

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.

2nd Sunday of Easter

April 16th, 2023 10:00 a.m.



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GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 16

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.

4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

7 I bless the LORD, who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

8 I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

10 For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit.

11 You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

OPENING PRAYER

God of glory, fill your church with the power that flows from Christ's resurrection so that, in the midst of the sinful world, it may signal the beginning of a renewed humanity, risen to new life with Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

HYMN PH #463 BH #361 "How Firm a Foundation"

CALL TO CONFESSION:

What a wonder that we can come before our God and receive a listening ear and a mercifully open hand. We are accepted, not because of what we have done or failed to do, but because of what Jesus has done, his obedience and faithfulness. Let us pray together...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Living God, we confess that we look for the living among the dead. We want to receive forgiveness, but we are not ready to forgive. We want to see Jesus's wounds, but we ignore the woundedness of others. Embrace us in Christ's body so that we may embody for the world the life that death cannot destroy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DECLARATION OF PARDON: —1 Corinthians 15:54-57, NRSV

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of life, your Spirit raised Jesus from dead. Your Spirit inspired the prophets and writers of Scripture. Your Spirit draws us to Christ and helps us to acknowledge him as Lord. We ask that you will send your Spirit now to give us deeper insight, encouragement, faith, and hope through the proclamation of the Easter gospel. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Micah 5:2-5

2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

4 And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth,

5 and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land
and tread upon our soil,
we will raise against them seven shepherds
and eight rulers.

ANTHEM

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Luke 2:1-5

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of

David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

SECOND OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Hosea 11:5-11

5 They shall return to the land of Egypt,
and Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.

6 The sword rages in their cities;
it consumes their oracle priests
and devours because of their schemes.

7 My people are bent on turning away from me.
To the Most High they call,
but he does not raise them up at all.

8 How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.

9 I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim,
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.

10 They shall go after the Lord,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling from the west.

11 They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt
and like doves from the land of Assyria,
and I will return them to their homes, says the Lord

SERMON Bethlehem and Nazareth: Jesus' Birthplace and Hometown

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Imagine what Mary and Joseph's struggle to find accommodation must have felt like, in the busy city. Was Mary having contractions? Did she tell the stressed Joseph or just keep it quiet? How many times did Joseph knock on a door in hope, only to be disappointed? How helpless must they have felt to accept an animal shelter for accommodation?

HYMN PH #405 BH #339 "Be Thou my Vision"

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

We give of our treasures, time and talent to worship the one who has redeemed us and reconciled us to himself. Let us pray...

Living God, you have given us so much in Jesus Christ: hope, joy, and peace. Above all, you have given us life! What can we give in return? If the whole world were ours, it would not be enough. What little we have we humbly offer to you. Thousand, thousand thanks are due, dearest Jesus, unto you. 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)

Will the Ushers Please come forward.

OFFERTORY

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.*

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.

HYMN "I'll Fly Away"

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

As Christ burst forth from the tomb, may new life burst forth from us and show itself in acts of love and healing to a hurting world. And may that same Christ, who lives forever and is the source of our new life, keep your hearts rejoicing and grant you peace this day and always. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Peace be with you!
...and also with you!