



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.

17th Sunday after Pentecost
September 15th, 2024 10:00 a.m.

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GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Forsake wicked ways and unrighteous thoughts. Turn to the Lord and he will have mercy. Turn to God and he will freely pardon. (based on Isaiah 55:6-7)

INTROIT Seek the Lord

Hal Hopson

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 19

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

**Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.**

There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

**yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.**

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

**Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hidden from its heat.**

The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;

**the decrees of the LORD are sure,
making wise the simple;**

the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;

**the commandment of the LORD is clear,
enlightening the eyes;**

the fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring for ever;

**the ordinances of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.**

More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;

**sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.**

OPENING PRAYER

O God, you pour out the Spirit of grace and love. Deliver us from cold hearts and wandering thoughts, that with steady minds and burning zeal we may worship you in spirit and truth. Amen.

HYMN PH #625 BH #467 “How Great Thou Art”

CALL TO CONFESSION: based on Psalm 66:16, 18-20, NRSV

The psalmist testifies: Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me. If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; he has given heed to the words of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me. In the strength of this assurance, let us confess our sins to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)—based on Daniel 9:4-19

O Lord, great God, all holy, Father most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, we are embarrassed to come before you, for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways, for we have rebelled against your wisdom and we have gotten into trouble, for we have rejected your fatherly guidance and have gotten lost altogether. To you belongs righteousness, O Lord, and to us confusion of face. O Lord, great God, all holy, filled with awe, Father, most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, incline your ear to our troubles. Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you. Forgive us, not on the ground of our own righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercy. On the ground of your great mercy in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we pray, for he is our Savior and the mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON—Isaiah 54:8; 43:25; 44:22, NIV

“In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,” says the Lord your Redeemer. “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.” “I have wept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.”

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Our Lord and our God, now as we hear your Word, fill us with your Spirit. Soften our hearts that we may delight in your presence. Sharpen our minds so that we may discern your truth. Shape our wills that we may desire your ways. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Proverb 1:20-33

Wisdom cries out in the street;
 in the squares she raises her voice.
 At the busiest corner she cries out;
 at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:
 ‘How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?
 How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing
 and fools hate knowledge?
 Give heed to my reproof;
 I will pour out my thoughts to you;
 I will make my words known to you.
 Because I have called and you refused,
 have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,
 and because you have ignored all my counsel
 and would have none of my reproof,
 I also will laugh at your calamity;
 I will mock when panic strikes you,
 when panic strikes you like a storm,
 and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
 when distress and anguish come upon you.
 Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;
 they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.
 Because they hated knowledge
 and did not choose the fear of the LORD,
 would have none of my counsel,
 and despised all my reproof,
 therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way
 and be sated with their own devices.
 For waywardness kills the simple,
 and the complacency of fools destroys them;
 but those who listen to me will be secure
 and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.’

ANTHEM Come, Thou Fount arr. Craig Courtney Chancel Choir

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Matthew 22:1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, “Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.” But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.” Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, “Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?” And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, “Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” For many are called, but few are chosen.’

SERMON The Kingdom of Heaven is like a King who Prepared a Wedding Party for his Son
Pastor Lindsey Carnes

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

God’s creation is filled with color, beauty, and good things. How can we join in celebrating all the good in this world and add to it until the world more closely resembles the kingdom of heaven?

HYMN PH #770 “I’m Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING —Ephesians 5:1-2, NJB

As God’s dear children, then, take him as your pattern, and follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up for us as an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God. Let us offer our gift to the Lord, and so we pray...

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us— Jesus Christ, our Lord. 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 Adding Color to Our Pulp
As you leave the Sanctuary you are invited to add color to the paper pulp.

HYMN PH #307 BH #420 "God of Grace and God of Glory"

CHARGE—Jude 24-25, NIV

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen!

BENEDICTION Whatsoever You Do Hal H. Hopson

POSTLUDE

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