



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.

4th Sunday after Pentecost

June 25th, 2023 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

A MOMENT FOR DEACONS

CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT #413 "Come into God's Presence"

CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 86

- 1 Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer us,
for we are poor and needy.
- 2 **Preserve our life, for we are devoted to you;
save your servants who trusts in you.**
- 3 **You are our God; 3 be gracious to us, O Lord,
for to you do we cry all day long.**
- 4 Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, we lift up our soul.
- 5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.
- 6 **Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer;
listen to our cry of supplication.**
- 7 **In the day of our trouble we call on you,
for you will answer us.**
- 8 There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.
- 9 All the nations you have made shall come
and bow down before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.
- 10 **For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.**

OPENING PRAYER

O God, we joyously come together to worship, realizing we need not summon you into our midst, for you are here. We need not call you into the secret places of our hearts, for you are there. We need our eyes of faith to be opened, that we may see you; our ears to be unstopped, that we may hear you; our minds to be sensitive, that we may know you; our hearts to be tender, that we may receive you. Grant each one a blessing, O Lord, as each has need, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

HYMN PH #183 “Come to Me, O Weary Traveler”

CALL TO CONFESSION: —based on Romans 8:39

We know that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Let us in freedom confess the wrong we have done.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

O Lord, great God, all holy, Father most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, we are embarrassed to come before you, for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways, for we have rebelled against your wisdom and we have gotten into trouble, for we have rejected your fatherly guidance and have gotten lost altogether. To you belongs righteousness, O Lord, and to us confusion of face. O Lord, great God, all holy, filled with awe, Father, most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, incline your ear to our troubles. Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you. Forgive us, not on the ground of our own righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercy. On the ground of your great mercy in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we pray, for he is our Savior and the mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON:—Isaiah 44:21-22, NRSV

Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you, you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. Find forgiveness in the mercy of the Lord and be at peace.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover your peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Jeremiah 2:7-13

7 I brought you into a plentiful land
to eat its fruits and its good things.

But when you entered you defiled my land
and made my heritage an abomination.

8 The priests did not say, “Where is the LORD?”

Those who handle the law did not know me;
the rulers transgressed against me;
the prophets prophesied by Baal

and went after things that do not profit.
9 Therefore once more I accuse you,
 says the LORD,
 and I accuse your children's children.
10 Cross to the coasts of Cyprus and look;
 send to Kedar and examine with care;
 see if there has ever been such a thing.
11 Has a nation changed its gods,
 even though they are no gods?
 But my people have changed their glory
 for something that does not profit.
12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this;
 be shocked; be utterly desolate,
 says the LORD,
13 for my people have committed two evils:
 they have forsaken me,
 the fountain of living water,
 and dug out cisterns for themselves,
 cracked cisterns
 that can hold no water.

ANTHEM

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Acts 9:10-25

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, **20** and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." **21** All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" **22** Saul

became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

23 After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, **24** but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him, **25** but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

SERMON Dealing with Close-Mindedness: Damascus

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Is there a time in your life where someone has been a spiritual encourager to you?
How can you encourage someone in your life today?

HYMN PH #824 BH #527 “There is a Place of Quiet Rest”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING —Matthew 6:19-20, NRSV

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Let us pray...

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us— our selves, our time, and our possessions—signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us— Jesus Christ, our Lord. 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 Usher 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.

TABLETALK WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

1. Ask God to bring to mind someone who doesn't know Jesus who could use some encouragement.
2. Ask God to remind you of what's good and beautiful about that person; also ask if there's anything in particular you should share with them.
3. Reach out to them (by phone, card, email—a handwritten note is always better) and tell them that you were thinking about them and what you appreciate about them. Share anything else you feel led to share.

HYMN PH #475 BH #356 “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (first 2 verses)

CHARGE —1 Corinthians 16:13-14, NRSV

Keep alert,
stand firm in your faith,
be courageous, be strong.
Let all that you do be done in love.

BENEDICTION PH #475 (BH #356) Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing (third verse)

POSTLUDE

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