



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.

13th Sunday after Pentecost
August 27th, 2023 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT #330 “Our Help Is in the Name of God” (1st verse)

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 124

1 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side
—let Israel now say—

**2 if it had not been the LORD who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,**

3 then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;

**4 then the flood would have swept us away;
the torrent would have gone over us;**

5 then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

**6 Blessed be the LORD,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth.**

7 We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the hunters;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.

**8 Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.**

OPENING PRAYER

Even from a place of exile, from a position of despair, we trust, O God, in your power: to return and restore us, to enliven and empower us, to soothe and to save us. You can turn a desert into Eden, sorrow into joy, and silence into singing. The heavens may vanish above and the earth dissolve underneath, but your salvation is forever. We wait for you, O God, attentive and hopeful, for with you, deliverance is always possible. In Christ we pray, Amen.

HYMN #81 BH #446 “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”

CALL TO CONFESSION

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Confident in this ever-gracious, never-failing help, we come before the Lord, confessing our sin and seeking forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

God our redeemer, we confess that we remain captivated by sin. You let the oppressed go free, but we allow oppression to continue. You give away the keys to your realm, but we try to stand guard at the gates. Forgive us; liberate us! Let us be no longer bound by sin, but released, restored, set free to worship and serve you in freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,

we would now be lost in sin.

But it is the Lord who is on our side.

And so we are forgiven.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of revelation, mere flesh and blood cannot reveal divine truth; only your Spirit can give that gift. Be in my breath and voice, be in our ears and understanding, that through these words your Word may be known. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the LORD.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

2 Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah, who bore you,
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.

3 For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

4 Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.

5 I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats,
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

ANTHEM

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” **14** And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” **15** He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” **17** And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” **20** Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

SERMON

A Faith All Your Own

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Is there an area of your life that is in need of transformation and renewal?

Ask God to show his will for you in this area of your life.

HYMN #722 BH #426

“Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

Brothers and sisters, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. As an act of worship, let us now return to God our offering.

Almighty God, you took a baby from the Nile and used him to lead your people to the promised land. Take our offerings and use them for your people in this land and throughout your world. In Jesus' name we pray. 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 from Psalm 138

We give you thanks, O Lord, with our whole heart;
before the nations we sing your praise;

We worship in your sanctuary and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.

We call out to you and you answer us;
you increased our strength of soul.

We look forward to the day when all knees will bow and praise you, O Lord,

And all tongues confess that you are Lord from their mouths for they have heard the words of your mouth and have seen your great glory.

It is astonishing to us that though you are high above us in every way imaginable, you regard the lowly,

but the haughty you perceive from far away.

Though we walk in the midst of trouble,

you preserve us against the wrath of enemies;

you stretch out your hand,

and your right hand delivers us. Deliver us today from bodily pain that keeps us from serving you well and shatters good attitudes. Deliver us from despair and despondency. Keep us in your light. Open our eyes that we might see those around us as your creations deserving of

dignity and worthy of respect. And enable us to share our lives and our time with them.

The Lord, we pray today that you will fulfill your purpose for us as your church;
 your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. We pray that this love might root us in a strong foundation as your people, your family, and that as your family, we might be emissaries of your great love to the world.

We know that we are not perfect examples, but we desire to be living examples of people who follow your will, do your work and follow in your ways. Bless us now and do not forsake the work of your hands. Let us lift our voices together in the pray that Jesus taught his disciples...

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

Encourage a college student

Do you know any college students? Maybe a neighbor, a relative, the child of a work colleague, a family friend?

Encourage them this week with a note, a gift card, and/or a snack food care package. Let them know you're praying for them.

Consider donating to the FFPC college student care packages. We send these out every Fall Semester.

COMMISSIONING OF TEACHERS

The leader addresses the congregation:

Christian friends, as Jesus called men and women to service, so God has called us to participate in the redemption of all creation. Each of us has been given a unique expression of God's Spirit. We are to develop, refine, and use what has been given to us for the common good.

The persons being commissioned will rise and remain standing The leader says:

At the celebration of baptism, we pledge ourselves to nurture one another in the faith. You, as teachers, leaders, and assistants, carry a particular joy and responsibility.

You were chosen from among us to teach us and our children. You are charged to represent the gospel of God with gentleness and insight as the Spirit guides you in your words and in your witness with us.

Through your ministry our faith will be nurtured and deepened. We look to you to equip us to live the truth of Jesus Christ in community, family, workplace, and world. *[The tiny globes are passed out]*

The leader continues:

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to give yourselves to this calling with diligence, energy, and love, and to be guided by the Spirit and the Word of God?

The teachers, leaders, and assistants respond:

We do, by the grace of God.

The leader says: Congregation, let us acknowledge the gifts and callings of your sisters and brothers.

We receive you as servants of Christ;

We pledge to support you in your service.

We encourage you with works and prayers.

We consider ourselves coworkers with you in the service of Christ.

The Charge

Servants of Christ, accept the service with which you have been entrusted. Do not neglect the gift that is in you. Present yourselves to God as approved workers, ever faithful to the Spirit of God.

Remember always that Jesus called you friends as well as servants. Attend to prayer, for without God you can do nothing.

Dear friends, as Christians we are tasked with being a part of God's work to redeem all of creation. In your hands you hold a little globe. All of the earth is to be redeemed as happy, healthy and whole and that is our task. But we do not do it alone. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to go about the work that God has called us to. Serve with this knowledge.

SONG He's Got the Whole World in His Hand (in E flat)

Let us pray:

Spirit of the living God, in every age you have appointed teachers to tell your power, justice, and love. We thank you for brothers and sisters in faith committed to teaching us your ways and your words. We give thanks for the evidences of your Holy Spirit that we and our children experience in the community of learning. We commend ourselves and our sisters and brothers to your constant love and guidance. Fill them with grace and grant them the strength and peace of your Spirit. In the name of Christ, our Master, Servant, and Friend. Amen.

PRESENTATION OF 3rd GRADE BIBLES

HYMN #726 “Will You Come and Follow Me” (Vs 1-4)

CHARGE

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed to live as the body of Christ in the world.

May the Lord who made heaven and earth,
the Christ who lived and died for all,
and the Spirit who renews our minds and hearts
abide with you and all God’s people, now and forever.

BENEDICTION #726 “Will You Come and Follow Me” (Vs 5)

POSTLUDE

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