



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.

5th Sunday after Pentecost
July 2nd, 2023 10:00 a.m.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT PH #401 “Hear in this Place” (1st verse)

CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 89

1 I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

2 I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

**3 You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to my servant David:**

**4 “I will establish your descendants forever
and build your throne for all generations.”**

15 Happy are the people who know the festal shout,
who walk, O LORD, in the light of your countenance;

**16 they exult in your name all day long
and extol your righteousness.**

17 For you are the glory of their strength;
by your favor our horn is exalted.

**18 For our shield belongs to the LORD,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.**

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God, we pray your blessing on those who lead us in worship this day, those who speak and sing and move among us, those who direct others in singing and playing, those who have prepared this space with beauty. We ask that each of them may lead with a sense of peace and confidence that comes from your Spirit, so that your truth may be proclaimed faithfully and we may live up to our calling as the body of Christ. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN PH #401 “Hear in this Place” (Verses 2-4)

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION —based on Psalm 119:105, NRSV

Lord God, may your Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Jeremiah 28:5-9

5 Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD, **6** and the prophet Jeremiah said, “Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD and all the exiles. **7** But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. **8** The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. **9** As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet.”

ANTHEM

“The Power and the Glory”

by Phil Ochs

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Acts 10:1-33

In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort, as it was called. **2** He was a devout man who feared God with all his household; he gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God. **3** One afternoon at about three o’clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius.” **4** He stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” He answered, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. **5** Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter; **6** he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.” **7** When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a devout soldier from the ranks of those who served him, **8** and after telling them everything he sent them to Joppa.

9 About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. **10** He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while it was being prepared he fell into a trance. **11** He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. **12** In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. **13** Then he heard a voice saying, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.” **14** But Peter said, “By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean.” **15** The voice said to him again, a second time, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.” **16** This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

17 Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon’s house and were standing by the gate. **18** They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. **19** While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Look, three men are searching for you. **20** Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation, for I have sent them.” **21** So Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for; what

is the reason for your coming?” **22** They answered, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish people, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.” **23** So Peter invited them in and gave them lodging.

The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers and sisters from Joppa accompanied him. **24** The following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. **25** On Peter’s arrival, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, worshiped him. **26** But Peter made him get up, saying, “Stand up; I am only a mortal.” **27** And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled, **28** and he said to them, “You yourselves know that it is improper for a Jew to associate with or to visit an outsider, but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. **29** So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?”

30 Cornelius replied, “Four days ago at this very hour, at three o’clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me. **31** He said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms have been remembered before God. **32** Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter; he is staying in the home of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’ **33** Therefore I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say.”

SERMON Dealing with Legalism: Caesarea

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Have you ever had a moment in which a specific person came to mind and you wondered how they were doing?

What may have kept you from reaching out to them?

What happened when you made contact?

HYMN PH #458 “Thy Word is a Lamp unto My Feet”

OFFERING

Let us offer of ourselves so that the mission of this Church and the Kingdom of God might flourish in this place.

Let us pray:

You invite us to offer our pain, our burdens, our troubles to you, and we do so easily. Yet when you challenge us to offer our abundance for others, we resist and grumble. Help us to be as welcoming, as caring, as generous as you, Loving God, as we share our gifts with you and the world. 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

Patriot Medley

Morris Fulcher

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

Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! Listen to the desire of our Lord for his table: They will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God.

According to Luke, when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples, he took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. We fully expect to eat together in the presence of Jesus and see him more clearly today.

This is the Lord's table. Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast which he has prepared.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE pray by Thom Shuman

Eternal God: you sing a song of silence to our noisy hearts, inviting us to still our fidgeting souls, and find our peace in your cupped hands which cradle us.

Jesus Christ: Wanderer of the kingdom: you are called to reveal God to us and do so in the tenderness of your touch, the gentleness of your words, the goodness of your heart, the peace of your shared yoke.

Spirit of Rest: your childlike presence opens our eyes to the wonders of the world. As we hand you our anger, our hurt, our sin, may our burdens become our songs of joy.

May we find our rest, our hope, in you, even as we pray as Jesus taught us, saying,

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: from Romans 6

As long as we did what we felt like doing, ignoring God, we didn't have to bother with right thinking or right living, or right *anything* for that matter. But do you call that a free life? What did you get out of it? Nothing you're proud of now. Where did it get you? A dead end.

But now that we've found we don't have to listen to sin tell us what to do, and have discovered the delight of listening to God, what a surprise! A whole, healed, put-together life right now, with more and more of life on the way! Work hard for sin your whole life and your pension is death. But God's gift is *real life*, eternal life, delivered by Jesus, our Master. Let's pray together.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION from Psalm 13 (In Unison)

How long, O LORD? Our sin makes us feel like you have forgotten us forever. How long will you hide your face from us? How long must we bear pain in our souls and have sorrow in our hearts all day long? How long shall our enemies be exalted over us?

Consider and answer us, O LORD my God! Give light to our eyes, or we will sleep the sleep of death, and our enemy will say, "I have prevailed"; Our foes will rejoice because we are shaken. But we trust in your steadfast love; Our hearts shall rejoice in your salvation. Grant us forgiveness and extend us mercy and we will sing to the LORD because he has dealt bountifully with us.

DECLARATION OF PARDON:

We are welcomed in mercy and grace by God because of Jesus' work of humility and obedience on the cross. In the same way, let us welcome others in big ways and small knowing that even offering a cup of cool water to a little one in Jesus name is a reflection of this great love.

COMMUNION

With hearts filled with joy, we bring our praise to you, God of Rest. On the first morning of creation, you whispered of peace, and the cacophony of chaos was stilled. You walked softly through the grasses of the earth and all creation sang of your goodness. Created to find our peace with you, our fretful desire to be in control led us into a nomadic existence of rebellion against you. Prophets spoke and angels sang to invite us home, but our stubborn pride only grew stronger. When the burden of our sin became too great for your heart, you sent Jesus to carry it for us.

With those who have found their rest in you, with those who long for their burdens to be lifted, we join in singing your praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

Holy are you, God of our footloose hearts, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord and Savior. Watching our restless striving for more and more, he modeled the life of self-denial and service; seeing us weighed down with the burdens of sin and death, he picked up his cross, carried it to Calvary, where he died to give us life.

As we remember his life and his rest in you, as we celebrate the good news of lightened burdens, we speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ came, that we may have life;
Christ died, so that the burden of death might be lifted from us;**

**Christ was raised to new life, so grace might be revealed to every generation;
Christ will return, to yoke us to God through all eternity.**

Pour out your Spirit of rest and shalom upon this bread and this cup, that these gifts might nourish us. As we find our rest in you, may we become restless in service to your children; as we engage with you in solitude, may we build a community of justice and righteousness; as we listen to your silence, may we speak out for all whose voices are ignored by the world.

Then, when we gather with all who have found their rest with you at the Table of the Lamb, we will sing our praise for all eternity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Communion Prayer: Loving God, we thank you that you have fed us at this table, and in doing so united us with Christ. We thank you that you give us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in your eternal kingdom. May the image of your people sitting together for a meal in your presence inspire us as you send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

TABLETALK WITH GOD’S CHILDREN (bulletin only, no slide)

Do you have a neighbor, co-worker, acquaintance, or relative you’ve been wondering about? Are they okay? Do they have what they need? Are they lonely? Do they need help with something? Reach out to them this week and check on them. Find out how they’re doing and share with them what’s new with you. See if there’s anything you can do for them.

HYMN PH #337 “My Country, Tis of Thee”

CHARGE

We have worshiped together and felt God’s love.
As we leave this worship place, and go to schools, to homes, and to work,
may God bless us and be near us, so that we may feel God’s presence in all we do.

BENEDICTION PH #288 BH #322 “Spirit of the Living God”

POSTLUDE

May the Peace of Christ be with you...
...And also with you!
