



## 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.

12th Sunday after Pentecost  
August 20th, 2023 10:00 a.m.

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### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

#### PRELUDE

#### WELCOME

INTROIT #701 “Lord Prepare Me”

#### CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 133

How wonderful it is, how pleasant, when brothers live in harmony!

**For harmony is as precious as the fragrant anointing oil that was poured over  
Aaron’s head**

running down onto his beard and onto the border of his robe.

**Harmony is as refreshing as the dew on Mount Hermon, on the mountains of Israel.**

And God has pronounced this eternal blessing on Jerusalem, even life forevermore.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, whose compassion embraces everyone, gather the outcast and the lost,  
heal the wounds of fear and distrust, and make us a community of reconciliation that we  
may embody your merciful love and rejoice in your astounding grace in Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

HYMN PH #299 “You Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim”

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

Who are we to judge one another? We all stand before the judgment of God. Trusting in  
God’s grace, let us confess our sin...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

**O Lord our God, we confess that we do not reflect your glory. You invite us to live  
together in unity; we allow family drama to drive us apart. You welcome all to the  
table of grace; we turn away strangers asking for crumbs. Forgive us; restore and  
reorder our lives by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may be one as you  
are one, sharing the blessing of life forevermore, to the glory of your holy name.**

**DECLARATION OF PARDON:**

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. We belong to Christ, the Lord of the dead and the living. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God.**

## PROCLAIMING THE WORD

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path. Open our hearts and minds to hear your voice, source of truth and beauty, in the Scripture read and proclaimed, in music and silence, in prayer and action. Amen.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON:** Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

*Stop and listen for the voice of God; you are standing on holy ground.*

**1** Thus says the LORD:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,  
for soon my salvation will come  
and my deliverance be revealed.

**6** And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,  
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,  
and to be his servants,

all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it  
and hold fast my covenant—

**7** these I will bring to my holy mountain  
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;  
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices  
will be accepted on my altar,  
for my house shall be called a house of prayer  
for all peoples.

**8** Thus says the Lord GOD,  
who gathers the outcasts of Israel:

I will gather others to them  
besides those already gathered.

*The Word of the Lord, the great I AM.*

**Thanks be to God.**

**ANTHEM**

“I Was There To Hear Your Bournig Cry”

Jennifer Hall

**NEW TESTAMENT LESSON:** Matthew 15:10-20, 21-28

*Stop and listen for the voice of God; you are standing on holy ground.*

**10** Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: **11** it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” **12** Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” **13** He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. **14** Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” **15** But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” **16** Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? **17** Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? **18** But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. **19** For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. **20** These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

**21** Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. **22** Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” **23** But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” **24** He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” **25** But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” **26** He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” **27** She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” **28** Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment.

*The Word of the Lord, the great I AM.*

***Thanks be to God.***

**SERMON**

At the Heart of the Matter

Rev. Jim Foster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

**A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION**

Can you think of a time when someone had an encouraging word for you?

Consider who might need an encouraging word from you.

**HYMN #327**

“From All That Dwell Below the Skies”

## BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

### OFFERING

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Let us pray...

Bountiful God, you give without measure. May our giving reflect your generosity; may our lives overflow with your deep love. Use our lives and the gifts we bring today to share your blessing throughout the earth. 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

“The Potters Hands”

Jennifer Hall

### 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

As Christians, we believe that prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. We also believe that God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking him for them. Let us pray:

No matter where we are, where we are going, or what we are doing, we know that we find our help in you, our Lord. You are the creator and sustainer of all that has been made and will be made. And yet, the immensity of creation does not distract you from caring personally for every person in it. We know that is true of your care for us too! You do not daydream or become weary in that care. We thank you that you not only watch over us with diligence but that you will guide us so that we will not fall— so that we won’t even stumble. Whether we are awake or asleep, you are there, sheltering and protecting us from all that would hurt us. We know that you watch over all our living— you have in the past, and we know you are now. Your promise holds for the future and for eternity, and we praise and thank you for that.

With one voice let us pray together the pray our Lord taught us to pray...

**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**

PLEASE just print in bulletin and not on screen

Pray for gospel workers

Jesus gave us very few specific instructions on what to pray for. Here is one he did give: "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Luke 10:2)

This week's challenge is to ask God each day to send out gospel workers. How we need more of them! It might help to set a daily timer to remind yourself.

As you ask, think about who might be the answer to your prayer. An up-and-coming leader? A young adult or teenager? Someone who's not even a Christian yet? Or maybe you!

**HYMN #649** "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound" (verses 1-3,5)

**CHARGE**

The blessing of the Lord,  
The God of our ancestors,  
The God of all generations,  
Be with you forever. **Alleluia!**

Love one another; serve the Lord; live peaceably with all. **Amen.**

**BENEDICTION PH #649 BH #280** "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"  
(verse 4)

**POSTLUDE**

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

**Flowers on the Communion Table** In celebration of Hannah Hall's 80th Birthday!  
Given by her children and grandchildren.