



*Love  
must be sincere.  
Hate  
what is evil;  
Cling  
to what is good.*

Romans 12:9



# HELLO & WELCOME

The Church is not a building. It is a gathering of people brought together to experience God's love and purpose.

**God designed the church for YOU** – you belong here. Are you ready to experience a community of people doing life together? To find out, come worship with us on Sunday mornings.

**Our Mission:** To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people know Jesus Christ and grow, share, and serve as his disciples.

**Our Vision:** To provide an inviting and welcoming church home that attracts people of all ages and encourages positive growth, while creating an exciting and dynamic approach as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for worshipping with us! We are happy to welcome you into this household of God.

# GROWING IN GOD

We commit to knowing Jesus through worship, Bible study, and prayer, encouraging continued spiritual growth as His disciples.

## PASTOR'S LETTER

### The Kingdom of God: Already/Not Yet.

Pastor Lindsey Carnes

Jesus said the kingdom of God is a work in progress, but not yet finished. That's a lot like knitting (or many other things in life). The kingdom of God, Jesus said, is already a reality among us in this world, but it is not yet complete. It's something God is doing now, but it won't be completed until the end of time. We live between this present "already" and God's future "not yet." So Jesus taught us to pray for that future, saying "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Jesus said that the kingdom of God is like a sower who went out to sow seed in his field. The seed fell on various types of ground, but the seed that fell into good soil brought forth much grain, yielding a hundredfold. Jesus said the kingdom of God is like yeast a woman mixed in with three measures of flour until all of the dough was leavened. Jesus said the kingdom of God is like a tiny mustard seed someone sowed in his field; when it grew, it became a large shrub, a tree, in which the birds of the air came to make their nests.

Jesus was saying that the kingdom of God is already a reality, but not yet a completed reality. So Jesus taught us to pray for the kingdom: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." I can imagine Jesus saying, "The kingdom of God is like a woman who sat down to knit. She knitted stitch by stitch and row by row until she finished a shawl that gave warmth and comfort to one who needed it."

Stitch by stitch, row by row, already but not yet. Think about the unfinished things in your own life. Think about unresolved conflicts, unhealed pain from the past, uncertainties about relationships.

Think about the things that worry you—like concerns you have for children or grandchildren. Think about the unknowns in your future. The unknown and unfinished things in our world are reasons Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." He was saying to take our lives, the lives of those we love, and the well-being of this world, and place them in the hands of God—trusting God for the future.

### **Stitch by Stitch**

When we pray this prayer, we're praying that God's kingdom would come in and through us—that God would use us to be part of the healing of this world. We're asking that God enable us to help bring about God's kingdom of well-being for all God's people on earth.

Your kingdom come. You know, if we stop and think about it, praying for God's kingdom to come is an immense and awesome thing to try to wrap your head around. What we're praying for is nothing less than the kingdom of God to be manifest in our world. That is huge. That is powerful. That is...intense.

Part of what it means to embrace God's kingdom is to embrace hope that there is a future free of heartache and conflict and pain. And it's completely valid and very meaningful to pray in anticipation of that glorious event...after all, the very last prayer found in the Bible is "Come Lord Jesus!" But I think in our escapist culture... where we put such a high value on "getting away from it all," there's a danger that our Kingdom thinking becomes too narrow. We can become so enamored with what Christ will do when he returns, that we lose sight of what he's doing right now.

As a pastor friend of mine likes to say: "The kingdom of God is here but it is not yet fully here." One day it will be realized in all of its joy and peace and wonder and fulfillment. But even still, until that day, because of Jesus Christ, the kingdom is something we can taste and experience in this life. How does that happen? What does it mean to experience the kingdom of God in the here and now? To answer that we need to know what the kingdom is.

See, we tend to think of kingdoms as nations...geographic and political entities, with defined boundaries and maybe a certain ethnicity associated with it. That's not what Jesus is talking about when he says "kingdom of God." For the Hebrew mind, the "kingdom of God" means, "God acting as king." It's not a place or a people...it's a dynamic experience of God's loving kingship and rule. And it results in a changed world.

We cannot bring about the kingdom by social works, elections or education or humanitarian good works, or environmental stewardship, or by the cultivation of the arts. This is where we must not be confused. Yes, kingdom values should infiltrate our politics. Kingdom living should make a difference in our communities. But let us not misunderstand the nature of the kingdom. The kingdom does not advance when trees are planted, or unemployment lowered, or beautiful art is created, or elections go one way or another. Those may all be important things. They may reflect certain values of the kingdom. But the kingdom comes when and where the King is known. When Jesus is loved and worshiped and believed upon, there the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.

But when Jesus came to earth, those kingdom priorities were reflected perfectly in his life. Jesus is God's righteousness revealed. Jesus demonstrated the kingdom in what he did. He showed what happens when God's rule and kingship are experienced here on earth. And just what happens when God's rule and kingship are experienced here on earth? What happens when God answers our prayer, "Thy kingdom come?"

Lost people are found. Broken people are healed. Oppressed people are set free. Hungry people are fed. The hurting find comfort. The despairing find hope. The wronged find justice. That's the kingdom! That's what it looks like.

**Conclusion: Trusting God**

In other words...we are invited to pray these words of Jesus that the reality of God's kingdom would be known in our world today. You are invited...I am invited, to pray for this "in-breaking shalom of God" to be known here and now. That is huge. That is revolutionary. Don't settle for less.

Like the great preacher Charles Spurgeon once said, "A little faith will take you to heaven, but I pray for the kind of faith that will bring heaven to earth." Did you catch that? "A little faith will take you to heaven, but I pray for the kind of faith that will bring heaven to earth." Thy kingdom come. Friends...if we say that prayer...and really mean it, it has huge implications for how we live our lives.

When we say, "Your kingdom come," and we really mean it, we find ourselves invited and enlisted to demonstrate the kingdom in the same way Jesus did. By laying down our lives. By offering them to God, asking that through us the truth of his reign...his loving, benevolent, transforming reign... would be known in the world.

One might talk about the Lord's Prayer as a prayer of trust and hope in God's future. For God's people, hope lies in trusting that God is not yet finished with us or with this world. The already of God's kingdom we experience now will one day give way to that glorious reality of the not yet of God's future. No more suffering, no more tears, no more death. "*Mourning and crying and pain will be no more*" (Revelation 21:4). In the meantime, until that day, we place our lives and this world in God's hands. We take it stitch by stitch, row by row, word by word, line by line, one day at a time. And in trust, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."



# WORSHIP

## HOW TO WORSHIP WITH US

**Join us online as well as in person Sunday's at 10am**

Masks are optional. Paper masks remain available for those who might need one, and hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the building.

**Here is how to join us Online**

**Facebook Live:** <https://www.facebook.com/fentonfpc>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkBa-DrcqSECxjAyeaiC4bg>

**Zoom** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT09>

**Use the Zoom app** and use this Meeting ID

**Meeting ID:** 830 914 2301 **Meeting Password:** 5013

Use your telephone line to listen in:

Call +19292056099 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (New York)

Or Call +13126266799 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (Chicago)

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE



**February 4<sup>th</sup>**, 5th Sunday after Epiphany, Communion, Scout Sunday, Pancake Breakfast - "Lead us not into temptation..."

**February 11<sup>th</sup>**, Transfiguration Sunday - "For yours is the Kingdom..."

**February 14<sup>th</sup>**, 7:00pm Ash Wednesday, Prayer Stations in the Fellowship Hall, Ashes & Communion

**February 18<sup>th</sup>**, 1st Sunday in Lent, Church's Anniversary - "Rest for Your Soul"

**February 25<sup>th</sup>**, 2nd Sunday in Lent, "Sabbath as Rhythm and Resistance"



# LENTEN SIMPLE MEALS

We welcome you all to come to the 2024 Lenten Simple Meals. We will be meeting on Thursday night in Lent beginning on February 22nd. Dinner will begin at 5:30pm and the learning time will begin at 6pm. We will end our time together with music and prayer.

We are especially excited that St. Jude's Episcopal Church will be joining us for meals and learning. And Reverend Susan Anslow Williams will be joining Pastor's Robbie and Lindsey in leading the discussions

Lent is traditionally a time of self-reflection and action that prepares followers of Christ to walk more intentionally in the way of God. Many of us want to understand how to integrate our personal spiritual lives more actively with our engagement in working for justice and expressing compassion to the oppressed and marginalized. We will be studying together a book called *Hard and Holy Work*, by Pastor Mary Alice Birdwhistell and Hebrew Bible scholar Tyler Mayfield.

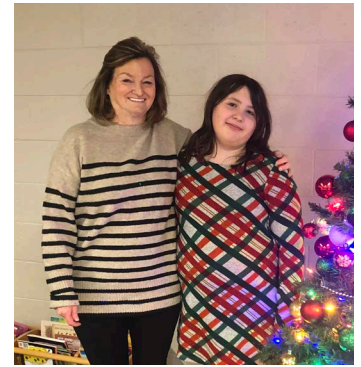
Together we will begin a unique Lenten journey, trying to see those who are marginalized or suffering as God sees them; contemplating how privilege, fear, risk, and feelings of uncertainty can cloud our attention; and practice endurance for the messy middle of justice work, leaning on God's provision and rest when the way forward is unclear.

We will challenge each other to become more attuned to God's boundless presence in our world and wake up to and take action for God's justice through exploring stories from the book of Exodus. We hope that you can join us.



### Confirmation Class 2024

On Sunday, January 7, youth assisted in leading worship and six youth were confirmed after a weekend confirmation and youth retreat. What a blessing it was to have youth and their mentors share their faith stories with one another. Confrimands and their mentors are: Leah Carnes and Jenn Wenzel, Camryn Coffin and Ellen Horton, Emily Hollopeter and Ceil Ladd, Aletheia Thomas and Jeanne Cupp, Amaris Thomas and Jay Kirkey, and Azariah Thomas and Kay Kirkey. Please hold them and all of the youth group in prayer as they continue to journey together through the school year exploring topics of Wisdom and Discernment, Justice, Hospitality, Compassion, Unity, Humility, Grace, and Gratitude.





# CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Class begins at 10AM. Children return to worship after the sermon where they are welcome to either sit with their parents or with Miss Tina. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kate Kirkey or Tina Ritchie.

## February Teacher

### Elementary/Preschool

Tina Ritchie & Heidi Howieson



### “The Mission Begins” topics:

#### Unit 30 - The Church Grew (Acts, 2 Corinthians, Colossians)

The early church's rapid growth led to some disagreements and problems. The leaders of the church addressed these problems by reminding everyone that Jesus is their ultimate leader and that they share the common mission given by Him to take the gospel to the entire world.

#### 1/28 Philip and the Ethiopian

#### 2/4 Paul Met Jesus

#### 2/11 New Life in Jesus

#### 2/18 Guarding the Truth

**Big Picture Question:** Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshipping God, showing God's love, and telling others about Jesus.

**Unit Key Verse:** *And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.* ~ **Colossians 1:18**

### “The Church United” topics:

#### Unit 31 – From Jews to Gentiles (Acts, Hebrews)

The gospel is good news for everyone, both Jews and Gentiles. Through the early church, the good news about Jesus spread beyond Jerusalem. The Lord saved more and more people every day, and the church grew.

#### 2/25 Peter and Cornelius

#### 3/3 Barnabas in Antioch

#### 3/10 Jesus is Better

#### 3/17 The Hall of Faith

**Big Picture Question:** What is the gospel? The gospel is the good news that God sent God's Son, Jesus, into the world to rescue us from our sins.

**Unit Key Verse:** *Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let them say among the nations, “The Lord reigns!”* ~ **1 Chronicles 16:31**



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



## ADULT STUDIES

Newcomers are welcome at every class - invite your friends too :-)

### **Sunday Evening Bible Study - Sundays from 5 - 6:30PM**

Led by Larry Zimble, this class meets in the conference room at 4square Tax & Accounting. We are reading the book *Flood and Fury: Old Testament Violence and Shalom of God* by Matthew J. Lynch. This book discusses how the destruction and killing in the Old Testament (Joshua and the Flood) can cause us to question whether God is true and just. Rabbi Larry is not currently traveling so we will meet most Sundays. Newcomers are always welcome!

### **Tuesday Morning Bible Study**

"Discovering the Bible" by Kerygma from 11AM - 12:15PM in the Conference Room. Led by Pastor Robbie, we are learning about the people, places and stories of the Bible and discovering where The Story lives in our story! Through a process of reading, reflection, discussion and creative expression, both the first-time learner and the lifelong student are invited to an engaging, rewarding encounter with Scripture that will greatly deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Bible. The Coffee is hot, the fellowship is good, and all are welcome.

### **Winter Women's Study**

Twelve MORE Women of the Bible: Life-Changing Stories for Women Today

Monday evenings, through March 25 from 6:30 - 8PM

via ZOOM facilitated by Dee Dee Ainsworth

OR

Wednesday mornings, through March 20 from 10AM - 12PM in Fellowship Hall facilitated by Tina Ritchie

We are looking at the lives of the Proverbs 31 Woman: How Not to Do It All, Deborah: Fight Like a Girl, Shulamite Woman: We Had God at Hello, Ruth: Staying Focused in a World of Distractions, Puah and Shiphrah: How to Fight Your Fears, Esther: Letting God Be in Control, Priscilla: Living a Life of Blessed Ordinary, Mary and Martha: Finding Life in Death, Bent Woman: We've Got God's Complete Attention, Woman with the Issue of Blood: When Persistence Pays Off, Elizabeth: How to Win the Waiting Game, and Anna: How to Live a Life Devoted to God.

# GROWING IN LOVE

**We model Christian love towards each other, providing an inviting and welcoming spiritual home that attracts people of all ages to share their faith.**

**Youth Group Events for 6 - 12 graders and friends,**  
Meetings are generally Sundays unless noted. Sign up for events on the youth bulletin board or email [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org). Friends welcome with a current parental consent form on file.

\*Events subject to change



## Family Fellowship & Youth Group Events

Children, with their parents, are invited to participate once a month with Youth Group for fun activities or community mission projects. Please see Kelly Sunman-Davis or Tina Ritchie with any questions.

### Upcoming Sunday Events:

#### February

**Sun 4: Youth Group 2-4pm "Wisdom & Discernment"**

**Sun 11: Family Fellowship Noon-2pm, event TBD**

**Sun 25: Youth Group 2-5pm "Justice"**

#### March

**Sun 3: Youth Group 2-4pm "Hospitality"**

**Sun 17: Youth Group 2-4pm "Compassion"**

### Ways to support Youth scholarships and activities:

**Bottle returns** - Drop off your rinsed returnable bottles and cans to the youth room.

**Kroger Rewards** - Linking your Kroger Rewards card to FFPC is easy and earns us quarterly benefits. Contact the office if you need info on how to do this!



**WE WANT YOU TO JOIN THE CHOIR**

PRACTICE WITH US  
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS  
7:30pm - 8:45pm  
IN THE SANCTUARY




## Yarn Rappers

Do you knit or crochet, or would you like to learn?

Join the YARN Wrappers  
Tuesdays at 1:00pm  
in the Adult Library



## Communion Table Flowers

ARE A PERFECT WAY TO HONOR A PERSON, COUPLE OR SPECIAL OCCASION

CONTACT HEIDI ROBERTS AT  
HROBERTS6862@GMAIL.COM  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

## How Can We Pray For You?

Prayer requests and updates can be sent to Nancy Parkin by phone at 810-241-6497

or by email at [prayerchain@ffpc.org](mailto:prayerchain@ffpc.org)



Scan for Newsletter Sign-up  
Visit [ffpc.org](http://ffpc.org)



Sunday February 18th  
AFTER WORSHIP

# Chili

BRING YOUR FAVORITE CHILI AND CONDIMENTS TO SHARE

PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED FOR 1ST & 2ND PLACE

## COOK OFF

SIGN-UP IN FELLOWSHIP HALL



ANNUAL SCOUT THANK YOU

# Pancake Breakfast

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH  
8:30AM-9:30AM & 11:00AM-12:00PM

COME FOR THE PANCAKES AND STAY FOR WORSHIP  
OR  
COME FOR WORSHIP AND STAY FOR THE PANCAKES.

EITHER WAY, YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THE SCOUTS ANNUAL  
THANK YOU FFPC PANCAKE BREAKFAST.

*Widow's Pottluck*

*Our husbands are in heaven.  
Our hearts are on the mend.  
Come to church on Valentines Day.  
To have lunch with a friend.*

**February 14th at 1:00pm  
in Fellowship Hall**

*A-M Salads, N-R Desserts, S-Z Soup  
or bring your speciality  
Contact Janet Stork for more information*

## Happy Birthday

George Hameline Feb 3  
Jay Kirkey Feb 3  
Shari Foguth Feb 4  
Elaine Pelletier Feb 7  
Peggy Fowler Feb 8  
P.J. Collier Feb 10  
Edward Hoeglund Feb 11  
Marsha Schwarz Feb 11

Bev Welch Feb 11  
Jennifer MacLean Feb 13  
Carmen Ormsby Feb 14  
Margie Congdon Feb 15  
Katy Black Feb 16  
Mitzi Uebel Feb 19  
Rog Zollars Feb 20  
Carly Foguth Feb 23  
Julie Maloney Feb 25  
Heidi Howieson Feb 27

## STEWARDSHIP

### Financial Review

Profit/ Loss	<u>December</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan-Dec.</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Income:	\$21, 829.07	\$21,331.90	\$268,686.06	\$255,982.80	\$255,982.80
Expense:	<u>\$20,787.50</u>	<u>\$23,576.82</u>	<u>\$251,617.50</u>	<u>\$288,511.64</u>	<u>\$288,511.64</u>
	\$903.30	(\$2,244.92)*	\$177,068.56	(\$32,528.84)	(\$32,528.84)

\*This does not include additional obligations such as restricted funds or other payments such as: Board of Deacons, Organ Fund, HVAC Fund, etc.

### Statement of Cash Flows

	<b>December</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$43,954.50	\$39,183.66
Cash at End of Period:	<u>\$48,304.76</u>	<u>\$48,304.76</u>
Net Cash Decrease:	(\$4,350.26)	(\$9,121.10)

Balance in the Building Repair & Improvement account as of December 2023, \$3,921.11

Respectfully Submitted January 7th, 2024

Marilee Smily

Treasurer

# GROWING IN COMMUNITY

We engage with our wider community, seeking to be a Christian influence and encouraging others to follow Jesus through service in mission and outreach endeavors.

GET READY TO DONATE!

## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING



Feb. 11th, 2024



The FFPC youth group is participating and has chosen to support the North End Soup Kitchen and the food pantries of FFPC and the Fenton United Methodist Church.

Please bring your donations of money and non-perishable items to church Sunday, Feb. 11. Checks should have memo of Souper Bowl of Caring.



Step Up and Save Lives!

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)

### Join Our Blood Donation Drive

**DATE**  
MONDAY  
FEB. 19TH

**TIME**  
11:00AM-  
4:45PM

**LOCATION**  
2nd Floor  
Fellowship Hall

Fenton First Presbyterian Church • 503 S. Leroy Street

For more information call our church office at 810-629-7801

# WAYS TO GIVE

There are many different ways that you can give back to the Fenton First Presbyterian Church. **Together we can make a difference!!**



**Online Giving:** An easy and convenient way to give. Just visit the Presbyterian Mission Exchange link in the Giving section of FFPC.org website. A fast and SECURE way to give back.



**Church Giving:** You can give during one of our services by placing your check or cash in the Sunday offering plates. When giving cash, please complete a giving envelope so we can properly record your gift.



**Automatic Bank Pay:** You can set up payments through your financial institution by utilizing the bill pay feature. Simply use First Presbyterian Church as the payee and your name for your account information. Saves on postage!!



**Non-Cash Giving:** Assets or Planned Gifts



**Mail offering to Church:**  
Fenton First Presbyterian Church  
503 S. Leroy  
Fenton, MI 48430

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION!**

NON PROFIT  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Fenton, Michigan  
Permit No. 85

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
503 S. LEROY STREET  
FENTON, MI 48430-1736