



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FENTON

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

9th Sunday after Pentecost
August 7, 2022 10:00 AM

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come to prepare the way;

The way for Christ –

the hope of Christ, the peace of Christ –

to enter our world, to enter our hearts.

We cry out together in the wilderness:

The kingdom of heaven has come near.

We come to be part of the light–

the light that shines in the darkness.

OPENING PRAYER

God of power and might, let your love shine on us and through us to others. Like Paul, take the blindness from our eyes and our hearts. Give us the joy of knowing and serving you in all that we say, think and do. In Jesus' Name, we pray, Amen.

HYMN "I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God, open our hearts and minds so we can fully receive the truth you need us to hear today. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Psalm 30

- 1** I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.
- 2** O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
- 3** O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.
- 4** Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.
- 5** For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.
- 6** As for me, I said in my prosperity,
“I shall never be moved.”
- 7** By your favor, O Lord,
you had established me as a strong mountain;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.
- 8** To you, O Lord, I cried,
and to the Lord I made supplication:
- 9** “What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?”
- 10** Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!
O Lord, be my helper!”
- 11** You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,
- 12** so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

ANTHEM

“Come Thou Fount”

Cameron Carlson

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Acts 9:1-19a

9 Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he

found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. **3** Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. **4** He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” **5** He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **6** But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” **7** The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. **8** Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. **9** For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank.

10 Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” He answered, “Here I am, Lord.” **11** The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, **12** and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” **13** But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, **14** and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.” **15** But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; **16** I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” **17** So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” **18** And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, **19** and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus,

SERMON

Who'd a Thunk it? (Saul's Conversion)

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Do you have a story of life transformation? Who can you tell it to?

Is the Holy Spirit nudging you to allow for transformation in a specific area of your life? If so, what?

OFFERING (Psalm 30)

The Holy One has given us fish and bread for a lifetime. Let us now share from our bounty, that through our gifts, God's will may be done.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Psalm 30)

Lord, accept these offerings, given with joy as a token of our praise, that they may be used in service to Christ. Thanks be to God. Amen.

(If you would like a written prayer request included in our prayers today, please indicate that and an usher will collect them)

(Financial Offerings can be placed in dropbox located in the New Narthex)

OFFERTORY

“Jesus Paid it All”

Cameron Carlson

DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

INVITATION TO THE TABLE**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE****LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

God calls out to us to come out of the darkness and into the light, let us confess our sins together.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

How hard we try to be good, how passionately we defend our truth, how strongly we draw our lines, how bravely we denounce wrong, but how easily we miss the point. Forgive us, God, when we misunderstand our calling; when we think it serves you to

make violent threats against those we disagree with, to go to war for the sake of our truth, to seek to bend others to our way of thinking and being.

Heal and restore those who have been wounded by us, shamed by us, suspected by us, misunderstood by us, slandered by us. Come to us, Jesus, each on our own Damascus Road, stop us in our tracks, soften our hearts, show us yourself, and help us to fulfill our calling in a way that does justice to your gracious love.

DECLARATION OF PARDON (Acts 9, Psalm 30)

God's anger lasts but a moment, but God's favor lasts for a lifetime. The Lord forgives our shortcomings and sends deliverance through Christ, just as the Lord forgave Saul, changed his name to Paul, and used him to spread the gospel, so our lives are changed and renewed. Thanks be to God!

COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

As we come to the table of God's heavenly feast,
let us prepare our hearts anew
to be in communion with one another
and with the risen Christ.

**We come, ready to partake of bread and cup;
ready to commune with one another
and with the living God.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious God, we give thanks that through Christ,
we live in your favor.

**We give thanks that through Christ,
we come to the table of grace
partaking heavenly food
and the gift of salvation.**

Like the great company of witnesses
who came to this table before us,
we are filled with gratitude and joy
for your many blessings.

**We come before you
in praise and thanksgiving,
as we commit ourselves again
as members of the living body of Christ.**

Words of Institution

Communion Prayer

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

HYMN The Power of the Cross**CHARGE AND BLESSING (Acts 9, Psalm 30)**

May you depart knowing the invitation of God, to move

- from comfort to insecurity
- from what we know to what we have yet to discover
- from where we have been to where we have yet to go
- from safety to a place of risk

Go in the example of the saints before you,
the Israelites in the wilderness,
Paul blind in Damascus waiting for Ananias.

Go in the name of Jesus, our Christ, who said 'follow me' without saying where he was going, just promising transformation and relationship with the God of Love along the way.

Amen.

May the Peace of Christ be with you...

...And also with you!
