



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 in Lent

March 8th, 2026 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP Inspired by Psalm 19

If you ask the sky who God is,

the sky will tell you of God's reach.

If you ask the day who God is,

the sun will tell you of God's warmth.

If you ask the night who God is,

the moon will tell you of God's comfort.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God".

Are you listening?

We are listening! We will sing of God's glory.

Let us worship Holy God.

OPENING PRAYER from the Syrian Orthodox Tradition

Rise up, O children of light, and let us give glory to the Lord who alone can save our souls. O Lord, as you withdraw sleep from the eyes of our body, grant us wakefulness of mind so that we may stand before you in awe and sing your praises worthily. We pray this, in the powerful name of Jesus our Savior. Amen.

HYMN PH #321 BH #442 "The Church's One Foundation"

CALL TO CONFESSION

In our scripture for today, Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter said, "You are the Messiah." Have you ever wondered if his voice faltered when he answered? Did he respond loudly and with confidence, or with a tentative whisper? We'll never know. The text doesn't provide those details. But we can trust that, no matter how we speak to God, when we speak, God is listening. So friends, join me in the prayer of

confession. Whether you whisper these words or speak them with conviction, may you trust that our gracious and merciful God is listening with love. Let us pray together:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Holy God, Some days, we are quick to declare your goodness. Like Peter, we see you in our midst and we are confident in our faith. Other days, we are distracted and uncertain, desperate for answers.

Forgive us for losing sight of you.

Some days we are quick to trust your blessings—

trusting that we are called, that we can make a difference.

Other days, our praise falls silent and doubt creeps in.

Forgive us for losing sight of ourselves.

We know that fear and doubt are part of the journey of faith. But for the days when we are far from you and far from ourselves, we ask for your tender grace.

Pull us closer toward you. Remind us of the mountaintop moments of our faith.

Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Friends, Whether you speak to God in a whisper or with clear conviction, with questions or with answers, with hope in your heart or with doubt in your throat— God will always listen with love and mercy. So rest in this good news: regardless of how loudly you live your faith—you belong to God. You are loved. You are claimed. You are forgiven. Speak that good news with confidence. Amen.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Word, For generations people have bowed their heads, have prayed the Psalms, have asked for your presence in their lives. For generations people have whispered, “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable and pleasing to you, O God.” For generations we have gathered here, we have quieted our minds, we have prayed to feel your presence in our midst. So once again, just as the generations before, we turn our hearts to your Word. Still our busy minds so that we might truly comprehend what you have to say to us today. With joy and hope we pray, amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Psalm 19

- 1 The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
- 2 Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
- 3 There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

4 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,
 5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
 and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
 6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens
 and its circuit to the end of them,
 and nothing is hid from its heat.
 7 The law of the LORD is perfect,
 reviving the soul;
 the decrees of the LORD are sure,
 making wise the simple;
 8 the precepts of the LORD are right,
 rejoicing the heart;
 the commandment of the LORD is clear,
 enlightening the eyes;
 9 the fear of the LORD is pure,
 enduring forever;
 the ordinances of the LORD are true
 and righteous altogether.
 10 More to be desired are they than gold,
 even much fine gold;
 sweeter also than honey
 and drippings of the honeycomb.
 11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
 in keeping them there is great reward.
 12 But who can detect one's own errors?
 Clear me from hidden faults.
 13 Keep back your servant also from the insolent;
 do not let them have dominion over me.
 Then I shall be blameless
 and innocent of great transgression.
 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
 be acceptable to you,
 O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

ANTHEM

A Time for All Things

The Chancel Choir

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” **14** And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” **15** He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” **17** And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” **20** Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

TABLETALK WITH GOD’S CHILDREN

SERMON Praise the Mount

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Jesus asked the disciples, “But what about you? Who do you say that I am?” Church, what do you say?

Jesus is a hand reaching out in the storm, the voice of truth spoken over us, and love without walls. Jesus is justice for the weary, healing for the hurt, and welcome for the stranger. Jesus is teacher, Messiah, and friend— with me on the mountain and beside me in the valley. Jesus is a star in the night, and the love that knows my name.

Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?”

Like Peter, we say, “Jesus, you are the Messiah, son of the Living God.”

HYMN PH #81 BH #446 “Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken”

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

Let us give as we are each called by God to give: gratefully and as an act of worship to the Living God.

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

Let us pray together, Mighty God and Father, you overwhelm us with your great mercy. At the time of our greatest need you surprised us with your wondrous love. Jesus offered his life for us to remove our dreadful curse. As you draw us into this renewing relationship of love, may we respond with gratitude as we offer the substance of our souls to continue the ministry of Christ. For his name and glory we pray and present our gifts. 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.

HYMN PH #625 BH #467 "How Great Thou Art"

CHARGE

Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place, may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve. May you look for God in every face. May you find the courage to get out of the boat, to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith. And when the world falls apart, may you hear God's voice deep within, saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid." You are called. You are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news.

BENEDICTION Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

POSTLUDE

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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, Jason Allen 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.

Book Binders - Our next meeting will be held at the home of Maureen Utt on Tuesday, March 10th at 2:00 pm. We are reading Miss Morgan's Book Brigade by Janet Skeslien Charles. Join us as we gather for meaningful discussion and fellowship. New participants are always welcome! Regrets only at 810-701-2336.

Church Potato Bake After Worship- Sunday, March 15th

Join us right after worship for a delicious Baked Potato Bar Fellowship! We'll have hot baked potatoes ready and plenty of tasty toppings to enjoy. Bring your favorite topping to share if you'd like — and invite your family and friends!

This event is open to the public, and everyone is welcome. Come for worship, stay for food, fellowship, and fun! Please sign up in the fellowship hall to bring toppings. We can't wait to see you there!

Lenten Simple Meals at St. Jude's Episcopal Church- Join us Thursdays through Lent at 5:45 PM, beginning February 26th, for a simple meal of soup, salad, and bread, followed by thought-provoking study and discussion. This Lent, we will be watching and reflecting on Season 5 of The Chosen. All are welcome! Sign-up in Fellowship Hall

Keep an eye out for your next "Invite a Presbyterian" opportunity! In a season when resources feel stretched, community becomes even more precious. Consider extending a friendly invitation to someone new or someone different—whether it's lunch with friends, a movie, a museum visit, or a concert outing. When one of us shows up, it may be the gentle nudge someone else needs to feel included and encouraged. Small invitations can build strong fellowship.

The FFPC Session invites the congregation to join them in pray about the following: Peace and Unity for our country. Wisdom and Understanding for our leadership. The many life transitions that our church and our members are experiencing. Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

Easter Lily Orders - Help decorate the sanctuary for Easter by ordering an Easter Lily. Order forms are available in the church office and in Fellowship Hall. All orders and payments must be submitted to the church office by March 29, 2026.

You may dedicate a lily in honor of or in memory of a loved one. The names of those honored and remembered will be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

Please plan to pick up your lily after Easter Sunday Worship on April 5, 2026. Thank you for helping make our sanctuary beautiful as we celebrate the joy of Easter!

Tuesday Adult Bible Study - Join us on Tuesday Mornings at 11am, we will be watching and discussing season 5 of The Chosen

Spring Women's Bible Study - James: What You Do Matters by Margaret Feinberg

Wednesdays, April 8 – May 6 from 10am – noon in person facilitated by Jenn Wenzel & Peggy Fulcher

OR

Thursdays, April 9 – May 7 from 6:30 – 8pm via zoom only facilitated by Dee Dee Ainsworth

Penned by the beloved half-brother of Jesus, James sounds more like Jesus than any other New Testament writer. The short letter is packed with doable and down-to-earth teaching, golden treasures of wisdom, and a timely call for believers everywhere to grow into maturity.

Join beloved Bible teacher Margaret Feinberg, in a rich, fresh study of James that will uncover the genuine markers of real faith, equip you to break free from old patterns by developing new practices, and discover how the Father of heavenly lights treasures you.

Participant book is \$13 – Register by March 29

For more information, see Jenn Wenzel or contact the church office.

Growing Personally & Spiritually - A faith-based journey toward peace, balance, & joy

Are your relationships—personal or spiritual—feeling a little off course? Do you long for more joy, clarity, or calm in your daily life? Are you wondering where your path is leading?

GPS offers a compassionate, faith-centered space to pause, reflect, and reconnect with what truly matters. Together, we'll explore life's challenges, celebrate its blessings, and support one another as we grow in confidence, grace, and peace.

Where: Fenton First Presbyterian Church – Youth Room

When: Mondays, ongoing from 5:30–6:30 p.m., beginning January 5, 2026

Why: To nurture our spiritual and personal growth, learning to navigate life with steadiness and joy.

How: By reading thoughtful texts, sharing personal experiences, and walking alongside one another in faith and friendship.

Come as you are! Bring your questions, your hopes, and your heart!

Sunday Evening Study - Led by Larry Zimbler, this group, meets from 5:00PM – 6:15PM in the Conference room of 4square Tax, 205 Lincoln St, Fenton.

February 29—May 17th We will explore the gift of hymns. Hymns, like the Psalms, are prayers meant to be sung. Though much of the original music of the Psalms has been lost, the tradition of singing our prayers continues through the hymns of the Church. Every hymn carries a story. Behind each one is a heart speaking to God—often shaped by joy, sorrow, struggle, or deep faith. When we sing a hymn, we step into that prayer and make it our own.

Each Sunday through May 17, we'll look at four to six hymns selected by members of our group, many of them beloved favorites. In our time together, we will:

- Listen to a beautiful performance
- Learn the story behind the hymn
- Reflect on what the hymn is praying
- Sing it together

We'll pause for the summer and return on September 13 to begin studying the New Testament book of Hebrews. We hope you'll join us as we sing, learn, and grow together.

Deacon's Easter Project! Help our local refugee families enjoy a blessed Easter!

You can make a difference by donating Easter basket items for the children and/or making a monetary donation toward grocery gift cards for each family. Your generosity will help bring joy, celebration, and practical support to families in our community this Easter season.

If you'd like to contribute or learn more about what items are needed, please reach out to an available Deacon. Thank you for helping us share hope and kindness this Easter!

Donations are due by March 29th, 2026. Drop Off Bin Is Located In The Entryway