

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.

23rd Sunday after Pentecost
November 1st, 2026 10:00 a.m.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP from Matthew 23:1-12
Jesus said to obey the law, but do not act like the teachers of the law and the Pharisees who sit in Moses' seat.
Let us practice what we preach. We will not tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other's shoulders, refusing to lift a finger to help.
Jesus said to stop seeking the approval of humans.
We will not make our phylacteries wide and our tassels long. We will leave the banquet seats of honor and the important synagogue seats to others. We will not burn in our hearts to be greeted with respect and be called 'Rabbi' in the Marketplace.
Jesus said that the 'greatest among you will be your servant'.
We have one Teacher and we are all sisters and brothers. We have one Father in Heaven and we are all one family. We have one Messiah instructor, so let us humble ourselves and let our Living Lord exalt us in His time!

OPENING PRAYER —based on Ephesians 1:3-18
All glorious God, we give you thanks: in your Son, Jesus Christ, you have given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms. You chose us, before the world was made, to be your holy people, without fault in your sight. You adopted us as your children in Christ. You have set us free by his blood; you have forgiven our sins. You have made known to us your secret purpose, to bring heaven and earth into unity in Christ. You have given us your Holy Spirit, the seal and pledge of our inheritance. All praise and glory be yours, O God, for the richness of your grace, for the splendor of your gifts, for the wonder of your love.

HYMN PH #438 "Rock of Ages"

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION—based on Psalm 25:4-5, NRSV
Lord God, help us to know your ways; teach us your paths. Lead us in your truth, and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation; for you we wait all day long. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 43

1 Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people;
from those who are deceitful and unjust,
deliver me!
2 For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because of the oppression of the enemy?
3 O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.
4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy,
and I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.
5 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Ephesians 2:1-10

2 You were dead through the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. **3** All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, doing the will of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else, **4** but God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us **5** even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us

up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— [9] not the result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.

TABLETALK WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

SERMON Ephesians: The Gospel Story Pastor Lindsey Carnes

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

REFLECTION
Paul uses two words—transgressions (active rebellion) and sins (anything contrary to God's plan). Which one do you tend to recognize more easily in your own life?

OFFERING

DEDICATION OF PLEDGES
We believe in an Eternal God, whom the generations have worshipped in beauty and holiness. We worship our God for God's faithfulness and love and for the extravagance of God's grace and the wise tenderness of God's creativity which is evident all around us. Instead of a world that contains only the useful and the expedient, God has created a world of extravagant beauty and joy. Instead of creating people who are motivated only by work, God has created a people with a capacity for rejoicing and worship. Instead of enduring our anxious hoarding and grasping, God calls us to generosity and hope. Instead of a community that is an expression of only what is practical and utilitarian, God's church is a community whose purpose is worship, whose nature is love, whose energy is joy, and whose life is filled with glad thanksgiving. We thank God for encouraging us to create beauty that nurtures the spirit, through art, music, and acts of compassion and mercy. We thank God that we are called to be a part of God's story as it is played out here in Fenton Presbyterian Church. For the eternal circle of giving and receiving that is our life in God, we offer our praise and dedicate our pledges to the 2027 year of ministry that God has granted to us in the name of Jesus, our Christ.

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

Let us pray: Gracious Giver of our days, whose giving knows no ending: From your rich and endless supply, we bring these pledges and offer ourselves in thankful praise to you, O God. We return a portion of what you have first entrusted to us—our time, our talent, our energy, and our financial gifts.
Receive these commitments, O God. Bless them, multiply them, and use them to advance your work, care for your people, and spread your love in this congregation and throughout the world. Establish the work of our hands, and grant us the faithfulness to live out what we have promised. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Will the Ushers please come forward.

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY (Communion Servers Come Forward)
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 Ephesians 2:13-22
It was only yesterday that we outsiders to God's ways had no idea of any of this, didn't know the first thing about the way God works, hadn't the faintest idea of Christ. We knew nothing of that rich history of God's covenants and promises in Israel, hadn't a clue about what God was doing in the world at large. Now because of Christ—dying that death, shedding that blood—we who were once out of it altogether are in on everything.

14-15 The Messiah has made things up between us so that we're now together on this, both outsiders and insiders. He tore down the wall we used to keep each other at a distance. He repealed the law code that had become so clogged with fine print and footnotes that it hindered more than it helped. Then he started over. Instead of continuing with two groups of people separated by centuries of animosity and suspicion, he created a new kind of human being, a fresh start for everybody.

16-18 Christ brought us together through his death on the cross. The Cross got us to embrace, and that was the end of the hostility. Christ came and preached peace to you outsiders and peace to us insiders. He treated us as equals, and so made us equals. Through him we both share the same Spirit and have equal access to the Father.

19-22 That's plain enough, isn't it? You're no longer wandering exiles. This kingdom of faith is now your home country. You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You *belong*

here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. God is building a home. He's using us all—irrespective of how we got here—in what he is building. He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now he's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. We see it taking shape day after day—a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home. Welcome to Christ's table!

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

When we come into the holy presence of God, our own humanity is laid bare. When we stand in the living presence of truth, our own falsehood is revealed. People of God, let us acknowledge who we are and ask our ever-present God to forgive us

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Awesome and compassionate God, you have loved us with unfailing, self-giving mercy, but we have not loved you. You constantly call us, but we do not listen. You ask us to love, but we walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed. God of grace, as you come to us in mercy, we repent in spirit and in truth, admit our sin, and gratefully receive your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON: —Isaiah 44:21-22, NRSV

Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you, you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. Remember the faithful love of the Lord and be at peace.

COMMUNION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING
WORDS OF INSTITUTION
SHARING THE FEAST

COMMUNION PRAYER: from Ephesians 3 16-21
Lord of Heaven and Earth we pray, according to the riches of your glory, that you might grant that we may be strengthened in our inner being with power through your Spirit. We pray that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith, as we are being rooted and grounded in love. [18] I pray that we may have the power to comprehend and to know, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that we might be filled with all your fullness.

[20] Now to you who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, [21] to you be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

HYMN PH #475 "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

CHARGE from Ephesians 1:17-23
May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you and the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

May the Peace of Christ 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.

Congregational Meeting on November 8 - A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 8, to elect elders and deacons. All members are encouraged to participate as we prayerfully select those who will help lead and serve our church family.

🎲 **GAME NIGHT - Saturday, November 7th at 7:00 PM -** Come for the games, stay for the fellowship! Join us for a relaxed evening filled with games, laughter, and great company. Whether you're a board game enthusiast, love a good card game, or simply enjoy spending time with others, there's a place for you at the table! Feel free to bring a favorite game and a snack or beverage to share! We'll have plenty of games available too, so just come ready for a fun evening together! Invite a friend, bring the family, or come on your own. Everyone is welcome, and we'd love to see you there!

Hanging of the Greens - Sunday, November 22

Help us prepare our church home for Advent! Join us on Sunday, November 22, as we decorate for the season and enjoy food and fellowship together. Whether you enjoy arranging decorations or simply lending a helping hand, there's a place for you. Come help make our church warm and welcoming as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth!

Annual Turkey Dinner – Gather around the table with us for one of our favorite traditions! Our Annual Community Turkey Dinner returns on Saturday, November 14th. Enjoy a delicious traditional turkey dinner and a wonderful evening of fellowship with friends, family, and neighbors throughout our community.

> **November 14th, 2026, Doors open at 5:30 PM, with grace at 5:45 PM. Tickets are $18 for adults and $7 for children 10 and under. To-go dinners will also be available!**
>
> **Volunteers Needed!** Many helping hands make this special community tradition possible! Whether you can help with preparation, serving, or cleanup, we would love your support. Please sign up to volunteer in Fellowship Hall. Every helping hand makes a difference! **For tickets or additional information,** please contact the church office at 810-629-7801. Come hungry, bring a friend, and help us share the warmth of community!

Tuesday Knitting Group - Weekly at 1pm in the church library. Come join us for a cozy and creative time at our Tuesday Knitting Group! Whether you're an experienced knitter or just getting started, all are welcome. Bring your current project—or simply come to learn, share ideas, and enjoy friendly conversation together. It's a wonderful way to relax, connect, and create something meaningful. We'd love to have you join us!

Men's Study - 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 6 pm. Come join a group of men of all ages from our church and community, including some of our newest attendees, for a discussion on faith, philosophy, the bible, and personal testimony. The topic is freeform and may follow the book "Casket Empty." This group will meet at the fellowship hall to walk to a nearby establishment, weather permitting, or order food in when weather is inclement. Please contact jonwenzel@gmail.com for more details.

Tuesday Adult Bible Study Tuesdays from 11:00 AM–12:15 PM in the Conference Room. Based on the book, "The Good Shepherd, A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament" by Dr. Kenneth E. Bailey, we are exploring the theme of the Good Shepherd through the Old and New Testaments striving to learn more about the character of God and the actions of Jesus in our world. Whether you've attended before or are thinking about joining us for the first time, we'd love to have you. The coffee is always hot, and the conversation is always fruitful!

Sunday Evening Adult Study - Exploring the Ten Commandments
05:00 PM (Most Sundays) Conference Room at 4Square Tax & Accounting - 205 Lincoln St., Fenton, MI. We are taking a closer look at the **Ten Commandments**—their history, meaning, and how they apply to our lives today. **Everyone is welcome!**

Growing Personally & Spiritually (GPS) - Mondays • 4:00–5:00 p.m.
Are you longing to grow deeper in your faith while finding greater emotional and spiritual health? Join us as we begin our new study, ***Journey of the Soul: A Practical Guide to Emotional and Spiritual Growth*** by Bill and Kristi Gaultiere. Together we'll discover how God meets us in every season of life, helping us move beyond feeling stuck and continue growing in grace, hope, and Christ-centered living. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact the church office so we can order your copy of the book. Participants are also welcome to purchase their own copy if they prefer.

Flowers for Worship - If you would like to provide flowers for worship, we invite you to bring flowers from your garden or purchase a bouquet from a grocery store or florist of your choice. If you plan to provide flowers, please contact Heidi Roberts in advance.

FFPC Book Binders Book Group - "Get lost in a good book…and find great friends along the way!" Join us on the **second Tuesday of each month at 2:00 PM** as we gather to discuss a new book and enjoy great conversation with fellow book lovers! Expect thoughtful discussion, a few laughs, and plenty of book-loving fun. Contact Mary Zimbler for more information.

🎶 **Come Make a Joyful Noise! -** Our Handbell Choir and Chancel Choir are back, and there's always room for more! Join us on Wednesday evenings for music, fellowship, and the joy of making music together. Whether you're a longtime musician or simply looking for a new way to get involved, we'd love to have you join us!

🔔 Handbell Choir: 6:30–7:15 PM
🎵 Chancel Choir: 7:30–9:00 PM

GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays
Sunday, November 22 • 11:30 AM • Youth Room
The holidays can be especially difficult when you're grieving the loss of someone you love. Join us for GriefShare's *Surviving the Holidays*, a time of encouragement, support, and practical guidance for navigating the season. Wherever you are in your grief journey, you are welcome. You don't have to face the holidays alone. **Please sign up in Fellowship Hall.**

As part of our annual Giving Tree collection, Bookbinders will be collecting new and gently used books, along with socks, hats, scarves, underwear, pajamas, and clothing in infant sizes through size 16. The Giving Tree will be up in the new narthex beginning November 22. Thank you for sharing warmth and love with children in need! ❤️

2027 Lay Reader sign-up - We are seeking Lay Readers for next year, please consider. The sign-up is in Fellowship Hall, on the information table. If you have questions, contact Debera Bard or Ceil Ladd.

ATTENTION ALL USHERS - As you line up to come forward for the collection, PLEASE lower your voices. You can be heard from the back rows in the Sanctuary, also the people on the balcony can hear you. Thank you, Worship Committee

Rise Against Hunger Meal Packaging Event
Sunday, November 15, 2026 • 4:00 PM
Hosted by Fenton Ministerial Group
St Jude's Episcopal Church
106 E Elizabeth St., Fenton, MI

Grab a hairnet, find your station, and get ready to make an impact! Join neighbors from area churches for a fun, fast-moving experience as we package nutritious meals for communities around the world. Our fundraising goal is $4,100, and donations begin October 11. Whether you volunteer, make a financial contribution, or both, you can help provide the nourishment people need to thrive. Register to volunteer and help us turn compassion into action!

https://tinyurl.com/mryb9by7

Financials through 10-30-26
Offerings $8.737.32 Fiscal $257,878.65
Expenses $5,464.52 Fiscal $202,259.76