



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.

15th Sunday after Advent
September 21th, 2025 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 113

1 Praise the LORD!

Praise, O servants of the LORD;
praise the name of the LORD.

**2 Blessed be the name of the LORD
from this time on and forevermore.**

3 From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the LORD is to be praised.

**4 The LORD is high above all nations
and his glory above the heavens.**

5 Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,

6 who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?

**7 He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,**

**8 to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.**

9 He gives the barren woman a home,
making her the joyous mother of children.

Praise the LORD!

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, it is in this morning that we grasp the overwhelming reality of the sacrifice You made in giving Your child to us as Savior and Redeemer. In this hour, healing Master, let us feel Your presence within us. Send Your spirit into our community, so that together we may be the embodiment of the love You gave us in Jesus. For it is in His name that we offer this prayer. Amen.

HYMN PH #375 “Shall We Gather at the River”

CALL TO CONFESSION: —from Psalm 32:1-6

The psalmist testifies: 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 I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Sovereign God, we know You to be the God of endless possibilities. We know, if we choose to recall, the countless times that You have turned defeat into victory, and sorrow into joy. And we know too of the deep yearnings You have for us as Your children. But so often, Master, we are seduced and captured by a world that places limits on You and has us serve the principalities and powers of this age. Have mercy on us., Creating God. Forgive us for the countless times we have denied the reality of the new life You offer. Liberate us with Your loving grace and empower us for the ministry of justice and peace to which You call us. This we pray in hope and faith in the new life that awaits us, even now. Amen.

ACCLAMATION OF PARDON (Lyrics) Nothing to fear

In the depths of your sorrow, I wept beside you.

When you walked through the shadow, I drew you near.

Yesterday, today, tomorrow, always the same,

I am the Lord, I am the Lord

**And there is nothing to fear, nothing to fear,
there is nothing to fear, nothing to fear, for I am with you always.**

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,
and the depths of the rivers, shall not overwhelm.

When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned:

I am the Lord, I am the Lord.

**And there is nothing to fear, nothing to fear,
there is nothing to fear, nothing to fear, for I am with you always.**

What can separate you from My perfect love?

What can separate you from My perfect love?

What can separate you from My perfect love?

Do not fear. Do not fear. Do not fear.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION—based on Psalm 27:11, Psalm 119:33-34

Teach us your way, O Lord, and lead us on a level path. Teach us, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then we will keep them to the end. Give us understanding, and we will keep your law and obey it with all our hearts. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 41:6-13

6 Each one helps the other,

saying to one another, “Take courage!”

7 The artisan encourages the goldsmith,

and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, “It is good,”

and they fasten it with nails so that it cannot be moved.

8 But you, Israel, my servant,

Jacob, whom I have chosen,

the offspring of Abraham, my friend;**9** you whom I took from the ends of the earth and called from its farthest corners,

saying to you, “You are my servant;

I have chosen you and not cast you off”;

10 do not fear, for I am with you;

do not be afraid, for I am your God;

I will strengthen you; I will help you;

I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

11 All who are incensed against you

shall be ashamed and disgraced;

those who strive against you

shall be as nothing and shall perish.

12 You shall seek those who contend with you,

but you shall not find them;

those who war against you

shall be as nothing at all.

13 For I, the LORD your God,

hold your right hand;

it is I who say to you, “Do not fear,

I will help you.”

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: [Video] Revelation 2:8-11

SERMON Churches of Revelation: Smyrna

Pastor Robbie Carnes

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Has God ever granted you courage to face something very scary? How did that feel?
 Who can you share this memory with?
 What are you afraid of right now?

HYMN PH #792 BH #394 “There is a Balm in Gilead”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

With gladness, let us present the offerings of our life and labor to the Lord.

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

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions—signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us— Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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 #730 BH #364 “I Sing a Song of the Saints of God “

CHARGE

The grace of Christ attend you, the love of God surround you, the Holy Spirit keep you now and forevermore.

BENEDICTION PH #443

“There is a Redeemer”

POSTLUDE

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

Flowers on the Communion Table in celebration to Rita Vadasz-Miller and Gene Miller on 20 wonderful years of marriage!

SAVE THE DATE! Senior Luncheon October 11th

Be sure to visit the sign-up table before you leave on Sunday mornings! There are many opportunities to volunteer and serve.

Closed Captions during worship are available on the TV located in the Sanctuary Annex. Please see Mike Cupp or Kelly Sunman-Davis with questions.

Do you use the T Coil hearing loop? If you are having trouble with the system, please info Mike Cupp.

Children’s Sunday School and Worship Information

Class begins at 10AM and children return to worship after the sermon where they are welcome to either sit with their parents or with Miss Tina. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tina Ritchie

Kitchen Training - Kitchen training after church on Sunday, September 28. Sign-up in Fellowship Hall.

Save the Date! Congregational Life Lecture & Information Series

Join us for an engaging series of talks on important life topics. Desserts and coffee provided! Come learn, connect, and share in meaningful conversation.

When: 6:30 PM start time

Where: Fellowship Hall

Upcoming Topics: September 25 – Donating Your Body to Science - Presented by Roger Zollars

In one year's time we collected 27 pounds of pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald house! I will turn them in and we will continue to collect them. Thank you to all that helped. **Mary Zimbler.**

Please join us for the CROP Hunger Walk after church on September 21st @ 12:30pm. CROP raises money globally to fight hunger with 25% going to local programs including:

St. Jude's School Lunch
Fenton UMC Food Pantry
F.I.S.H. of Linden

We will start with a potluck lunch on Elizabeth Street with the walk following at 1:15pm, and free Uncle Ray's ice cream after the walk. Sign up in fellowship hall to bring a salad to the potluck, and please join the FFPC team using the following link bit.ly/FFPC

Sunday Evening Study - Beginning September 7 from 5PM – 6:15PM in the Conference room of 4square Tax, 205 Lincoln St, Fenton. Led by Larry Zimble, this group will study the book “Desire of the Everlasting Hills” by Thomas Cahill

Amazon comment: “In his subtle and engaging investigation into the life and times of Jesus, Thomas Cahill shows us Jesus from his birth to his execution through the eyes of those who knew him and in the context of his time—a time when the Jews were struggling to maintain their beliefs under overlords who imposed their worldview on their subjects. Here is Jesus the loving friend, itinerate preacher, and quiet revolutionary, whose words and actions inspired his followers to journey throughout the Roman world and speak the truth he instilled—in the face of the greatest defeat: Jesus' crucifixion as a common criminal. Daring, provocative, and stunningly original, Cahill's interpretation will both delight and surprise.”

From the introduction: “And what is the “desire of the everlasting hills?” What could be the meaning of this phrase, taken from the blessing of Jacob on his son Joseph [Gen 49:26], the last of the patriarchs? Is not the desire of the everlasting hills that they be saved from their everlastingness, that something new happen, that the everlasting cycle of human cruelty, of man’s inhumanity to man, be brought to an end?”

The book has 7 chapters and 320 pages. We finish when we finish; we recess for special holidays and Larry’s travel schedule. ALL ARE WELCOME

Tuesday Adult Bible Study

Join us on Tuesday Mornings at 11am as we study the prophecies in the Book of Daniel. Written by Ray C. Stedman and Kathy Rowland we will be spending 9 weeks looking at the strange, marvelous and sometimes scary prophesies of Daniel. While unneeded, workbooks are available for about \$14

(<https://joyofliving.org/product/prophecy-in-the-book-of-daniel-adult-study-english/>)

Fall 2025 Women's Bible Study - Sermon on the Mount

We're starting fresh this fall with transformed hearts and a solid Bible study from Jen Wilkin. Friends are welcome! Come and learn from Jesus, just as His disciples did.

Most of us have only encountered the Sermon on the Mount in fragments, considering its subdivisions as complete teachings in their own right—a study on blessedness; a reflection on the Lord's Prayer; a discussion of religious devotion, money, ambition, and relationships.

What if we navigated these three chapters in Matthew as they were originally heard? What if we read them as one cohesive, well-ordered message, intended to challenge us to think differently about what it means to be a follower of Jesus?

This study invites you to do just that.

Wednesday Mornings | Sept 10 - Nov 5 | 10am - 12pm | Conference Room

Facilitated by Tina Ritchie

OR

Thursday Evenings | Sept 11 - Nov 6 | 6:30 - 8pm | ZOOM only

Facilitated by Dee Dee Ainsworth

Register to tina@ffpc.org

No one in this world should be hungry. That's why the CROP Hunger Walk is more than just a yearly gathering. It's a movement that's 55 years strong, made up of compassionate people in more than 500 communities across the U.S.

The steps we take – and the funds we raise together – will provide life-saving support including emergency food and resources, along with the seeds, tools and programs that will help families feed themselves in the future.

Apple Umpkin Sunday – October 26

During Coffee Hour there will be food made of apples or pumpkins. Bring a friend to church and join for wonderful food following. Please sign up to provide your favorite food.

“An Event so Good It's Scary” – Friday, October 31

This is a city-wide trick or treat event. Workers are needed to hand out candy and candy donations are needed. Please sign up!!!