



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.

5th Sunday of Easter

May 18th, 2025 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

John 13:34 Jesus said: I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

INTROIT “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 24

1 The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it,

**2 for he has founded it on the seas
and established it on the rivers.**

3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

**4 Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false
and do not swear deceitfully.**

5 They will receive blessing from the LORD
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

**6 Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HYMN PH #610 “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

CALL TO CONFESSION

We cannot come before God unless we are first honest with ourselves about who we are, about the mistakes we make, and about how well or poorly we care for others. In this spirit, let us offer our prayers to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws.

We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. O Lord, have mercy upon us.

Spare those who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent, according to your promises declared to the world in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And grant, O merciful God, for his sake, that we may live a holy, just, and humble life to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON—Psalm 130:3-4, 7-8, NRSV

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

O Israel, hope in the LORD!

For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

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: Leviticus 19:9-18

9 “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. **10** You shall not strip your vineyard bare or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.

11 “You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. **12** And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the LORD.

13 “You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. **14** You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

15 “You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. **16** You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the LORD.

17 “You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. **18** You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

ANTHEM “Cornerstone”

Nancy Casteel (Soloist)

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Acts 7:1-7;44-53

Stephen’s Speech to the Council

1 Then the high priest asked him, “Are these things so?” **2** And Stephen replied:

“Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, **3** and said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you.’ **4** Then he left the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to this country in which you are now living. **5** He did not give him any of it as a heritage, not even a foot’s length,

but promised to give it to him as his possession and to his descendants after him, even though he had no child. **6** And God spoke in these terms, that his descendants would be resident aliens in a country belonging to others, who would enslave them and mistreat them during four hundred years. **7** ‘But I will judge the people whom they serve,’ said God, ‘and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.’

44 “Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the wilderness, as God directed when he spoke to Moses, ordering him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. **45** Our ancestors in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the peoples whom God drove out before our ancestors. And it was there until the time of David, **46** who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **47** But it was Solomon who built a house for him. **48** Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says,

49 ‘Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.

What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is the place of my rest?

50 Did not my hand make all these things?’

51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. **52** Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. **53** You are the ones who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.”

SERMON

“A Man Full of Faith and Holy Spirit”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Have you ever had to defend your faith in God?

Have you learned to reach out to others because of your faith in God and Jesus?

HYMN PH #282 “Come Down, O Love Divine”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

With joy, we offer our gifts to God as a sign of our deep devotion and covenant faithfulness. In joy, let us pray...

O Lord our God, the author and giver of all good things, we thank you for all your mercies, and for your loving care over all your creatures. We bless you for the gift of life, for your protection round about us, for your guiding hand upon us, and for the tokens of your love within us. In all these things, O heavenly God, make us wise for a right use of your benefits, that we may render an acceptable thanksgiving unto you all the days of our lives, through 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 “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts”

Bell Choir

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.

RECOGNITION OF 40 YEAR PLUS MEMBERS

It's not often in our society that we get to celebrate people who have been members of one church or one community for decades. But today—as part of our annual tradition we recognize those saints in our midst who have been members of this church family for 40 years or more. I'd like to ask those individuals to stand if they are able.

****Clap****

You may be seated. You may have noticed they're wearing a red carnation—please remember to say thank you to them for their involvement in this community.

Let us pray:

We thank you, Lord God, For brave and believing people Who have been faithfully sharing your message in this place. Keep us close together in your Spirit, Breaking bread in faith and love. Remembering all those Christians who have gone before us May we follow as they followed, In the way, truth, and life of Christ Jesus The head of the church. 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 #14 “For the Beauty of the Earth”

CHARGE from Revelation 21:1-6

“See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them and be their God;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.”

Follow in the way of the one who says, “See, I am making all things new.”
Seek to make all things new.

BENEDICTION “How Great Thou Art”

POSTLUDE

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