



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 7th, 2021 10:00 a.m.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*Those who are able are encouraged to stand.

*Please join on the bold

DRESSING THE TABLE

WELCOME

A MOMENT FOR HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP

***CALL TO WORSHIP** 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 their 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.**

OPENING PRAYER

Seeker of the lost, hear our plea for help. Demolish the barriers that separate us. Lead us out of the dark death of sin into the living light of your presence. For we crave the peace that comes through perfect accord with you. Save us Lord and give us life. Amen.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

All that we have learned and think we know has not brought meaning to our lives; the brokenness of our world needs your peace; our pain-shattered hearts need your healing: and so you speak to us through your word. May our hearts be open. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 63:7

7 I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Sovereign God, Our Great Creator
Sayuri & Hiro Iwaki, Rebekah Ratza

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: 1 Corinthians 13:4

4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant.

SERMON Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

1. List the numbers of ways you have experienced the kindness of the Lord in your life. What effect does that have on how ready you are to show kindness to others?
2. In our culture, what does kindness look like in practice? Is there any difference between kindness as fruit of the Spirit, and just ordinary “being nice”?

***HYMN** Pray with me at Gethsemane
Dr. Ray Shuster

OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH IS FROM THE Study Catechism of PCUSA

Question 25. Did God need the world in order to be God?

No. God would still be God, eternally perfect and inexhaustibly rich, even if no creatures had ever been made. Yet without God, all created beings would simply fail to exist. Creatures can neither come into existence, nor continue, nor find fulfillment apart from God. God, however, is self-existent and self-sufficient.

Question 26. Why then did God create the world?

God's decision to create the world was an act of grace. In this decision God chose to grant existence to the world simply in order to bless it. God created the world to reveal God's glory, to share the love and freedom at the heart of God's triune being, and to give us eternal life in fellowship with God.

OFFERING

May we be foolish enough in our generosity that we might become wise enough to know that our gifts will bless others - the hungry, the lonely, the searching, the weak. Let us offer our gift to the Lord!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the gospels tell us that on the first day of the week, the day on which our Lord rose from the dead, he appeared to some of his disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

Come, then, to the joyful feast of our Lord.

***CALL TO CONFESSION:**

As we prepare to partake of the Lord's table, let us come with a spirit of humility, repentance, and thanksgiving. Let us examine our thoughts, our actions, our motives, and our attitudes toward others.

ENCOUNTER

(A time for silent and personal prayer...)

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (In Unison)

O Living God, we stand in need of your grace, strength, and mercy. Have mercy and forgive us for our shortcomings. Teach us to love you above all else, even above our ambitions.

Help us to remember our responsibility to our families and our neighbors, our stewardship to you, and the work you have given to our hands. Guide us. Awaken us. Energize us for the massive tasks that lay ahead.

As we eat of the bread, which represents your body, which is the True and Living Bread, open our eyes to recognize the intimacy that you yearn to share with us.

As we drink the cup, which represents Christ's blood shed for us, we thank you for the new covenant, "Love one another," which is written on our hearts. Help us to live it out. Let us rejoice because our names are written in the book only you can open and close.

Tender Father, may your great sacrifice of redeeming love in Jesus, renew us for loving service and for sacrifice for others. Let us worship here and leave refreshed to serve. Let us not take of this bread and wine if we do not intend to serve others as you have served us

***DECLARATION OF PARDON:**

May this Lord's Supper energize every area of your lives and enable you to transcend your circumstances, your inadequacies, and your enemies.

God who sees you fully, touches and empowers you so that your lives will be remarkable testimonies of God's presence and a witness to God's faithful forgiveness.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we, your unworthy servants, give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

*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.*

COMMUNION

We praise you, O God, who made us your people through the death and resurrection of your Son, our Lord.

Abide in us, and throughout this service, our Savior and Redeemer. Fill us with the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, so that when we leave this place, we will be forever changed.

We celebrate this feast in obedience to Christ's example and mandate.

(—based on 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

[as the minister breaks the bread]

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

“Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

[as the minister lifts or pours the cup]

In the same way he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord until he comes.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.—Matthew 5:6

Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives us all our sins and heals all ours diseases, who redeems our lives from the pit and crowns us with love and compassion.—Psalm 103:1-4, NIV

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

***HYMN #35** “Praise Ye the Lord The Almighty”

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

May the Peace of Christ be with you...

...And also with you!