

## *Growing in God*

WE COMMIT TO KNOWING JESUS THROUGH WORSHIP, BIBLE STUDY, AND PRAYER,  
ENCOURAGING CONTINUED SPIRITUAL GROWTH AS HIS DISCIPLES.

### The Need for Empathy or Caring for People over Politics

by Pastor Robbie Carnes



It is far too easy to shake our heads at the state of the world today. War and rumors of war abound. The negative language that is used to promote civic policy and procedure is prolific. Identity politics and the desire to categorize people into moral dichotomies and ignore the subtlety of the human experience is rampant. In our church's work with housing refugees, it has been curious that certain people groups are seen as more ok to serve and welcome (i.e. Afghani military interpreters)

than others (i.e. Syrian families). Even as they all have gone through the same types of horrible experiences that qualify them as refugees and have the same basic needs. This is an example of our tendency to uplift those we imagine as 'for us' and those who are 'against us'. We can quickly jettison empathy for people made in God's image if our politics are questioned.

Does our faith have anything to say about this? You bet your manischewitz. There is a curious story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5. Naaman is an Aramean (modern day Syria) Military Commander. He has injured Israel through warfare, economic terrorism and slavery. In an effort to be healed from leprosy, Naaman goes to Samaria and is connected with the prophet Elisha. Naaman is healed from his from his skin disease and puts his faith in the God of Israel.

It is at this point in the story where Naaman makes a request of Elisha. After pressing Elisha to accept gives of wealth and being rebuffed he makes the following request:

## 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.

17 Then Naaman said, "... please let two mule loads of earth be given to your servant, for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god except the Lord. 18 But may the Lord pardon your servant on one count: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my arm, and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I do bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the Lord pardon your servant on this one count." (2 Kings 5:17-18)

We can imagine that the first part of Naaman's request is simple enough to approve of. Dirt is cheap and it is clear evidence of how seriously Naaman is taking his new found faith in the God of Israel. Empathy is easy. The second part should be more problematic.

Naaman is seeking permission to attend a worship service of an idol and assist in other people's worship of that idol. It would make sense to deny Naaman this. The political foci isn't right. The cost to Naaman would be great of course. Naaman would probably have to resign from being a great military leader and potentially face criminal charges for it. Naaman may also have to give up his influence, power and prestige and possibly live as an exile in another country. For many of us this is a proper sacrifice for the faith. Getting the politics and the practice aligned is more important than the empathy. But this is not what Elisha says.

19 He said to him, "Go in peace."

How can this be? How could Elisha condone this practice? Doesn't the Jewish faith (and by association our own faith) demand a separation from idols and idol worship? Elisha, known for being a seer, comprehends a faith in Naaman that does not require an absolutist mindset to direct. Could it be that Naaman is referring to the care and respect he wants to maintain not for the idol Rimmon, but for his master the King of Aram? It could very well be that the King is elderly and needs a caretaker. Naaman is asking for permission to serve an elderly man who does not share his new found faith and is a citizen of a belligerent country to Israel. Naaman is asking for permission to serve in the fuzzy business of empathy rather than the strict and rigid boundaries of politics. In what context would Jesus tell us that we are not to serve someone?

- When they are from another country?
- When they have committed violence?
- When they have been irresponsible with their finances?
- When they practice another faith from ours?
- When they promote another politic than ours?
- When they uphold a different worldview from ours?
- When they uphold different sexual ethics than ours?
- When they have experienced intense suffering and pain?
- When they have led a life of privilege, opportunity and wealth?

To whom shall we turn the other cheek, walk the extra mile and lend our cloak?

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It is curious that in Luke 4, Jesus reads scripture about the Messiah and the crowd in the synagogue love it. He then brings the story of Naaman, the foreign leper healed from his disease, as a description of how the Messiah would act in this world, including foreigners in the Kingdom. The people of the synagogue turned in rage to hurl him off a cliff.

Following Jesus is a challenge. Being a Peacemaker means we have to walk into conflict. As we do so may we be filled with power from the Holy Spirit to act with empathy, grace, wisdom and mercy.

Go in Peace.



# WORSHIP

HOW TO WORSHIP WITH US

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



## 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](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT09)

### Zoom:

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)

## MAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### **May 5th, 6th Sunday of Easter**

Communion, 40+ year member celebration  
Sermon: "Separating from Others"

### **May 12th, 7th Sunday of Easter**

Mothers Day  
Sermon: "Processing Pain"

### **May 19th, Pentecost Sunday,**

Sermon: "Becoming an Adult"

### **May 26th, Trinity Sunday**

Memorial Day Weekend  
Sermon: "Who Is My Neighbor"



Do you use the T Coil hearing loop?  
If you are having trouble with the  
system, please contact the  
church office or Mike Cupp.

# CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

## CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL AND WORSHIP INFORMATION

**Class begins at 10AM**

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

### MAY TEACHERS

ELEMENTARY/PRESCHOOL  
Tina Ritchie & Heidi Howieson

#### "The Church United" topics:

##### **Unit 33 – A Firm Foundation**

(Acts, Galatians, 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 Scripture, 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

#### "All Things New" topics: **Unit 34 – Fight the Good Fight** (Acts, Ephesians, Philippians)

Pauls' ministry was difficult, and he suffered so that others would hear the gospel. Paul encouraged believers in the church to grow in their faith, seeking to know Jesus more and looking ahead to eternity with Him.

**5/26** Paul's Third Journey  
**6/2** Paul Was Arrested  
**6/9** Together in Jesus  
**6/16** Running the Race

**Big Picture Question:** What is sanctification? Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Unit Key Verse:** Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ~ 1 Timothy 6:12



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## ADULT STUDIES

**Sunday Evening Bible Study** - Sundays from 5 - 6:30PM  
Led by Larry Zimble, this class meets in the conference room at 4square Tax & Accounting

This group will be discussing the book "The 5th Gospel" by Bobby Conway. This book is different. It is an invitation to actually live out the message of the gospel.

**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.

**Spring Women's Study**  
Trustworthy – A study of 1 & 2 Kings by Lysa TerKeurst

**Monday evenings**, through May 20 from 6:30 – 8PM  
via ZOOM facilitated by Dee Dee Ainsworth

OR

**Wednesday mornings**, through May 15 from 10AM - 12PM  
in Fellowship Hall facilitated by Tina Ritchie

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.

Participant books are \$23  
For more information, contact [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org)

Newcomers  
are welcome  
at every  
class.  
Invite your  
friends too!



# 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 & friends,

Watch your texts and email or contact Tina Ritchie [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org) for more information. Adults seeking to be part of the program are asked to see Tina.

## Youth Group & Confirmation Class Schedule

- Meetings are typically Sundays unless noted
- Sign up for special events on the youth bulletin board or email [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org).
- Friends are always welcome; a parental consent form is needed for offsite events.

## May

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

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



## Ways to support Youth Group scholarships & 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!





How can we pray for you?

Prayer requests & updates  
can be sent to  
[prayerchain@ffpc.org](mailto:prayerchain@ffpc.org)

## Communion Table Flowers



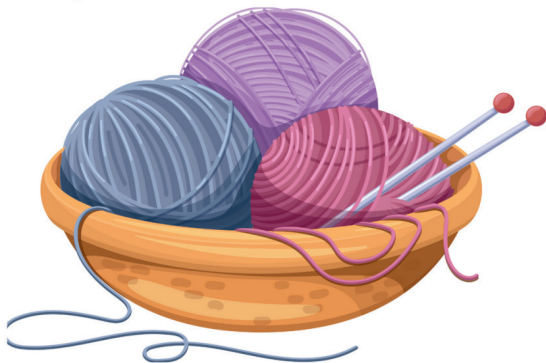
*A perfect way  
to honor a  
person, couple  
or special  
occasion*

*Contact the Church Office  
or Heidi Roberts for more  
information*



## 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 PRaise 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



CLASS OF 2030



### CALLING HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GRADUATES!

We'd like to acknowledge and celebrate your achievements! Please contact the office by April 30 to let us know the school you are graduating from, what degree if appropriate, and share your future plans. If possible, we'd also like to have a current picture to post that can be sent to [office@ffpc.org](mailto:office@ffpc.org).



### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SATURDAY GROUNDS BEAUTIFYING WORK GROUP

We need the help of a few individuals to help keep our flower gardens clean, pretty and weed free.

Our first meeting is Saturday May 18th from 9:30am-12pm. If you are interested in participating, please contact the office at 810-629-7801 or see Deb Bard or Mary Zimpler.



### MEN NEEDED!!!

JERRY HOPE IS IN CHARGE OF COFFEE HOUR FOR MOTHER'S DAY. HE NEEDS SOME MEN TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP HIM WITH THIS.

THERE IS A SIGN-UP SHEET IN FELLOWSHIP HALL OR YOU MAY CALL JERRY AT 734-604-0622.

# We Need YOU

## JOIN US !

Join us for an organizing meeting on the first Wednesday of every month at 9:00 AM in the conference room. During this meeting we will be coming up with a plan of completion for various tasks that need attention around the building and grounds.





# SAVE THE DATE

**AUGUST 13TH-17TH, 2024**

**HOLLY RECREATION AREA GROUP CAMPSITE**

**JOIN US FOR FUN & FELLOWSHIP!**

**DURING THE DAY WE WILL HIKE, ENJOY THE BEACH, AND  
OTHER PLANNED EVENTS.  
THE EVENINGS WE WILL SHARE FOOD AND CONVERSATION  
AROUND THE CAMPFIRE.**

**CAN'T TAKE AN ENTIRE WEEK OFF FOR CAMPING?  
WON'T BE CAUGHT DEAD IN A TENT? AFRAID OF BIGFOOT?**

**WE HAVE YOU COVERED. THERE WILL BE A LIST OF EVENTS  
PUBLISHED THAT YOU CAN JOIN AS YOU WISH, NO  
CAMPING INVOLVED. POTLUCK DINNER IS AT 6PM AND  
CAMPFIRE (WITH SMORES!) BEGINS AT 7PM EACH NIGHT.  
COME AND JOIN THE FUN!**



## Happy Birthday

RACHEL BLACK MAY 1  
 MORRIS FULCHER MAY 10  
 MELISSA ERWIN MAY 13  
 CHRIS COFFIN MAY 19  
 ROBERT MCLIVE MAY 21  
 BEV TIPPETT MAY 24

MICHAEL PELLETIER MAY 8  
 DAVID HALL MAY 11  
 JAMES FOSTER MAY 15  
 MARK MARTIN-FANONE MAY 19  
 JERRY WELCH MAY 22  
 GERRI DANULES MAY 29

MARILEE SMILEY MAY 9  
 PAUL JOITKE MAY 11  
 SARAH MARTIN-FANONE MAY 16  
 MADELINE GIBB MAY 20  
 JENNY E. GIBB MAY 23  
 SHIRLEY ISRAEL MAY 30

CAMERON ANDERSON MAY 10  
 PAT ALLEN MAY 12  
 DEBERA BARD MAY 18  
 JOHN DANULES MAY 21  
 JEFF STONE MAY 24

## Happy Anniversary

FRANK & CHARMAINE THORLEY  
 JEFF & SHARON STONE MAY 10  
 DOUG & LYNN WATTERS MAY 19

## Financial Review

Profit/ Loss	March	Budget	Jan-Mar	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Income:	\$18,248.44	\$22,089.99	\$74,603.03	\$64,180.75	\$256,723.00
Expense:	<u>\$25,418.73</u> (\$7170.29)	<u>\$23,434.17</u> (\$1,344.18)	<u>\$75,932.94</u> (\$1329.91)	<u>\$68,536.50</u> (\$4,355.75)	<u>\$274,146.00</u> (\$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	March	YTD
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$52,301.58	\$45,142.12
Cash at End of Period:	<u>\$42,653.57</u>	<u>\$42,683.57</u>
Net Cash Decrease:	(\$9,648.01)	\$2,458.55
Balance in the Building Repair & Improvement account as of March 2024, \$4,412.68		

Respectfully Submitted March 6th, 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.

## Step Up and Save Lives!

### Blood Donation Drive Fenton First Presbyterian Church



**MONDAY**  
**6.10.2024**

**TIME**  
**11:30-4:30**

**WHERE**  
**Fellowship Hall**



You are a Beacon of Hope whose kindness saves lives, including those with cancer or sickle cell disease. These fighters and their families are counting on you.



[Learn More](#)

For more information, visit us at  
[WWW.FFPC.ORG](http://WWW.FFPC.ORG)

The Pentecost Offering supports our ministries with children and youth.



Join Us!  
When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!  
April 1-May 19



PENTECOST  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

# 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!**