

FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy  
and peace as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Romans 15:13*





# 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

Fear is the Mind Killer:

When Mission Creep becomes Mission Abandonment.

Pastor Robbie Carnes

The title of this article comes from the book and movie Dune. It references the pseudo religious philosophy that is displayed throughout the story. It also is quite true. When we are afraid, we tend to lose our minds, doing things that, if we thought about it a bit more, we wouldn't have considered. Fear has a way of deconstructing our best intentions into default reactions that may or may not align with our ethics and morals.

I have been studying the story of Naaman in a personal devotion. Naaman was a commander of the army of the king of Aram; a very successful warrior and highly respected man. However, he had leprosy which was a limiting factor to his political, social, and religious life. Hearing that there was a prophet in Samaria who could cure leprosy, Naaman asks his king for permission to cross the border and seek healing. The King of Aram agreed and sent a letter to the King of Israel, requesting healing for his servant.

The interesting part of this story is the King of Israel's response. Naaman "brought the

letter to the king of Israel, which read, 'When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his disease.' When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, 'Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his skin disease? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.'" (2 Kings 5:6-7)

On the outset the king of Israel's response seems reasonable enough. The king seems to be unaware or does not believe that a prophet in Samaria could help Naaman, although we will touch on this later. The king is very aware that the king of Aram, most likely, is insinuating a threat of violence if Naaman isn't healed. It is also unnerving to learn that a person with leprosy has come to visit. The king of Israel has a lot to be scared of. Except that there is a prophet in Israel and the king of Israel has nothing to fear.

The devastating part of this story is that the king of Israel's fearful actions were an abandonment of the mission that God



gave his people beginning with Abram. Genesis 22:18 says, “by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.” The purpose of the kingdom of Israel was, in large part, to bless the peoples around them. This was done by humbly worshiping God and faithfully obeying the law. In the story of Naaman we have the nation of Israel, which is not powerful economically or militarily, presented with an opportunity to bless their neighbor nation. Naaman was revered in his country; what a great opportunity to share God’s blessing simply by acknowledging that there is a prophet in Samaria.

I believe that the king of Israel knew full well of Elisha. Reading further on, it seems clear that Elisha had a relationship with the king and communicated regularly with the royal court. Could it be that fear robbed the king of Israel of knowledge of Elisha? Either way, the king’s initial reaction to Naaman and his abandonment of the God given mission of the nation of Israel has some pretty clear parallels in our own lives and the church.

We all have to deal with fear. Many times, fear is what keeps us from doing very unhealthy things. However, when fear keeps us from working out our God given mission there are problems, especially in the church. As individuals and the Body of Christ, we are called to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

This is a high calling and it is reasonable

to be fearful of it. In order to teach, we need to be trained. In order to baptize, we need to be commissioned. In order to go, we need to be equipped. To the extent that the fear of the mission encourages us to prepare ourselves to fulfill the mission, that is a holy fear. However, if our fear of the mission is so great that we lose our minds and begin to augment, divert or abandon our mission altogether, we cannot be the people of God that God is intending. Like a campfire within the ring, it is great for roasting hotdogs and smores. Once it grows beyond the fire ring, it is a destructive force quickly becoming unmanageable.

***In what ways has fear augmented or diverted our church from the mission that Jesus has given us?***

***What are those fears?***

***How can we face them together and not give them so much power?***

***In what ways has fear led you to abandon Jesus’ mission in your own life?***

***Do you have people that you can comfortably have a spiritual conversation with and talk through these fears?***

***Do you want people like that in your life?***

***How can we nurture community around us and within the church that helps us to stay on the mission that Jesus has given us?***

Fear is a mind killer. May you be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. May Jesus speak the words, ‘Do not be afraid’, breathe peace into your heart, and may you follow faithfully.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you;  
be not dismayed, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold  
you with my righteous right hand.

2 Timothy 1:7

For God gave us a spirit not of fear  
but of power and love and self-control.

Psalms 34:4

I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you?  
Be strong and courageous.  
Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed,  
for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man lays a snare,  
but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.

April

# 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



**March 31<sup>st</sup>**, Easter Sunday, Eternally New, Isaiah 65:17-19; John 20:1-18

**April 7<sup>th</sup>**, 2nd Sunday of Easter, The 2nd Day

**April 21<sup>st</sup>**, 3rd Sunday of Easter, Healing Churches

**April 28<sup>th</sup>**, 4th Sunday of Easter, Ingredients of Growth: Grace + Truth + Time

# 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.

## April Teacher

Elementary/Preschool

Tina Ritchie/TBD



### “The Church United” topics:

#### Unit 32 – Making Disciples (Acts, 1 Corinthians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus)

In the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples of all nations. Early church leaders made disciples by sharing the gospel, baptizing new believers, and teaching them to obey Jesus. Our mission as Christians is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- 3/24 Peter Escaped from Prison
- 4/7 Paul's First Journey
- 4/14 The Church Divided
- 4/21 Letters to Church Leaders

**Big Picture Question:** What is our mission as Christians? Our mission is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Unit Key Verse:** *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*  
~ **Matthew 28: 19-20**

#### “ Unit 33 – A Firm Foundation (Acts, Galations, 1-2 Thessalonians)

Paul reminded believers about the truth of the gospel. The Bible gives us a firm foundation for our faith. By reading and studying Scriptures, we can remember what is true and encourage others as they live by faith.

- 4/28 The Jerusalem Council
- 5/5 Paul's Second Journey
- 5/12 No Other Gospel
- 5/19 Paul Gave Hope

**Big Picture Question:** What is the Bible about? The Bible is the story of God's plan to save people through Jesus.

**Unit Key Verse:** *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.* ~ **Acts 4:12**





# 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 Beginning April 7, the group will be reading *"The Fifth Gospel"* by Bobby Conway. This book is different; it's an invitation to actually live out the message of the gospel! Please see Rabbi Larry for more information.

### **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.

### **Women's Study**

*"Trustworthy - A study of 1 & 2 Kings"* by Lysa TerKeurst  
Participant books are \$23  
Register in Fellowship Hall or to [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org)

When hard times come and it seems God is deviating from the plan we assume our life should follow, we're much more likely to want to tame God, not trust Him. It's then that we begin to press into our ways and our own timing. No human can carry the weight of being their own god, but so many of us try.

In this 6-session study we join Lysa in Israel as she honestly reveals the places of distrust in her own heart while exploring the deeply personal applicable Scriptures that will teach us how to truly trust God.

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



# 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



## Youth Group Events

### Upcoming Sunday Events:

#### April

**Sun 7: Youth Group 2-4pm "Unity"**

**Sun 21: Youth Group 2-5pm "Humility"**

#### May

**Sun 5: Youth Group 2-4pm "Grace"**

**Sun 19: Youth Group 2-5pm "Gratitude"**

### 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!

April



JOIN US FOR A...  
Ladies Luncheon



# SPRING CLEANING

Spring Cleaning for the Kitchen & Fellowship Hall - On Friday, April 12th at 10:00am, we are looking for volunteers to assist us with spring cleaning our Kitchen and Fellowship Hall. Cleaning supplies will be provided. We need your help, as many hands make less work. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall.

## Funeral Luncheon Team

We are in need of individuals willing to join our funeral luncheon team. We are looking for those willing to assist with set up and clean up, as well as individuals to cook and bake.

Please see the NEW sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall.



### 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)



### 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



### FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LOOKING FOR CHOIR MEMBERS

PRaise THE LORD THROUGH MUSIC REJOice THE LORD THROUGH MUSIC

If you have a passion for singing and/or ringing, join us!

Practice With Us Wednesday Evenings  
Chancel Choir - 7:30pm-9:00pm  
Hand Bell Choir 6:30pm-7:15pm



### Communion Table Flowers

A perfect way to honor a person, couple or special occasion



Contact the Church Office or Heidi Roberts for more information



April

# POTATO BAKE FUN!



# Happy Birthday

# Happy Anniversary

Harry Clark	Apr 3
Jean Hermann	Apr 4
Tina Smith	Apr 7
William Eddington	Apr 14
Christian Coffin	Apr 16
Meredith Weldon	Apr 18
Mark Gibb	Apr 20
Barb Taylor	Apr 21
Debbie Hoeglund	Apr 25
Sarah Kasprzak	Apr 25
Gabrielle Smith	Apr 26
Lee Graham	Apr 28
Lynne Watters	Apr 28
Roy Fetzer	Apr 29
Connie Morrison	Apr 29
Jayce Erwin	Apr 30

Michael & Jeanne Cupp	April 22
Scott & Cathy Hollopeter	April 29



## STEWARDSHIP

### Financial Review

	<u>March</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan-Mar</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Profit/ Loss					
Income:	\$26,947.84	\$21,752.40	\$56,352.25	\$44,245.27	\$256,723.00
Expense:	<u>\$23,912.65</u>	<u>\$19,054.03</u>	<u>\$50,484.21</u>	<u>\$46,109.30</u>	<u>\$274,146.00</u>
	\$3,035.19	\$2,698.37	\$5,868.04	(\$1,864.03)	(\$17,423.00)

\*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>February</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$48,415.87	\$45,142.12
Cash at End of Period:	<u>\$52,329.24</u>	<u>\$52,329.24</u>
Net Cash Decrease:	(\$3,913.37)	(\$7,187.12)

Balance in the Building Repair & Improvement account as of February 2024, \$4,303.64

Respectfully Submitted March 6th, 2024

Marilee Smily  
Treasurer

April

# 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.**

## Refugee Welcome Team

MAKING MICHIGAN HOME

Good News!!!

Samaritas, our partner organization, has received approval to resettle refugees in Genesee County! They are now building their local team and expect to receive their first family in April. That means we have about two months to get ready. When the family arrives we will do our best to provide furniture, housewares, and other goods as needed. Please let me know if you are interested in joining us.

Also... we have been asked to assist another team with their latest match. This group is helping the Sadat family and they have provided a helpful link to their list of needed items (posted below). If you sign up for anything on the list please let me know and we can do a group delivery of everything at once. Robbie and I are coordinating getting them photos of the furniture that we currently have in stock.

Finally... donations of housewares have piled up a bit in our storage room at the church. I am looking for anyone who might have a few hours to sort and organize. This can be done anytime at your convenience. Please contact me if you are available.

As always, thank you all for your continued support.

Peace,  
Sarah-Martin Fanone

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090B49ADAC22A75-48030014-donations#/>



April

**On March 17th, after a hearty and potato filled meal, we engaged in mission activities. We assembled 35 Easter baskets 4 \$20 gift cards and numerous fillers 26 duffle bags for foster children!**



# 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!**

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