



## 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.

3rd Sunday of Easter, Communion  
May 4th, 2025 10:00 a.m.

### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

#### PRELUDE

#### WELCOME Rom. 6:9

Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

#### INTROIT

#### CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 30

4 Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,  
and give thanks to his holy name.

**5 For his anger is but for a moment;  
his favor is for a lifetime.**

**Weeping may linger for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning.**

10 Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!  
O LORD, be my helper!"

**11 You have turned my mourning into dancing;  
you have taken off my sackcloth  
and clothed me with joy,**

12 so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.  
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Lord of life, submitting to death, you conquered the grave. By being lifted on a cross, you draw all peoples to you. By being raised from the dead, you restore to humanity all that we had lost through sin. Throughout these fifty days of Easter we proclaim the marvelous mystery of death and resurrection. For all praise is yours, now and throughout eternity. Amen

**HYMN PH #805 BH #181 “Come Sing to God”**

**PROCLAIMING THE WORD**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

God our helper, show us your holy ways and teach us your paths.  
By your Holy Spirit open our minds that we may be led in your truth and taught your will. Then may we praise you by listening to your Word and by obeying it. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 61:1-3**

**1** The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and release to the prisoners,  
**2** to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
**3** to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

**ANTHEM**

**NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Acts 8:26-39**

**26** Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.)  
**27** So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship **28** and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. **29** Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” **30** So Philip ran up to it and heard him

reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” **31** He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. **32** Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,  
so he does not open his mouth.

**33** In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

**34** The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” **35** Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. **36** As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” **38** He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. **39** When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more and went on his way rejoicing.

**SERMON**      Blessing Diversity

Reverend Jim Foster

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Do you sometimes feel on the outside of things?  
How has, or may, God bless your uniqueness?

### OFFERING

**13** Turn, O LORD! How long?

Have compassion on your servants!

**14** Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,  
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

**15** Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us  
and as many years as we have seen evil.

**16** Let your work be manifest to your servants  
and your glorious power to their children.

**17** Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us  
and prosper for us the work of our hands—  
O prosper the work of our hands!

*(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.*

### **INVITATION TO THE TABLE** —from Matthew 11:28-29, NRSV

Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy  
burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from  
me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your  
souls.”

## **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.*

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Isaiah 53

Who has believed what we have heard?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

2 For he grew up before him like a young plant

and like a root out of dry ground;

he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,

nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by others;

a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity,

and as one from whom others hide their faces

he was despised, and we held him of no account.

4 Surely he has borne our infirmities

and carried our diseases,

yet we accounted him stricken,

struck down by God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions,

crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the punishment that made us whole,

and by his bruises we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have all turned to our own way,

and the LORD has laid on him

the iniquity of us all.

Let us turn our hearts back to our Lord. Let us pray...

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

**God of birth, God of joy, God of life, we come to you as a people hungry for good news. We have been so dead to miracles that we have missed the world's rebirth. We have preoccupied ourselves with pleasures and have overlooked the joy you offer us. We have been so concerned with making a living that we have missed the life you set among us. Forgive us, gracious God. Open our eyes and our hearts to receive your gift; open our lips and hands to share it with all humanity in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**DECLARATION OF PARDON:—Micah 7:18-20, NRSV**

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of your possession? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and unswerving loyalty to Abraham, as you have sworn to our ancestors from the days of old.

**COMMUNION****PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

All holy God,  
 how wonderful is the work of your hands! When sin had scarred the world,  
 you entered into covenant to renew the whole creation.  
 As a mother tenderly gathers her children, as a father joyfully welcomes his own, you embraced a people as your own and filled them with longing  
 for a peace that would last and for a justice that would never fail.  
 Through countless generations your people hungered for the bread of freedom. From them you raised up Jesus, your Son, the living bread, in whom ancient hungers are satisfied. He healed the sick, though he himself would suffer; he offered life to sinners, though death would hunt him down. But with a love stronger than death, he opened wide his arms and surrendered his spirit.

On the night before he met with death, Jesus came to the table with those he loved. He took bread and praised you, God of all creation. He broke the bread among his disciples and said, “Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is my body, given for you.” When the supper was ended, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to you, God of all creation. He passed the cup among his disciples and said,

“Take this, all of you, and drink from it.

This is the cup of the new covenant sealed in my blood for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this in remembrance of me.”

Gracious God, as we offer you our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we commemorate Jesus, your Son.

Death could not bind him, for you raised him up in the Spirit of holiness and exalted him as Lord of creation.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **SHARING THE FEAST**

#### **COMMUNION PRAYER:**

Now, Master, you are letting your  
servants go in peace as you  
promised;

for our eyes have seen the salvation  
that you have made ready in the sight of the nations;  
a light of revelation for the Gentiles and glory for your people Israel.  
Through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

## **BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD**

### **TABLETALK WITH GOD’S CHILDREN**

**HYMN PH #450**      “Be Thou My Vision”

**CHARGE**    Isaiah 61:1-3

- 1 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and release to the prisoners,
- 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn,  
3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

**May the Peace of Christ be with you...**  
**...And also with you!**