



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.

14th Sunday after Pentecost
August 25th, 2024 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE New Every Morning ~ Audrey Assad video

WELCOME

INTROIT PH #79 “Light Dawns on a Weary World”

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 34:15-22

15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.

**16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.**

17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears
and rescues them from all their troubles.

**18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.**

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD rescues them from them all.

**20 He keeps all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.**

21 Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

**22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.**

OPENING PRAYER

O God, the author and foundation of hope, enable us to rely with confident expectation on your promises, knowing that the trials and hindrances of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed, and having our faces steadfastly set toward the light that shines more and more to the perfect day, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN PH #463 BH #361 “How Firm a Foundation”

CALL TO CONFESSION: —based on Psalm 139:23-24, NRSV

The psalmist models a transparent faith with these words: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. We express our longing for God’s leading by our own transparent confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)—based on Psalm 51:10-12

Merciful God, you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you. We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with you, our God. Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness. In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON—Psalm 145:13-14, NRSV

The LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. 2 And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

14 “Now, therefore, revere the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the LORD. 15 Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

16 Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, 17 for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, 18 and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

ANTHEM

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Matthew 13:24-32

24 He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, 25 but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. 27 And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ 28 He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ 29 But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. 30 Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

31 He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

SERMON The Kingdom of Heaven is like Someone who Planted

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

How much energy and compassion do you have right now? Are there things in your life that you can let go of so that you can engage more energetically with the things God calls you to?

On the blank page provided in the worship bulletin, write down the things you will let go of. Put your page in the offering basket as a sign of your commitment to free up energy for the things God is calling you to.

HYMN PH #629 BH #310

“Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

We offer our gifts to the ministries of this church because Jesus has offered his very life and love for us. Let us pray...

Eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, accept the gifts and tithes of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

(If you would like a written prayer request included in our prayers today, please indicate that and an usher will collect them)

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

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 ~ The Marvelous Mustard Seed

GIVING OF THIRD GRADE BIBLES

COMMISSIONING OF TEACHERS AND BLESSING OF STUDENTS

HYMN PH #839 BH 341 "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!"

CHARGE Heb. 13:20, 21

The God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will, working among us that which is pleasing in God's sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever!

Alleluia! Amen.

BENEDICTION May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You ~Meredith Willson

May the good Lord bless and keep you

Whether near or far away

May you find that long awaited

Golden day today

May your troubles all be small ones

And your fortunes ten times ten

May the good Lord bless and keep you

Till we meet again

May you walk with sunlight shining

And a bluebird in every tree

May there be a silver lining

Back of every cloud you see

Fill your dreams with sweet tomorrows

Never mind what might have been

May the good Lord bless and keep you

Till we meet again

May the Good Lord bless and keep you,

Whether near or far away.

May the good you wish for others

Shine on you today.

May your heart stay turned to music

that will cheer the hearts of men.

May the Good Lord bless and keep you

Till we meet again.

May you long recall the rainbows

Then you'll soon forget the rain.

May the warm and tender memories

Be the ones that will remain.

**Fill your dreams with sweet tomorrows
Never mind what might have been
May the good Lord bless and keep you
Till we meet again**

POSTLUDE

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