

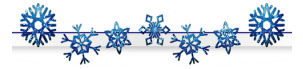


WINDOW

JANUARY 2025

The Monthly Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church, Athens, OH

January



January 2025

Sunday, January 5th Epiphany

10:30 a.m. - Communion
During Worship

Sunday, January 12th Baptism of the Lord

10:30 a.m. - Worship
Installation of New Elders
and Deacons During
Worship

Sunday, January 19th 2nd Sunday After Epiphany

10:30 a.m. - Worship
1:00 p.m. - Lindley Inn
Hymn Sing, The Plains

Sunday, January 26th 3rd Sunday After Epiphany

10:30 a.m. - Worship

Annual Report Deadline

by Wednesday,
January 15th

Annual Reports In Sanctuary

Sunday,
January 26th

Annual Congregational Meeting February 2nd

*We are a Christian commu-
nity of faith
that shares the love of God
with all people every-*

From the Pastor....

Here at the end of 2024, I listened to a familiar hymn one evening, the refrain of which captures Paul's words from Romans: "God will take care of you." But it is not hard to relate to experiences of exclusion, indifference, disenfranchisement, hate, humiliation, and separation. It is natural to long to believe that God is really and truly for you, and that in the words of the hymn that I heard that God will take care of you. Most people have experienced some sense of separation from God, whether by others or even by one's own self.

The mission of First Church has been to stand in the swirling vortex of almost any and every form of human pain, violence, despair and hopelessness that you can imagine — homelessness, unemployment, psychiatric disorders, racism, drug abuse, and the like, and standing there to proclaim without equivocation, "God is for you!" Our mission partners here in Athens, a college lunch program, our support of national and international outreach programs, and other ministries underscore our commitment to that pastoral proclamation: "God is for you, and nothing can separate you from God's love!"

These words come from Paul's famously debated comments about God's election, foreknowledge, calling, and predestination. But instead of theological speculation about who is excluded by these mysteries, his focus is pastoral consolation about who is included in God's love. His message is uncompromising: "nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:39).

I count at least twenty things that threaten to undo us mentioned by Paul — suffering, weakness, frustration, bondage to decay,

ignorance, trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword, death, life, angels, demons, powers, the present, the future, heights, depths, and, as if he might have overlooked some tragedy, he includes "anything else in all creation." None of these can separate you from God's love. You can personalize your own list, too: parents, children, your boss, employees, colleagues, foolish choices, sins, public failure, private disappointments, anxieties, school, a bad business deal, and on it goes. Paul is adamant and uncompromising: nothing can separate you from God's love.

When you consider Paul's own Christian journey you realize that his unequivocal language is not pious cliché, not mere metaphor, but a deeply held conviction born of his personal experiences. A few days after his conversion God promised him that he would suffer much for His kingdom (Acts 9:15–16), and that "prison and hardship" awaited him in every city (Acts 20:23). And so, it did. Brutal treatment, constant harassment, and strong opposition were his regular fare (1 Thess. 2:2, 2 Cor. 7:5, 1 Cor. 4:11). In the book of Acts, Luke records at least eight murder attempts on Paul's life (Acts 9:23–24, 9:29, 14:5–7, 14:19, 20:2–3, 21:31, 23:12, and 25:3). Paul compared himself and the first apostles to sheep headed to a slaughter; people in last place; public spectacles; dishonored fools; vagrants who were hungry, thirsty, homeless, and in rags; and in those memorable words, "the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world" (1 Cor. 4:8–13). Is anyone weak without my being weak, he asked?

Ultimately, he was martyred in Rome. Through all of this, Paul remained insistent:

(continued from page 1)
 nothing in all of creation can separate you from God's love.

2025 is for a discerning heart that believes that God is unconditionally for all of us, and in so believing accepts God's acceptance.

When you feel alienated, separated, and estranged, by others or by the tapes playing in your own head, when you sense that everyone and everything is against you, it is easy to forget Paul's declaration that God is unequivocally for you. Authentic Christian discernment looks beyond personal failures, social stigmas, and cultural conventions to affirm that despite your sense of alienation, nothing in all of creation can separate you from the love of God in Christ. My prayer for us in

~Pastor Rob



FPC Church Elders:

- 2025 Adrienne Nagy, Andrew Stuart, and David Tees
- 2026 Sharon Huge, Linda Parsons, Jane Woodrow, and Hugh Woods
- 2027 Harvey Ballard, John King, Susan Loughridge, and Sandy Nesbitt



FPC Board of Deacons:

- 2025 Alan Boyd, Mary Costello, Kim Jordan, Becky Pankratz and Ellen Sostarich
- 2026 Helen King, Joyce Mullins, Harold Robison, Riley Smoot, and Ayse Suer
- 2027 Carolyn Allen, Margaret Bourke, Bobbi Conliffe, Lois Harkins, and Carol Perry

January 2025 Worship
First Reading (Liturgist) - *Italics* - Sermon Text

Sunday, January 5th Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
 Ephesians 3:1-12
 **Matthew 2:1-12*

Sunday, January 12th Baptism of the Lord
Isaiah 43: 1-7
 Psalm 29
 Acts 8:14-17
 **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22*

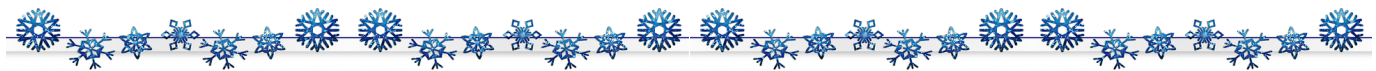
Sunday, January 19th Water or Wine?
Isaiah 62:1-5
 Psalm 36:5-10
 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
 **John 2:1-11*

Sunday, January 26th Today is the Day
 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
 Psalm 19
 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
 **Luke 4:14-21*



Epiphany Carol Walk Sunday, January 5th

On Sunday, January 5th, the Southeast Ohio Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will sponsor an Epiphany Carol Walk for the 12th day of Christmas. Beginning at 3:00 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, moving on to St. Paul's Catholic for a 3:30 p.m. program, and concluding at Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal with a 4:00 p.m. program. Each location will feature a twenty minute program of organ and other music. Playing at First Presbyterian will be Paul Barte, Joyce Beauvais, and Janice Robison. All are welcome to come to any or all of these programs.



Christian Education and Other Upcoming Events at FPC

A big THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the Advent and Christmas Eve services. We hope everyone has a healthy new year.

Women's Book Study

Fridays at noon via Zoom

Join the Women's Book Study on Fridays at noon via Zoom starting on January 10, 2025 as we discuss *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Henri Nouwen. For more information or to join, please contact the church office at 740-593-3351 or Joan Nease at christianed@athensfpc.org.

Court Street Clothesline Donations for Winter Needs

The Christian Education Committee is inviting everyone to donate new winter gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves for our church's winter clothesline. A collection box will be placed in the Fellowship Hall. The warm clothes will be hung from a clothesline along the railing on the Court Street side of the church for people in need during cold weather.

Children's Sunday School

Grade school and pre-school children are invited to attend Sunday School during Worship. If you have questions or would like to help with a class, please contact Barb Martin at barbaramartin729@msn.com or phone the church office at 740-593-3351. Lesson plans and materials will be provided for all volunteer teachers. Class sizes are usually small in number.

Upcoming Events

Souper Bowl Sunday - Youth for Hunger - February 9, 2025

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday - March 5, 2025

Palm Sunday and Holy Week - April 13-19, 2025

Easter Sunday - April 20, 2025





Poinsettias
Decorating the Sanctuary at Christmas
by the following:

Carolyn Allen in Memory of: *Husband, Bill Allen and Parents, Oscar and Lydia Berger*

Sue and Alan Boyd in Memory of: *Sam and Norvyn Nighswander, Howard and Evelyn Boyd, victims of war*

Mary Costello in Memory of: *Husband, Walter Costello, and Parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Boone*

Lillian Dinos and Family in Memory of: *In Memory of: Husband, Nick Dinos and children Chris and Janet*

Patricia Frost in Memory of: *Mother, Mildred Woodburn, Brother, Kenny Woodburn, and Husband, James Frost*

Martha Johnson in Memory of: *Husband, David Johnson*

The Jordan Family in Memory of: *Mary K. Jordan*

Florence McGeoch and Family in Memory of: *Lyle McGeoch, and Lyle Andrew McGeoch*

Scott Malcom in Memory of: *Wife, Marjorie Ann Malcom, and Their Son, Bill Malcom*

A. Louise and Darryl Markland in Memory of: *Bob and Marie Steele, and Claud and Emma Markland*

Robert and Barbara Martin in Memory of: *Parents, Robert and Marilyn Martin, and Robert and Doris Bell*

Danny Moates in Memory of: *Nephew, Robert Franklin Moates*

Emil and Adrienne Nagy, and Sisters in Memory of: *Son and Brother, Peter Nagy*

Sandy and Neal Nesbitt in Memory of: *Parents, Art and June Lyman and Sons, and Merle and Mark Nesbitt*

Debi Orr-Roderick and David Roderick in Memory of: *Don and Dolly Orr, and John and Martha Roderick*

Carol and Debbie Perry in Memory of: *Parents, Mildred and Worley Perry*

Carol and Debbie Perry in Memory of: *Grandparents, Daisy and Hurley Pidcock, and Margie and Garnet Perry*

Harold and Janice Robison in Memory of: *Parents, Clarence and Georgia Fowler, Chester and Ethel Robison*

Janice Robison in Honor of: *Rev. Robert and Jackie Salmon*

Mike and Ellen Sostarich in Memory of: *Daughter, Rebecca Sostarich Schultz*

Mike and Ellen Sostarich in Memory of: *Parents, John and Louise Hatton and Edward and Sophia Sostarich*

Andrew Stuart and Harvey Ballard in Honor of: *Parents, Eleanor and Wayne Stuart, and Marilyn and Harvey Ballard, Sr.*

Ayse Suer in Memory of: *Husband, Dr. Gursel Suer*

E. Hugh Woods in Memory of: *Wife, RoRy Ryan Woods, and Son, Martin Ryan Woods*

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 - Carla Boyle
Dorothy Bryant
- 4 - Mike Boyle
- 6 - Nicholas Jagers
Amy Key
- 7 - Timothy Jagers
- 8 - Paul Mullins
Davis Ann Kramer
- 10 - Annica Strickmaker
- 11 - Brad Graves
Debra Rentz
- 13 - Abbey Heinrich
Bethany Jagers

- 18 - Keith Wiens
- 21 - Emma Hauser
- 22 - Bobbi Conliffe
Susan Loughridge
- 25 - Matthew Brient
Eric Yehl
- 26 - Theodore Broadbent
- 27 - Wanada Baxter-Potter
- 28 - Amy Bianco
- 30 - Anna Wright

- 2 - Lloyd and Barbara Culbertson
- 15 - Ernest Bastin and Dorothy Bryant
- 27 - Mike and Carla Boyle

Mission Outreach Committee Diaper Project Continues

The Mission Outreach Committee continues the Diaper Project for some of the Mission Partners here in Athens: Athens County Food Pantry and Cat’s Cupboard. There is a box in the Narthex for your donation of diapers. Many donate food, but the Committee realizes that diapers can be expensive when a person is food insecure.



2025 Pledge Card - Still time to pledge!



AROUND
THE TABLE
SHARING OUR STORIES

2025 Stewardship Campaign

The theme of the FPC 2025 Stewardship Campaign is “Around the Table”

When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. — Luke 24:30-31

Name: _____

Address: _____

PLEASE CHECK AND COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE: [] Below is my pledge amount for the 2025 Budget.

Amount			
Payment Interval (choose 1)	Week	Month	Year

[] I will not formally pledge but will give as I am able throughout the year.

[] Please provide giving envelopes.

PLEASE CONTACT ME ABOUT: [] Making a gift to a FPC Athens Endowment Fund.



Windows ON: FPC Family and Friends

Robert Botzum

Surrounded by his family, Robert John Botzum died peacefully at home on December 2, 2024. He was born in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio on December 9, 1932, son of the late Marie and Fred Botzum.

Bob graduated from Cuyahoga Falls High School in 1950. He fondly recalled spending much of his youth in programs at the Akron Area YMCA, including over ten years as a counselor and staff member at Camp Y-Noah, and later serving in both executive and volunteer roles for the Akron Area YMCA throughout his professional career.

Bob studied sociology at Kent State University where he met his future wife, Janet Shuman. Both Bob and Janet graduated from Kent State in June of 1954. They married the following year and spent two years in Augusta, Georgia, where Bob served in the Army at Fort Gordon, before returning home to Akron.

After several years at the Firestone Park

branch of the YMCA, Bob joined McNeil Corporation where he spent over twenty-five years as a human resources executive. He ended his professional career with development roles at Barberton Citizens Hospital and the YMCA, and as a law firm administrator at Brouse McDowell, LPA.

As long-time residents of Portage Lakes and the Akron community, Bob and Janet were sad to leave many friends behind when they relocated to Athens County, Ohio in 2005, but they welcomed the priceless opportunity to build a new home and watch their only grandchild grow up across the street from them. In addition to the close family ties and memories, Bob enjoyed countless hours viewing birds and other wildlife from the porch of their home throughout his days.

A lover of all things water, Bob owned many boats over his lifetime and could be found water skiing or sailing various portions of the Portage Lakes. Family

vacations and extensive travel during retirement took him to many coastal areas where he developed a keen interest in lighthouses. Golf and snow skiing in the Colorado Rockies filled out a life well-lived.

In addition to his parents, Bob was recently preceded in death by his brother Donn Botzum. Surviving him are his wife of almost seventy years Janet Botzum, son Spencer (Tamara) Botzum, daughter Beth (Jeff) Ferrier, granddaughter Sonya Ferrier (Will Quinn), sister Barbara Goulart, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Bob donated his body to the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine. A memorial service in celebration of Bob's life will be held in Akron, Ohio at a future date. Contributions in Bob's memory can be made to YMCA Camp Y-Noah at gotcamp.org or mailed to Camp Y-Noah, 815 Mt. Pleasant Road, Green, OH 44216.

Windows ON: FPC Family and Friends

Pamela Harvey

Pamela Faye Vander Ark Harvey passed from this world on December 13, 2024 after a brief and courageous battle with breast cancer. She is survived by her spouse Aaron J. Harvey and her son Colvin Bel Harvey, her mother Helen Vander Ark, her brother Marc Vander Ark, sisters Julie Kirven and Jennifer Hayward and nieces and nephews Ella, Libby, Samantha, Ruth, Carson, Jack and Danny. She is preceded in death by her father Sherman Vander Ark.

We remember our dear Pammy and Mom as the embodiment of concern and charity for others, both in her personal and work life. Over the course of the last five years Pam was a tireless caregiver to her mother Helen, who struggled with retinal pigmentosa and deafness. Pam would care

for Helen one week a month in our home and made countless day trips to Akron to make sure Helen was cared for and comfortable.

Pam was very engaged with the local community from the very beginning of her professional career which spanned many local organizations, including roles as Executive Director of the ACCVB, Executive Director of United Appeal, accountant at HAPCAP, Assistant Director of Ohio University Alumni Services, child care specialist at COAD, and since 2020, with the Voinovich School as a grants accountant. She loved her work at the Voinovich School and Ohio University and will sorely miss her colleagues there.

What a short transit we are granted across

this earthly demesne. We will remember Pammy as our favorite soccer mom, my favorite motorcycle passenger, a great cook and baker, an avid follower of all things BritBox, and a lover of the outdoors. She loved to sew and quilt and practice yoga regularly with Linda and Rick and her yoga posse. She loved Liverpool in the EPL, but never as much as #7 on Alexander United.

In her last months she was soothed by walks with her friend Sue and pup Daisy, by trips when strength permitted to discuss new sewing projects with her friend Kathy at the farmer's market, and by frequent conversations with childhood friend Linda.

First Presbyterian Church
9 North College Street
Athens, OH 45701

January 2025



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<https://www.Youtube.com/athensfpc>

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robert E. Martin

Church: Corner of Court and Washington Streets
Office: 9 North College Street

Office Hours: Monday - Friday - 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Clerk of Session: Andrew Stuart

Choir Director: David M. Tadlock

Organist: Janice Robison

Bell Choir Director: Anna Crum

CE Co-Directors: Richard and Joan Nease

Administrative Assistant: Debbie Perry

Church Custodian: Tom Medley

Phone: (740) 593-3351 **FAX:** (740) 593-3352
E-Mail: office@athensfpc.org **Web:** www.athensfpc.org

Worship Service: In person service and can be seen live on YouTube. It is also recorded and under Worship Archives.

Bible Study: Tuesdays at 12:00 Noon in the church library and via Zoom

February 2025 Newsletter Deadline
Tuesday, January 20th

First Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ohio - FPC has occupied its site in the center of Athens, Ohio since 1809. Among the founding fathers was Ohio University's first president, a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Jacob Lindley. Dr. Lindley served this congregation as Moderator and Pastor until 1824. Over the years, thirteen pastors of the church have been either university presidents or members of the faculty. Dr. William Holmes McGuffey, author of the McGuffey's Readers, was called to serve as President of Ohio University and served as pastor of the church in 1839.

Presbytery of Scioto Valley - The Presbytery of Scioto Valley encompasses twenty-six counties in south central Ohio. From Ironton in the south to Ibera in the north: Hanover in the east and London in the west, FPC's presbytery consists of 95 congregations many of them historic where Presbyterians today are carrying on a long tradition of witness and service in their communities. All over FPC's presbytery, Presbyterians reach out to welcome the stranger, sharing the Gospel and God's love as Christ bids us to do.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) - The PC (U.S.A.), with denominational offices in Louisville, Kentucky, has approximately 2.3 million members, more than 10,000 congregations and 14,000 ordained and active ministers. Presbyterians trace their history to the 16th century and the Protestant Reformation. Its heritage, and much of its doctrine began with John Calvin (1509-1564), whose writings crystallized much of the Reformed thinking that preceded him.