

FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

A wreath of pink and yellow rose petals is arranged in a circular pattern on a white marble background. The petals are scattered and layered, creating a soft, textured appearance. The text is centered within the wreath.

*And above all these
put on love,
which binds everything
together in perfect
harmony.*



HELLO & WELCOME

The 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

When God Slows You Down: learning to listen & not to curse

Pastor Robbie Carnes

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is that of Balaam: profit for hire (Numbers 22). You see, King Balak was very concerned that a new people group, the Israelites, were encroaching on his land. He decided to engage in spiritual warfare and hire Balaam to curse these interlopers. Balaam was known to have powerful spiritual influence.

While the book of Revelation (chapter 2) condemns Balaam as ultimately succeeding in hurting the Israelites, at first Balaam seems to be faithfully following God's lead. Balaam tells King Balak several times that he can only say what God tells him to say and therefore cannot curse the Israelites unless God allows it. Each time Balaam dutifully inquires of God as to what he should do. Numbers 22:20 reveals God giving conditional permission for Balaam to leave with King Balak's men, if they call for him. The next day, without waiting for God's condition to transpire, the king's men did not call for him, Balaam got up and left to visit King Balak.

It might be that Balaam was doing what he thought God told him to do. Besides, the money and renown that working with King Balak would bring would surely be nifty! However, God was angered at Balaam's failure to obey and the next few

verses are some of the strangest in the Bible. Three times the Angel of the Lord, unseen by Balaam, threatens to cut him down. Three times Balaam's donkey, fully aware of the danger, avoids the Angel and saves Balaam's life. After the third time, Balaam begins to beat the poor animal and curse her. The donkey responds by speaking, "What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?" Remarkably, Balaam responds to the donkey saying, "You have made me look stupid; I wish there were a sword in my hand, for I would kill you right now."

God is angry, Balaam's angry, and his donkey is speaking. Shortly afterward God opens Balaam's eyes and he sees the danger that he was in. It is only at this moment that he might be truly listening to God's desires for him, yet the opinion in Revelation might lead us to believe that he did not take the correct lesson from his donkey.

Many times we are struck with experiences like Balaam's. We may feel like we are doing God's will. We may feel as if we are at the height of our powers and God might be opposing our plans; even willing to allow us to hurt in order that we might come to see his will more clearly. Have you ever been there?

God might put things like disobedient donkeys in our lives in order to communicate spiritual realities. This is God getting our attention. What matters here is to consider what God might be doing with us or saying to us. Disobedient donkeys should lead us to discernment.

Are you anxious? Angry? Sad? Overwhelmed? Could this be a disobedient donkey in your life? Something that isn't going according to your plan and causing you to slowdown and reconsider? Many times these things lead us to attempt to over-achieve, over-extend or be consumed by emotion. This is not God's intent. This is a result of our unwillingness to turn to God in repentant prayer and a desire to know his will.

In the month of January, 2023, I have seen the inside of the emergency room four times. I had my appendix removed. I had to return to deal with complications of that operation. I was overcome with the stomach flu. And not even a full week later I broke my foot falling down the stairs. Talk about disobedient donkeys.

I could be overwhelmed with a body that isn't what it used to be. I could be depressed that so much has happened in such short order. I could be mad at God for doing all of this to me. What I want to do is to be open and listening to what God is saying in the midst of all of this. I want to hear Jesus' words clearly so that I might do the work that he has for me in the way that he wants me to do it. It is unjust and unhelpful to beat on the disobedient donkeys in our lives. It might turn out that if we take the time to listen and turn our hearts we may find that God is speaking.

WORSHIP

Worship for February will find us continuing to talk about fear and how Jesus perfect love casts out all fear. On February 22nd is the Ash Wednesday Service. Join us at 7pm for a time of reflective and experiential worship in the Fellowship Hall.

For the season of Lent we will begin a new series. Lent is a time to become more open to God through the vulnerabilities of life. You are invited to join with others in bringing our doubt, fear, sorrow, loneliness, and dryness before God, hoping to taste God's promised provision in the deserts of life. Psalm 23 promises that God can 'prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies'. Can God really spread a table before us in the presence of global and personal fears and sorrow? The answer, of course, is yes! This series highlights one biblical character each week along with the way God provided food for them in their wildernesses.

- **February 5th, 2023**, Scout Sunday and Pancake Breakfast - 5th Sunday after Epiphany, "The Fear of Being Alone", Pastor Robbie
- **February 12th, 2023** - 6th Sunday after Epiphany, "The Fear of Dying", Pastor Lindsey
- **February 19th, 2023** - Transfiguration Sunday, "Fear Not For I am With You" , Pastor Lindsey

- **February 22nd, 2023**- Ash Wednesday, Prayer Stations in the Fellowship Hall and Ashes
- **February 26th, 2023** - 1st Sunday in Lent, "God Sets a Table for Jesus", Pastor Robbie

THE SEASON OF

Lent

LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY. JOIN US IN
A SEASON OF REFLECTION AND REPENTANCE.

HOW WILL YOU MAKE THIS A TIME
OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH?

Lenten Simple Meals

Join us in watching

Chosen Season 3

Thursdays, March 2nd-30th

Fellowship Hall

Soup & Salad will be served beginning at

5:30pm

Study begins at 6

How to Worship with Us

Join us online as well as in person Sunday's at 10am

Masks are optional. Paper masks will remain available for those who might need one, and hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the building. **If you feel ill or have been exposed, be considerate and stay home.**

Here is how to join us Online

Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/fentonfpc>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkBa-DrcqSECxjAyeaiC4bg>

Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT09>

Use the Zoom app and use this Meeting ID

Meeting ID: 830 914 2301 **Meeting Password:** 5013

Use your telephone line to listen in:

Call +19292056099 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (New York)

Or Call +13126266799 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (Chicago)



CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH

The Congregational Outreach Committee (even though we are a small group) has been busy working to bring back some events to involve the congregation and community. Please note that we welcome you to join us. If you are interested on serving on the committee, please contact Marilee Smiley (mibobalink@gmail.com).



Join Us

Chili

COOK OFF

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH
AFTER WORSHIP

Bring your favorite Chili and condiments to share.
A prize will be awarded for 1st and 2nd.

Be sure to get you ticket to vote for your favorite Chili.

Sign-up in Fellowship Hall.



We have a Gift for Sunday Morning Visitors!

IF YOU ARE AWARE OF A VISITOR, THERE ARE TUMBLES ON THE CABINET IN FELLOWSHIP HALL OR PLEASE LET DEB BARD, NANCY PARKIN, MARY ZIMBLER OR MARILEE SMILEY KNOW SO THAT THEY CAN WELCOME OUR VISITORS.

Welcome



SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL POTATO BAKE

Sunday, March 12th
After Worship



Coffee time:

We need YOUR HELP!

DO YOU LIKE...
Having coffee after Worship on Sunday?
Having a treat with your coffee?

If you enjoy this then we need your help.
Please sign up on the sheet when you get your coffee
or email Marilee Smiley
(mibobalink@gmail.com)

STEWARDSHIP

Financial Review - December

Profit/ Loss	Nov	Budget	Jan-Nov.	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Income:	\$30,653.69	\$26,429.74	\$383,420.36	\$317,152.70	\$317,152.70
Expense:	\$25,868.88	\$25,621.33	351,985.94	\$317,152.70	\$317,152.70
	\$4,784.81*	\$808.41 31	\$434.42*		

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

Statement of Cash Flows

	Dec	YTD
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$45,471.89	\$125,208.38
Cash at End of Period:	\$43,150.78	\$43,150.78
Net Cash:	(2,321.11)	(82,057.60)

Balance in the Building Repair & Improvement account as of December 31, 2022 is \$2,481.66

Respectfully Submitted, January 5, 2023

Debera J Bard

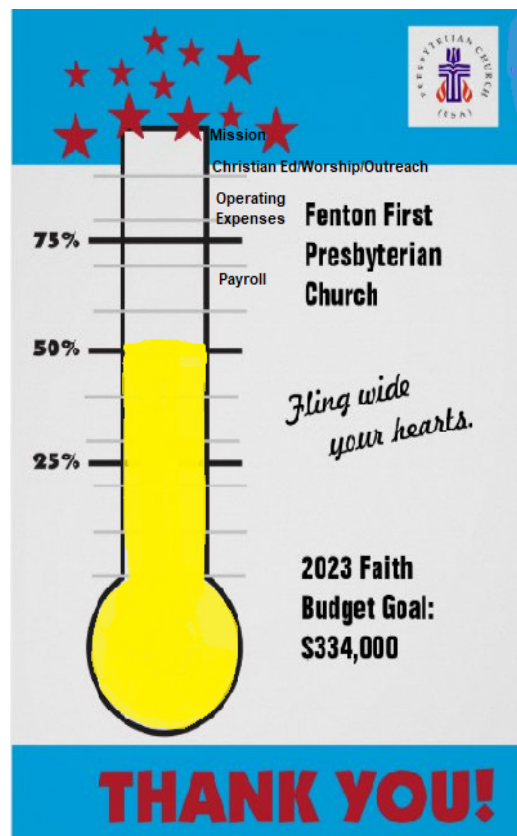
Treasurer

Pledge Update

59 total households have turned in their pledge totaling \$193,385.00

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple set a part, From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

God is working through us and the things we do to accomplish positive change in our own lives and in the world. However, we need to be open to God's working. Every time we give of who we are and what we have, we open up a bit more to what God is doing and that gift becomes ministry and mission. Please keep our congregation in prayer as we move together toward discerning what gifts we will make in the coming year. Pledge cards are available in the office, online at <https://ffpc.org/donate/> or contact Kelly to give your pledge.



DEACONS

The ministry of Deacons as 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.

Helping Hands



If you are shut-in and need some help, think about calling your Deacon. The Deacons' Helping Hands program may be just what you need.

If you need someone to run an errand, pick up groceries or a prescription, maybe we can help. Call the church office at 810-629 7801 and leave your name, contact number and your need. We will always wear a mask and leave any deliveries at your doorstep.

Want to help? 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 the church office. We will help you complete the form.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 810-629-7801



MISSION



FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Winter Blood Drive
LET'S SAVE LIVES

American Red Cross
FEBRUARY 6TH, 2023
11AM TO 4:45PM



The Zonta Club of Fenton wants to thank everyone who helped with the Comfort Pillows Sewing Bee at the church on January 21st, including Girl Scout Troop #71291 and ladies from Fenton 1st Presbyterian Church. If you know someone who has had or is having a mastectomy, contact the Zonta Club for a Comfort Pillow.

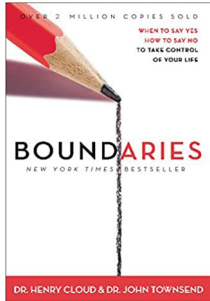
BLOOD DRIVE: Our church, along with Red Cross, will be hosting a blood drive on February 6, from 11am to 4:45pm in Fellowship Hall. The Red Cross blood supply has decreased and they need our help. Help to save lives with your donation. If you wish to schedule an appointment go online to www.redcross.org or call Red Cross @ 1-800-733-2767. For questions, please contact Jo Beardslee (810)750-9768 or Sherry Hunt (810) 735-6428.

Samaritas Wishlist: **The link below will take you to our newly created Amazon wishlist for refugees.** Purchases made from the list will ship directly to Sarah's home for delivery to families. You can share the list if you know anyone who might like to join our efforts. <https://www.amazon.com/registries/custom/2DEQ4NSYO42CL/guest-view>



Wonderful group helped assemble 100 snuggle Sacks for the homeless.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Join Pastor Robbie and Tina Ritchie for a 9 week study on **Boundaries** Through March 15 from 11:30AM – 12:30 PM in the Conference Room Childcare provided!

God has boundaries and Jesus models them! In this course we discover how a boundary is a personal property line that marks those things for which we are responsible. In other words, boundaries define who we are and who we are not. This sounds simple, yet in reality we often find ourselves forgetting our own limits and limitations, setting ourselves up for more difficulties than expected. Having healthy boundaries is essential to a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Join us as we learn what are legitimate boundaries; how to set limits and be a loving person; what to do if someone is upset or hurt by one's boundaries; why one might feel guilty or afraid when considering setting boundaries, and much, much more!

Sunday Evening Small Group

Book of Acts in the Bible, facilitated by Larry Zimble

5-6PM in the conference room at 4Square Tax in Fenton Starting on Sun Feb 5, the 12 Minor Prophets in the Bible.

5 -6:15 PM in the conference room at 4 Square Tax & Accounting in Fenton.

New Year Women's Study

Isaiah: Striving Less and Trusting More by

Melissa Spoelstra

Facilitated by Tina Ritchie

Monday Evening through February 13 from 6:30-8:30 Via ZOOM only

OR

Wednesday Morning through February 15 from 10AM – noon in Fellowship Hall

Tuesday Morning Adult Study

11AM-12:15PM In the Conference Room

Led by Pastor Robbie Carnes, the group is studying William Barclay's Acts of the Apostles.

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HOW WILL YOU MAKE THIS A TIME OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH?

Lenten Simple Meals

Join us in watching

Chosen Season 3

Thursdays, March 2nd-30th

Fellowship Hall

Soup & Salad will be served beginning at

5:30pm

Study begins at 6

Celebrate Recovery

Every Wednesday from 7-9PM

Worship from 7-8PM in Fellowship Hall

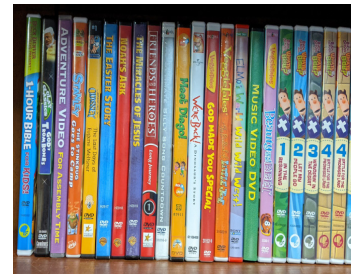
Men's and Women's Small Groups from 8-9PM in the Truth and Discipleship rooms

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR NEW LIBRARIES?

The Adult Library is located in the GRACE room, which was the computer classroom. It sports comfy couches, a Keurig, and a smart TV!

The Children's Library is located in the TRUTH room, which was the video classroom. While maintaining the steps to relax on, it also sports comfy couches, children's chairs, and a smart TV!

We have purchased several new books over the course of the last year. Book donations are always welcome, yet please know that if they do not match our criteria policy, they may be returned to you or donated elsewhere. There is a wish list available if you'd like to purchase something specifically. Please see Jennifer Wensel or Kate Kirkey for more information!



YOUTH GROUP

CREATING SPACE FOR YOUTH TO ASK QUESTIONS, ENCOUNTER GOD, AND LEARN TO LIVE AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.



Youth Group and Scouts had a great time getting to know one another with games, movies, food and fellowship. Ms. Tina bested the youth once again in an epic round of sardines

Fall Youth Group Events - for 6 - 12 graders and friends

Watch your texts and email or contact Tina Ritchie tina@ffpc.org for more information. Friends always welcome with a current Parental Consent form on file! Adults seeking to be part of the program are asked to contact Tina Ritchie.

Youth Group Calendar Fall 2022

Meetings are generally Sundays unless noted

Sign up for events on the youth bulletin board or email tina@ffpc.org. Friends welcome with a current parental consent form on file.

February

- 5 Scout Sunday Worship 10am
- 12 Souper Bowl of Caring, mission project with young children & families, 12-2pm
- 19 Movie Night with Scouts 2-5pm. Register by February 12th, \$10 per person
- 26 Youth Group 5-7pm "Spiritual Practices for Lent"

March

- 5 Progressive Drive-thru Dinner 5-7pm
- 12 Youth Group Soup & Talk 5-7pm, Location: TBD
- 19 Mission Project with young children & families 12-2pm
- 26 No meeting- Start of Spring Break

Ways to support Youth Group scholarships and activities:

Bottle returns - Drop off your rinsed returnable bottles and cans to the youth room.

Kroger Rewards – Linking your Kroger Rewards card to FFPC is easy and earns us quarterly benefits. Contact the office if you need info on how to do this!

VG's receipts – We are \$10,000 short in receipts to receive a \$1000 check. Please be sure to turn in your ENTIRE receipt in order to be counted!! Collection ends Sunday, February 12! Thank you for your ongoing support.

CHILDREN & FAMILY

Children's Sunday School and Worship Information

Class begins at 10AM

Children return to worship after the sermon where they are welcome to either sit with their parents or with Miss Tina; masks are optional at their parent's discretion. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tina Ritchie or Kate Kirkey.

Unit 18 – The People Restored (Nehemiah, Esther, Malachi)

After years of living in sin, God's people were sent into exile. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was captured by Babylon. Daniel's visions of the future showed that God is in control at all times. God used faithful people to continue God's plan to provide salvation through Jesus.

2/5 God's People Repented
2/12 Malachi the Prophet

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

Unit Key Verse: *And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ~ 1 Peter 5:10* Jesus the Messiah” topics:

Unit 19 – Into the World (Matthew, Luke, John)

God's plan to save people from sin came into sharper focus as Jesus was born at last. When Jesus grew up, He began His mission to bring people back to God. From the beginning, Jesus proved that HE is the Son of God and that all that was written about Him by the prophets was true.

2/17 From Adam to Jesus
2/26 John Was Born
3/5 Jesus Was Born
3/12 Jesus Was Dedicated
3/19 Jesus as a Child

Big Picture Question: Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

Unit Key Verse: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. ~ John 1:1-2 NIV*

February Teachers

Elementary: Tina Ritchie
Preschool/Nursery:

March Teachers

Elementary: Melissa Wing
Preschool/Nursery: Tina Ritchie
PJ Collier



Family Fellowship Group Events

Children with their parents are invited to participate once a month with Youth Group events. Please see Kelly Sunman-Davis or Tina Ritchie with any questions.

February 12 – Souper Bowl of Caring Mission Event 12-2pm

March 19 – Mission Event 12-2pm

*Saturday, April 8 – Easter Egg Hunt 11:30-12:30

April 16 – Earth Day Mission Project 12-2pm

May 7 – Mission Event 12-2pm



Love and Logic® Responding to Poor Grades by Dr. Charles Fay

As the remainder of the school year unfolds, parents often start monitoring grades to ensure that their kids finish with great success. One of the most common questions asked by parents and educators is how to respond to bad grades.

The first thing to remember is that responsibility for the child's report card belongs to the child, not to us. Although it's easy to get down on ourselves when kids perform poorly, it's very important for our mental health, and for theirs, to remember the following points:

- 1. We can't learn for kids.** As educators and parents, we can increase the odds of high achievement by modeling responsibility, establishing a safe and calm environment, providing excellent instruction, and demonstrating excitement for learning.
- 2. We can't control every action they take or decision they make.** If we consistently demonstrate empathy rather than anger or frustration, the odds of our kids overcoming their difficulties dramatically increase. Is empathy really that powerful? Yes, indeed! In fact, a growing body of research is demonstrating that warmth (i.e., empathy) is strongly correlated with higher achievement and better behavior.
- 3. Many highly successful people struggled with grades as children.** It's comforting to remember that some of the world's most successful people have struggled with grades. Albert Einstein, Henry Ford, Jim Fay, and Dr. Foster Cline are some notable examples. What's most important is that our children develop good character, curiosity, and problem-solving skills.
- 4. Remember to respond with sincere love and concern.** Consider responding to bad grades by saying something like, "Oh man! I bet these grades are really disappointing for you. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help. The good news is that this doesn't change the way I feel about you."

Rather than fighting with kids about their grades, consider studying my book, *From Bad Grades to a Great Life!* If it doesn't completely change your life, I'll buy it back!

Get started today by visiting loveandlogic.com or speaking with Tina Ritchie.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Scouts Annual "Thank You Fenton First Presbyterian Church Pancake Breakfast" will be returning once again this year. It will be held on Sunday, February 5, 2023 and we will be serving breakfast from about 8:15 A.M. until 9:30 A.M. and then again after the 10:00 A.M. Worship Service until noon. Anyone who usually attends services virtually are welcome to come in and have breakfast then return home in time for the service.

Souper Bowl of Caring

This year Youth Group is collecting 2 specific items for 2 local charities:

1. Baby food and formula for Center of Hope – see collection bin in the main entryway
2. Monetary donations for the North End Soup Kitchen – make check out to FFPC memo NESK.

Collection ends Sunday, February 12! Thank you for your ongoing support



Happy Birthday

George Hameline	Feb 3	Margie Congdon	Feb 15
Jay Kirkey	Feb 3	Mitzi Uebel	Feb 19
Shari Foguth	Feb 4	Rog Zollars	Feb 20
Elaine Pelletier	Feb 7	Carly Foguth	Feb 23
Peggy Fowler	Feb 8	Julie Maloney	Feb 25
P.J. Collier	Feb 10	Heidi Howieson	Feb 27
Edward Hoeglund	Feb 11	John Sharpe	Feb 27
Marsha Schwarz	Feb 11		
Bev Welch	Feb 11		
Jennifer MacLean	Feb 13		
Carmen Ormsby	Feb 14		

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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