

W I N D O W

MARCH 2025

The Monthly Newsletter

of First Presbyterian Church
Athens, OH



March 2025

Sunday, March 2nd
Transfiguration Sunday
10:30 a.m. - Communion
during Worship

Sunday, March 9th
1st Sunday in Lent
Daylight Savings Time
Begins
10:30 a.m. - Rev. Emily
Krause Corzine preaching

Wednesday, March 12th
5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten
Soup and Study

Sunday, March 16th
2nd Sunday in Lent
10:30 a.m. - Worship
Lindley Hymn Sing
1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 19th
5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten
Soup and Study

Sunday, March 23rd
3rd Sunday in Lent
10:30 a.m. - Worship

Wednesday, March 26th
5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten
Soup and Study

Sunday, March 30th
4th Sunday in Lent
10:30 a.m. - Puppets
with Mr. Rogers during
Worship
Pretzel Making During
Sunday School

From the Pastor....

The Word and words matter. We speak because we have been spoken to. And our words do things for good or ill. Even the prophetic literature in the Bible tells us that God's word does not return empty but accomplishes what God intends. Words, divine and human, do things and have an impact. There are probably words still swirling in the hallways of your memory that were said to you years ago by a parent or teacher or coach.

These days, there's so much buzz on college campuses in particular about 'civil discourse' across different viewpoints and diverse backgrounds and beliefs. Our words about and to each other matter and so there's an emphasis on open and respectful discourse because words are potent and never empty.

Universities are worlds of words, but respectful dialogue, discourse, and conversation are key not only at a university, but in everyday life. In the global context of political polarization, international wars, sociocultural conflicts, how and what we speak to one another are critical. Is it civil? Is it humane? Is it holy?

I say holy because in the context of the Gospel there is what could be called 'Spirit speech.' John the Baptist says that there is one coming who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire, which should make us remember the day of Pentecost in Acts where tongues of fire rested on everyone, and all were filled with

the Holy Spirit and began to speak in diverse languages as the Spirit gave them the ability. And when Jesus is baptized and prays, the heaven was opened, the Holy Spirit descends like a dove, and then there is a speech from a heavenly voice. The Spirit ignites holy speech.

Those texts reveal the materiality of spirituality, meaning we don't just engage God with our minds but through all our senses. In the gospel of Luke, it's through feeling the waters of baptism and seeing the descent of the Spirit in the bodily form of a dove, and hearing God's voice. In the book of Acts, the people receive the Spirit after the laying on of hands, that is, physical touch. There is a material reality – not solely a mental one – of experiencing the Spirit. Remember, the Word became flesh--the Incarnation-- through the agency of the Spirit. And one of the key manifestations of the Spirit is through speech from our mouths and tongues.

We read in Psalm 29: "The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness...The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl and strips the forest bare, and in his temple all say, "Glory!" What else can you say to that? Yikes!? When God speaks, it may overwhelm us, for God's Word is never weak. Words do things. And when the Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove, there is a particular kind of Spirit speech that then descends from heaven, from God. The Holy Spirit fire that is over the water declares, "You are my Son.....But it goes a step further.

"We are a Christian community of faith that shares the love of God with all people everywhere."

(continued from page 1)

We hear and know the stories where one may have a child, but that child still be unloved and neglected. This isn't God's story. "You are my Son, the Beloved." 'I love you and nothing will ever separate us because our love is the strong bond of the Spirit. You are my child, and I love you no matter what.' And to conclude his speech, God says, "with you I am well pleased." 'I take pleasure in you. You are a delight and a joy. I affirm who you are. You don't have to do anything special. You are special.'

Spirit speech hovering over waters is intimate language that does something – it includes, it loves, and it affirms. This is what and how God speaks to Jesus at his baptism and says to us when we are baptized in the waters of the Spirit – you are included into the family of God, you are loved by God, and you are affirmed as ones in

whom God finds pleasure.

This can be a challenge in our time when human rhetoric or language has been eroded and used to degrade, denigrate, and dehumanize other people. The speech we so often hear or read about – or perhaps the voices that get the most attention because they get the highest ratings – is not baptismal speech, is not the fruit of Spirit speech, is not often inclusive, loving, or affirming.

Does our speech reflect the Spirit speech of God at baptism and reveal that we are growing into the full stature of Christ, the stature of the anointing of the Spirit? To be honest, even Christians often fail at inclusive, loving, and affirming speech, toward other people. So as we continue in 2025 and look ahead, what voices are you listening to? The voice from heaven or the prevalent iterations of hate on earth? Voices of inclusion, love, and

affirmation or voices of exclusion, fear, and neglect? The voice of the Spirit or the latest breaking news on social media?

'What words will you speak? What kind of world do you hope to create with your words?' As Genesis reveals words around water create worlds and we inhabit the worlds our words create. Thus, 'Will your words be Spirit speech?' Civil discourse is important in our day but so is Spirit speech, especially as followers of Jesus Christ.

~ Rev. Martin



Easter Flower Order Form



Please Include Form With Your Order

Order Deadline-March 30th

Drop order form in the collection plate or mail to the church office at 9 N. College Street.

Each plant is \$12.00, choice is first come-first served, you can specify lily, tulip or hyacinth.

Number of plants you would like to purchase: _____

In memory/honor of _____

Choose:

I will pick up my plants(s) after the service.

I would like deacons to deliver my plant(s) to a church family member.

_____ \$ Amount Enclosed

_____ Name

FPC and Christian Education “Calendar at a Glance”

March 9th - Daylight Savings Time begins - “Spring Forward”

Sunday, March 30th - Mr. Roger’s Day Celebration

Monday, March 20th would have been Mr. Roger’s 97th birthday. Everyone is invited to wear a sweater on Sunday, March 30th to celebrate. The puppets are planning to include at least one of their Neighborhood heroes in the Children’s Moment. Please join FPC family and friends during the worship service in person or on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/@fpcathensoh/streams>) to help celebrate.

Sunday, March 30th - 9:45 a.m. - Pretzel Making

All children and youth are invited to make pretzels before church starting at 9:45 a.m. The pretzels will be baked during worship and then enjoyed during Fellowship Hour.



Women’s Book Study - Fridays at Noon via Zoom

Join Women’s Book Study on Fridays at noon via Zoom 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 office@athensfpc.org or Joan Nease at christianed@athensfpc.org.

Children’s Sunday School

Grade school and pre-school children are invited to attend Sunday School during Worship. If you would like to help with a class, please, contact Barb Martin at barbamartin729@msn.com or phone the church office at 740-593-3351. Lesson plans will be provided for all volunteers. Class sizes are usually small.

Easter Flowers

If you would like to purchase a spring flower (lily, tulip, or hyacinth) in memory of or in honor of someone for Easter Sunday, look for the insert in Sunday bulletins in March or please notify the church office at: office@athensfpc.org; or phone 740-593-3351. Price per flower is \$12.00 and choice of flower is on a first come-first served basis. An insert with “In memory” or “In honor of” will be in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Please specify if you want to pick up the flower after the Easter service or have a Deacon deliver it to a church family member. Please send your check to 9 North College Street, Athens OH 45701, or place it in the offertory plate with “Easter Flower” on the memo line. Deadline to order is March 30th.

The deadline to order flowers is March 31st.

2025 Per Capita Remains at \$44.00

For 2025, the Presbytery of Scioto Valley per capita will remain unchanged at \$44.00 per member. This \$44 is allocated as follows: General Assembly’s share is \$10.84, Synod’s share is \$3.40, and Presbytery of Scioto Valley is \$29.76.

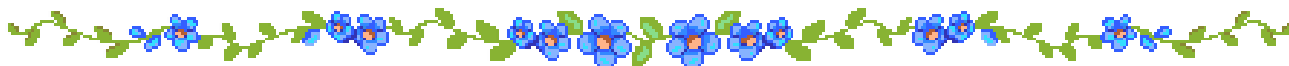


LENTEN SOUP AND STUDY
Wednesday's in Lent 5:30 – 6:00 p.m. - Dinner
6:00 -7:00 p.m. - Program

March 12th, 19th, March 26th, April 2nd, April 9th
Fellowship Hall

As we begin our Lenten journey, we're invited to come fully as we are. The prophet Joel proclaims, "return to God with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12). Your brokenness, joy, gifts, and doubts all belong to God. God wants you, authentically.

God wants you, stripped down and vulnerable. You are enough. Come as you are, with all that you are.



March Birthdays

1 - Joy Creighton	11 - Pamela Schatz
2 - Jeremy Haybron	13 - Stuart Goldsberry
3 - Marley Wright	14 - Marjorie Lloyd
4 - Susanne Boyd	15 - Andrew Eiler
5 - John Gutekanst	20 - Janice Robison
7 - Candy Stewart	21 - Andrew Stuart
8 - Joe Bianco	24 - Marla Longenecker
9 - Nicholas Jordan	Karen Graves
10 - Kali Knudsen	Carol Perry
David Schatz	Stephanie Stephenson
Bailey Stephenson	

26 - Covington Hauser
 28 - Nicholas Brown
 30 - Lindell Holtzmeier
 31 - Emma Bianco

March Anniversaries

2 - Stephen / Kimberly McKinley
 23 - Ben Morrow / Carissa Yablinsky

FPC Church Elders:

2025 Adrienne Nagy, Andrew Stuart, and David Tees

2026 Sharon Huges, 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

Windows ON: Amesville-New England THIS MONTH'S NEWS

Monday Bible School continues to meet from 4 to 5:30 each Monday with 10 to 12 children/youth each week. It's interesting the number of people who look at the pictures from the group programs. People have even talked to Marjie Shew who has a booth at Farmers' Market on Saturdays about the posting. Go to Catherine Hare's Facebook page to see what's happening!

On Sunday, March 16th from 11:30 until 2, a Bean Soup/ Cornbread luncheon will be held, to which everyone is invited. This event will help to raise campership money so that all children and youth who wish to attend Parish Camp at Geneva Hills, Lancaster, Ohio, (June 22-

27) will have that opportunity. The menu includes: soup beans (both vegetarian and with meat), cornbread, beverages and dessert. The cost is by donation. Come and join us for good food and good fellowship!

Blessing Boxes at both the Amesville Elementary School and the church building at New England continue to be a source of food staples and other items for those who can use these items. "Take what you need and share what you can" continues to be the motto for the Blessing boxes.

Mark Hare and Jenny Bent, along with their two daughters Keila and Annika continue to serve in Costa Rica with the

Green Team of the UBL Seminary. Their relationship with the denomination (Presbyterian Church USA) is about to change, but their support will continue from churches and individuals within the Presbytery of Scioto Valley and outside of the Presbytery. Everyone will be informed of the funding change when it has been finalized.

Needed: campers and counselors for Parish Camp (June 22-27, 2025). Contact Catherine Hare (740-448-6401 or harecf@frontier.com) if you are interested or know of someone who is.

Prayer Concern Requests and Visitation

Prayer request slips are available in the narthex. If you would like others in the church to pray for a person or for a concern near to your heart, place the slips in the Prayer Request box in the narthex. If you or someone you know would enjoy a visit from Pastor Rob and a Deacon, or appreciate receiving communion at home, contact the office 740-593-3351 or office@athensfpc.org

Easter Season Events/Services

All Services Available In-person and Via YouTube

Shrove Tuesday Supper - March 4th, 5:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Lenten Soup and Studies - March 12th, 19th, 26th, April 2nd and 9th
5:30 p.m. - Soup Supper
6:00-7:00 p.m. - Lenten Study

Palm Sunday Service - April 13th, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday Service - April 17th - 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Good Friday Service - April 18th - Noon, Sanctuary

Easter Service - Bell Choir and OhioBrass - April 20th, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary



March 2025 Worship

(**Bold, first reading** - *italics, sermon text*)

- March 2 Transfigured
 First Reading Exodus 34:29-35
 Psalm Psalm 99
 Second Reading 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2
 Gospel Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)
- March 9 Rev. Emily Krause Corzine, preaching
 The Life of Faith; the Gift of Trust
 First Reading Deuteronomy 26:1-11
 Psalm Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
 Second Reading Romans 10:8b-13
 Gospel Luke 4:1-13
- March 16 A Mother Hen
 First Reading Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
 Psalm Psalm 27
Second Reading Philippians 3:17-4:1
***Gospel Luke 13:31-35**
- March 23 An open future
First Reading Isaiah 55:1-9
 Psalm Psalm 63:1-8
 Second Reading 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
***Gospel Luke 13:1-9**
- March 30 Not the end of the story
 First Reading Joshua 5:9-12
 Psalm Psalm 32
Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
***Gospel Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**
- First Reading*
***Sermon Text**



Pi day is celebrated on March 14 (3/14) because of the value of pi is the fraction 22/7 or 3.14159... On Pi Day, it is tradition to eat pie. Dessert pies, meat pies, vegan pies, and moon pies. Examples of non-dessert pies in case dessert is not their thing: taco pie, pot pie, quiche, pizza pie, and shepherd's pie.

We are asking you, the members of the church to bring your favorite pie to share during fellowship on Sunday, March 16th. Please include ingredient list. You can let the church office know by Friday, March 14th (Pi Day), which pie you are bringing. We will provide whipped cream and vanilla ice cream.

LOUISVILLE — The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is among more than two dozen plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed Tuesday in response to a rescission of the Department of Homeland Security's "sensitive locations" policy. That policy had restricted Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from conducting immigration raids, arrests and other enforcement actions at houses of worship.

The case, *Mennonite Church USA et al. v. United States Department of Homeland Security et al.*, was filed in federal district court in Washington, D.C., by the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection (ICAP) at Georgetown Law.

Speaking on behalf of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the Interim Unified Agency of the PC(USA), the Rev. Jihyun Oh, said, "The policy statement 'God Alone is the Lord of the Conscience' adopted by the 200th General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) sought to 'articulate the conditions of the civil society necessary to the free and effective conduct of the church's mission and ministry...' because these are a 'vital dimension of Presbyterian witness and responsibility' both for the free exercise of religion in our country and for the common good."

"The policy statement affirmed that 'the free exercise of religion' must be understood to include and protect the right to practice faith in public and private as well as the right to believe....' This is what the current legal action aims to do, to proclaim that the practice of faith is lived out not just in a worship service

but in ministry, including public witness and acts of justice, that are expressions of the worship with the whole of our lives."

"Plaintiffs represent millions of Americans across dozens of denominations rooted in the Jewish and Christian faiths," said Kelsi Corkran, lead counsel for the plaintiffs and ICAP Supreme Court Director. "They have come together to file this suit because their scripture, teaching and traditions offer irrefutable unanimity on their religious obligation to embrace and serve the refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in their midst without regard to documentation or legal status."

"The Department of Homeland Security's abrupt decision to rescind the sensitive locations policy and subject places of worship to immigration enforcement action is a clear violation of Plaintiffs' rights under the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act," Corkran said. "We look forward to presenting our case in court."

"The Bible is clear and unambiguous on the obligation of Christians to welcome, serve and protect the undocumented immigrant in our midst," said the Rev. Carlos Malave, President of the Latino Christian National Network. "We affirm God's mandate to safeguard and nurture all children of God — no exception. We declare our unequivocal opposition to any attempt by the government to interfere with the free exercise of religion by members of our congregations."

Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of Union for Reform Judaism, noted the command to love the stranger is repeated 36 times in the Hebrew Bible "to make

sure we internalize that core commitment." Many congregations host meal programs and ESL classes and provide shelter to people who need it, Jacobs said. "We don't ask, 'Are you an immigrant or native born?' We will not be silent amidst policies that jeopardize our congregations' holy work."

If the court grants the plaintiffs the relief the lawsuit seeks and the administration ignores the court order, "We will certainly continue to advocate for the rights of all people in this country to worship freely," Rowe said. "We will not stop in our efforts to make sure people are safe and can worship freely in those places."

The original Hebrew in Moses' famous quote found repeatedly in Exodus — "let us go" — has at its root, "so we can worship freely," according to Jacobs. "Something so fundamental is at risk," Jacobs said. "We cannot be leaders of faith communities and not speak up and join together in this lawsuit." "This is a beautiful moment of ecumenical strength," Jacobs said. "Let them go, so that they may worship freely."

Presbyterian News Service



Windows ON: AFPC Members and Friends

MARTHA BRATTON

Athens - Former long-time Athens resident Martha L. Bratton, 102, died on February 1, 2025, in Columbus. Born January 7, 1923 in Barnesville, Ohio, Martha spent most of her life in Athens with her veterinarian husband Dr. James K. Bratton (deceased) and two sons Jay Bratton, of McHenry, Illinois (deceased) and Larry Bratton of Dardenne Prairie, Missouri.

A 1940 graduate of Barnesville High School, Martha received her Bachelor's degree in Education in 1944 from The Ohio State University. She was a member of the Athens First Presbyterian Church where she served on the Board of Deacons, was a Sunday School teacher, and a member of the Presbyterian Women's Association. She was a member of P.E.O. DD Chapter and volunteered at the Athens County

Red Cross Chapter and O'Bleness Memorial Hospital. Upon moving to Columbus, she and her husband joined the Worthington Christian Church.

Martha loved bright colors and bright outlooks, and encouraged others to share in her joyful, faith-based approach to life. She is also survived by daughters -in-law Debby Bratton and Cheryl Bratton, 5 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, her sister Gene Williams of Dayton, and many doting nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at 12:30 in the afternoon April 5, 2025, in the multi-purpose room at Worthington Christian Village, 165 Highbluffs Blvd., Columbus.

Burial of cremains will be Saturday April 5, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Athens

Memory Gardens with Rev. Robert Martin officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Nationwide Children's Hospital, 700 Children's Drive, Columbus, OH 43205 or Athens First Presbyterian Church, 9 N. College St., Athens, OH 45701. Please share a memory, a note of condolence or sign the online register at www.jagersfuneralhome.com.



College Lunch continues to nourish body, mind, and spirit at our weekly lunch with students from around the globe.

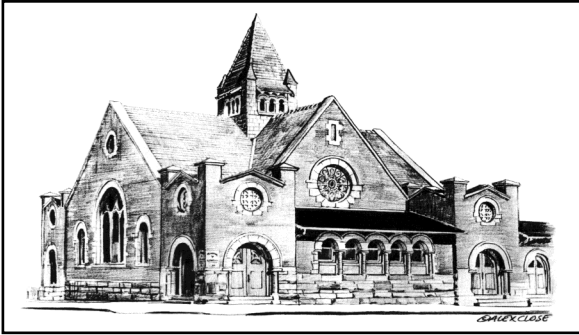
Warm, homemade meals and good company are enjoyed by all who attend and sometimes an impromptu concert breaks out! With our own, Edy Panjaiton on piano and Christian Arevedo Vargas on violin.

Thanks to all who work so hard to make these meals and fellowship possible!



First Presbyterian Church
9 North College Street
Athens, OH 45701

March 2025



Phone: 740-593-3351

Fax: 740-593-3352

Email: office@athensfpc.org

Web: athensfpc.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AthensFPC/>

<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

CE Co-Directors: Richard and Joan Nease

Bell Choir Director: Anna Crum

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

April 2025 Newsletter Deadline
Monday, March 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.