



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.

4th Sunday in Lent

March 30th, 2025 10:00 a.m.

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GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT “Let All Who Are Thirsty Come”

CALL TO WORSHIP From Psalm 32 *(Please rise if you are able)*

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

While we keep silent, our bodies waste away through our groaning all day long.

Then we acknowledged our sin to you, and do not hide our iniquity;

when we say, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,”

and you forgive the guilt of our sin.

Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you;

at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.

You are a hiding place for us; you preserve us from trouble;

you surround us with glad cries of deliverance.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy and awe-inspiring God, we come into this time of worship today seeking you, asking for your continued guidance as we journey through this season of Lent together.

Draw us close to you this day and always. Grant us the grace to accept our shortcomings, and may we lean not into the temptations of this world but focus our attentions on you, and you alone. For we pray through Jesus Christ, who came to serve and to save. Amen.

HYMN PH#23 BH #285 “God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”

CALL TO CONFESSION:

God is not content to simply return or restore us to who we once were but calls us to growth and new life. In faith and in humility let us confess the sin that entraps us.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

We pray “lead us not into temptation” but we find ourselves caught in the web of our sinful ways. We protect ourselves with a thin veneer of faith that keeps us comfortable. We resist vulnerability shielding our hearts from the brokenness of others. We mock those of differing opinions believing we alone know the truth. In your mercy Lord, forgive us and strengthen us to hear your true word and live into your commandment to love one another. Guide us to see you clearly and to reflect your word in the world. We ask this in the name of our Savior, your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE “O Lord Hear My Prayer”**DECLARATION OF PARDON**

We do not make ourselves righteous. Our righteousness comes through faith in Christ. As we confess our shortcomings, God does not turn away from us but draws us near. Hear the Good News of the Gospel, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Illuminate the shadows of our hearts and cast out the darkness of our sinful world. Warm our hearts with the light of your word and awake our minds to your truth through these scriptures. Amen.

EPISTLE LESSON: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we no longer know him in that way. **17** So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. **20** So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake God

made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

ANTHEM “With Every Breath”

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 15:1-3; 11b-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 So he told them this parable:

11 Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. **16** He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. **17** But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ’ **20** So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ **22** But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, **24** for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. **27** He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.’ **28** Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. **29** But he

answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. **30** But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ **31** Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. **32** But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

SERMON Temptation to an Overly-Righteous Faith Pastor Lindsey Carnes

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Which character do you like the most in the Story of the Prodigal Son? Which character challenges you the most? What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this story?

HYMN PH #821 “My Life Flows On”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING *(Please be seated)*

Because of the Lord’s graciousness toward us, we now take time to return our gifts to the Lord in the form of our tithes, time, gifts, and offerings. Let us give generously. Let us pray...

Lord, in your goodness and mercy, grant that these gifts would further your Kingdom and proclaim your Gospel in our neighborhoods and communities. May these offerings bear witness to your love, grace, mercy, and compassion for all the world. 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

HYMN PH #649 BH #280 "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"

CHARGE

Let the scales of our eyes fall away.
Let us look honestly upon ourselves,
And honestly upon God.
And Walk in the Light of the Gospel.

BENEDICTION "Stay With Us, O Lord Jesus Christ"

POSTLUDE

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