ritchie with any questions. We look forward to celebrating with you this next step of your faith journey!!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOOK FOR THE "GIVING TREE" LOCATED IN THE NEW NARTHEX SPONSORED BY THE BOOK BINDERS. Donations can also be placed in the designated bin in the entryway of the church. Suggested items are mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, underwear, socks, pajamas. All items in children's sizes up to size 16-18. Thank you for your KINDNESS.

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).



Pastor Emeritus Dale Swihart has published a book of poetic meditations, including some of his photos. He has been writing these since April and the book contains the first three months of poems. The book's title is, Catching Falling Stars: Poems for COVID and Beyond. Soon he will start to assemble volume 2. Inquiries may be directed to daleswihart@gmail.com.

Catching Falling Stars: Poems for COVID and Beyond. Share one person's faith journey through these turbulent times with poetic reflections and photographs. Visit some of the world's most remarkable places while pondering what is going on in our world today through a different lens. Dale C. Swihart, Jr. is a retired Presbyterian (PCUSA) Pastor. He spent 40 years in active ministry. This book is his first venture into the world of published writing.

https://www.amazon.com/Catching-Falling-Stars-Poems-Beyond/dp/B08P29KMTL/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Catching+Falling+Stars%3A+Poems+for+COVID+and+Beyond&qid=1606307683&s=books&sr=1-1

COMMITTEE CHAIR PERSONS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS! Please be thinking about what should go into the 2020 Annual Report.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE¹⁸ is December 10th. Please have all submissions for the December Newsletter in by this time. Thank you.



BIRTHDAY'S

Carey Muntin	Dec 2
Doug Jacobs	Dec 8
Karen Wensel	Dec 8
Larry Zimbler	Dec 10
Jim Murray	Dec 13
Nancy Berger	Dec 19
Barbara Hungerford	Dec 19
Mike Hussar	Dec 19
Jon O'Connell	Dec 19
Mary Zimbler	Dec 19
Melissa Browne	Dec 21
Amber Danules	Dec 21
Dennis Beardslee	Dec 25
Brandon McLive	Dec 27
Scott Rourke	Dec 27
Tracy Williams	Dec 29
John Foguth	Dec 31
Don Kutchey	Dec 31

ANNIVERSARIES

Dick & Nancy Berger	December 7
Jerry & Bev Welch	December 7
Bob & Nessie Brownlee	December 23
Spencer & Sharon Sutherby	December 24
Paula & Henry Glomski	December 29

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION!

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