

W I N D O W

JANUARY 2021

The Monthly Newsletter

of First Presbyterian Church
Athens, Ohio

HAPPY
New Year

January 2021

Sunday, January 3rd
Worship via YouTube
(see box)

Sunday, January 10th
Baptism of the Lord
Worship via YouTube
(see box)

Sunday, January 17th
Worship via YouTube
(see box)

Sunday, January 24th
Worship via YouTube
(see box)

Sunday, January 31st
Worship via YouTube
(see in box)

To View the Services by YouTube

Each week FPC creates a worship video - a service featuring organist, small group of vocalists, and Pastor, Rob Martin. FPC's worship services can be found on YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/athensfpc/search?query=sermon>

You can access them directly on the FPC YouTube channel and on the church web site under Worship Archive.

From the Pastor...

As I write, on December 22, 2020, things feel muddled and mired all around me, and within me in my own spirit. We just went through an agonizing and antagonistic national election, and daily COVID case counts in Ohio are on the rise. The economy is in a perilous imbalance and creation itself is crying out in fragility for change. God is calling people of faith (still) to rise up to participate in the works of peace, justice and hope, and our communal ways of being together are more challenged each day. Even as people of hope and light, it is hard to see and feel beyond the next moment, when the world may turn upside down all over again, when all we have to offer are sighs too deep for words.

It is hard to know what will speak to our collective hearts six months on, while holding so much in tension in this present time. The chaos of this year has started to feel almost normative. Almost. I find myself with more questions than assurances. What will turning toward the New Year and Epiphany hold for us, and how will we feel about the promise of next spring, fully one year after we all started adjusting and re-evaluating? To what will we attune our ears and our hearts, as we listen into Lent, and will we allow ourselves the audacity to proclaim, fully, resurrection joy come Easter morning? My questions come from a need to know, a need to root myself in something solid and sure. I have found myself returning to words from the poet Mary Oliver, from Dream Work. They resonate with me for their honesty and authenticity to speak to human experience, but especially to what 2020 has been teaching me.

“And now I understand something so frightening & wonderful—how the mind clings to the road it knows, rushing through crossroads, sticking like lint to the familiar.”

I do find myself bending toward the familiar. But in some confusing sense, I don't know what familiar means any longer. What was at one time so utterly unfamiliar, wearing masks and keeping distance, is now routine. Some system or order has been established in the chaos, and yet it remains undeniably chaos. It is frightening, even as it pulls from me a sense of awe.

I am drawn back to Genesis 1, remembering that God created out of chaos, the “watery abyss,” which had form, function, and purpose. In Hebrew it is *tehom*, meaning deep, sea, or chasm. Theologian Catherine Keller wrote in Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming that in this depth is a fluidity, which generates and regenerates itself and everything else, with no clear beginning or end, in a kind of divine chaos. Within the chaos, the Spirit itself is vibrating; it is “a pulsing, folding force.” She goes on to say of chaotic creation, “What appears first as formless, a dense shadow shot through with spectral afterimages, may be incubating the form you need. Brood a while longer.” . . . It is a bold dare. It is holy invitation.

Not only did God create out of the something of chaos, but God did so with the power of the Spirit. Something I truly need just may be incubating for me, within and around me, if I allow myself

(continued on page 2)

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

(continued from page 1)

to brood, just a little. What might be nurtured if I pause at the crossroads just for a moment? That living voice and collaborative Spirit continues as a pulsing and enfolding force today, drawing all of us in, drawing all of us together.

My hope is that we can continue to feel connected through our church

in the weeks and months ahead. Some of the current chaos will be present still, and perhaps even more familiar, and new disarray may be in the air. But the lengthening days will return; the ground will thaw and warm again. Bulbs will be pushing up from winter slumber. God's breath will be stretching over and through whatever is the current chaos, making something

good. As God's beloved, may we trust in God's creative, collaborative Spirit, and trust God as active in the wild and open spaces, at the chaotic crossroads. And together, may we brood a while longer.

Pastor Martin

Caring For the Congregation

Pastor Rob and the Deacons place a priority on visiting hospitalized members of the congregation. Hospitals no longer provide information on admissions and dismissals. Please notify the church if you know of someone who should be visited in the hospital or while recovering at home or at a nursing facility.

TV Service Broadcast



Complete recordings of the FPC services are available on the church's YouTube Channel. Services may be viewed by using your internet browser or smart TV connected to the internet.

Go to <https://www.YouTube.com/athensfpc>
Select the "Video" tab. Services and other videos are arranged by date.

2021 Per Capita \$37.75

Please consider donating the per capita assessed by the Presbyterian Church USA per member.

The 2021 per capita is \$37.75.

Your donation helps stretch the FPC budget dollars. It can be mailed to the office, or placed in the offering plate.

FPC Church Elders:

- 2020:** Carl Franz, John King, Sandy Nesbitt, and Debbie Perry
- 2021:** John Hauser, Anne Kemmerle, Katie Tadlock, and Keith Wiens
- 2022:** Carolyn Allen, Pamela Harvey, and David Tees

FPC Board of Deacons:

- 2020:** Harvey Ballard, Margaret Bourke, Martha Johnson, and Carol Perry
- 2021:** Nancy Hartley, Marla Longenecker, Danny Moates, and Marge Shelton
- 2022:** Harold Robison, Andrew Stuart, and Patrick Tegge

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 (*listed on page 10*), or appreciate receiving communion at home, phone the office (593-3351) or email: office@athensfpc.org



A Message from Pastor Rob,

The session, at its December meeting voted to concur with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbytery of Scioto Valley to maintain our YouTube worship experience into January. This means that our building will continue to be closed for worship and other church activities.

Let's point out the obvious: This holiday season will no doubt be dramatically different. Despite the fact that we have made the necessary lifestyle adjustments required to stay safe by now, being separated from loved ones during a time of year that is typically the height of socializing and connecting is painful. Whether it's parties, holiday productions, church, or time with loved ones, we're being asked to forego that which makes this time of year so special.

Additionally, we're living in a social and political climate that is unsettling. It's a lot to navigate, and at a time we need each other the most, we're to stay apart. Perhaps a useful approach during this challenge is to challenge yourself. This season will not be like others, but what is still within your control? Staying put with your immediate family may mean fewer obligations, and thus the opportunity to customize the holidays more to your liking. Can a family tradition be creatively modified? Can you do something new this year? The point is, moving through the holidays with creativity and flexibility will allow us to make the most of this challenge, while remembering this is, after all, temporary.



Game Night Friday, January 22, 2021

Everyone had so much fun the first time, we're going to do it again! Last time, there were scavenger hunts, charades, trivia, and Name That Tune game with Christmas carols. Let's see what we can come up with this time. Children under age 7 can also play if they have an adult to help them. Game Night will be between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. on Friday,

January 22nd. Interested, send Barb Martin your email address so that she can invite you to the zoom meeting. (Barb's address is barbaramartin729@msn.com) Be prepared to bring paper and a marker and, maybe, a box.

January 2021 Worship

*Preaching texts

January 3rd	* First Reading Jeremiah 31:7-14 and Psalm 147:12-20 Second Reading Ephesians 1:3-14 and <i>Gospel John 1:(1-9) 10-18</i>	"The Home For Which We Hope"
January 10th	First Reading Genesis 1:1-5 and <i>Psalm 29:1-11</i> Second Reading Acts 19:1-7 and * <i>Gospel Mark 1:4-11</i>	"Baptism of the Lord"
January 17th	First Reading 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20) and * <i>Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18</i> Second Reading 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 and <i>Gospel John 1:43-51</i>	"Known and Found"
January 24th	First Reading Jonah 3:1-5, 10 and <i>Psalm 62:5-12</i> Second Reading 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 and * <i>Gospel Mark 1:14-20</i>	"A Father's Loss"
January 31st	First Reading Deuteronomy 18:15-20 and <i>Psalm 111:1-10</i> Second Reading 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and * <i>Gospel Mark 1:21-28</i>	A New Teaching"



Windows ON: Fellowship - College Lunch Alternative

CAT'S CUPBOARD COMPLETES FALL SEMESTER, WILL RESUME DISTRIBUTION JANUARY 12th

FPC members contributed generously to the Cats' Cupboard project during fall semester at Ohio University. The project provides food and other essential items to students remaining in Athens during CoVid-created breaks in in-person instruction. Distribution to over 400 students ended on December 15th and will resume January 12th.

The project began when the pandemic forced the University to end in-person instruction on campus. Many students were forced to remain in Athens area due to travel and Visa restrictions. They had desperate needs as their jobs shut down temporarily, making it difficult to purchase needed food and supplies. About two-third of the students remaining in town during this time were international, and most were graduate students.

Spearheading the project was a student-led coalition called the International Student Task Force.

Windows ON: Presbyterian Women THIS MONTH

Thank You to all who volunteered and donated to the Ohio University's Cats' Cupboard in support of needy students during this epidemic. Doug Schmaltz, the new Basic Needs Coordinator began work on December 14th. Donations made the beginning of January will be delivered on the 12th. Lee Gregg has been the "connection" for PW.

Sale of Handknit Bells for Tree Decoration has brought in \$320 for two charities: My Sister's Place (local shelter for abused women) and The Nature Conservancy (protecting and preserving God's creation). Lillian Dinos and granddaughter Bryn "connected" to make the project possible.

Contributions include many FPC members involved previously in providing free Thursday lunches for college students along with Peace Corps volunteers and residents of the Elmwood Place neighborhood on Athens east side.

Church family members contribute in basic two basic ways: bringing items or sending checks to the church office. Wendy Toadvine shops for items on the "needs list", and Helen King, along with Alan and Susan Boyd, help get the items to the Court Street (fourth floor) entrance to Baker Center on Tuesday mornings (9:00-11:00) a.m. Contributors are asked to bring items to the church office partly because the Baker Center entrance is crowded and has limited parking space.

Monetary donations received to date have totaled \$955.00. Checks should be made out to FPC, with "Cats' Cupboard" in the memo line. Those who contribute food

Blankets for the Homeless can use the PW's help to knit or crochet 7"x9" rectangles which will be joined together to make warm and colorful blankets for the homeless. Leftover yarn can be used, and any size needle you like to make the dimensions (#7 was suggested). Garter stitch (all plain knitting) or any pattern you like is acceptable.

Joy Creighton is coordinator for the project if you have questions. Mary Jane Black, an expert knitter, was active in helping before her illness and death on November 12th. All PW members miss her, and give thanks for her faithful service as leader of PW Wednesday Circle, CWS Blanket Fund every

and other items should submit the items in bags or boxes that are easy to transport. Baker Center has limited space for storing items that require refrigeration.

Several people have expressed sincere gratitude for the Cats' Cupboard project and FPC's contribution to it. In particular, one doctoral student said the project represented much more than meeting a need for money and supplies. The student said this provided a much-needed feeling of hope and belief in humanity. That, in turn, ignited a sense of positivity and motivation that helped the student successfully complete an arduous comprehension exam for the doctorate.

If you have questions, please contact Lee Gregg by phone or email – 740-591-7714, tleegregg@gmail.com.

*First Presbyterian
Church helping
neighbors in need.*

February, and volunteer in many of FPC/PW missions. She was remembered in the FPC Blue Christmas service on December 21st, a light in everyone's lives who shared her creativity and brought those who knew her encouragement and joy.

Blessing for New Year

*May we find peace,
trusting that God will be
present in all new beginnings,
giving us guidance
and hope.*

Amen.



Windows ON: Church Support - Stewardship STEWARDSHIP 2021

Giving to the Church is a practice of faith. Giving helps us. God does not need our money, even though giving is an act of worship that God desires. Giving to God helps us reaffirm God's goodness, in expressing gratitude, and in demonstrating our faith. Giving to God brings us closer to God.

The truth about God, as we've been taught through the years, is that God is generous. God gave to us...God's

only son. God gave so that we would know something of God's amazing grace and generosity. We give because God gave and continues to give. We give back what God first gave us.

As we move into our Commitment season later this month, please be mindful of what First Presbyterian means to you. You are part of something bigger than yourself. Together we can do so much to

work towards God's promised day. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of your giving to FPC in 2021. Your church very much appreciates your continued support.

*Connect,
Reconnect,
Stay Connected*

2021 Pledge Card

*Connect,
Reconnect,
Stay Connected*

2021 Stewardship Campaign

The theme of the FPC 2021 Stewardship Campaign is "Connect, Reconnect, Stay Connected."
**"Resilience: we are strong. Shoulder to shoulder, keep moving on."
 Resilience: make a new plan. Stand up again and say, "Yes we can!"**
(Resilience from Justice Choir Songbook)


Name: _____
Address: _____

PLEASE CHECK AND COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE: [] Below is my pledge amount for the 2021 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.
 [] How to accomplish a lasting gift to the church.



Lindley Hymn Sing

Several FPC volunteers made suggestions for keeping in touch with our friends at Lindley Inn.

1. With Pastor Rob and Jane Baker's help a note card has been designed, as suggested by Danny Moates, to deliver to each resident, expressing our concern for their health and well-being, and saying that FPC and the Hymn Sing Volunteers have missed them for the regular monthly hymn sings.
2. Kevin Morgan made a 12x18 poster (framed), to be placed in the Activity Room near piano

REJOICE ,GIVE THANKS, AND SING! 🎵 Until we can meet to sing together~~~~

Volunteers of First Presbyterian Church

3. Lillian Dinos took a CD of St. Olaf Choir's Favorite Hymns to be played during the half hour of the regular 3rd Sunday monthly meetings.

The Volunteers hope these few gestures might fill a spiritual void and sense of community that everyone is missing during this epidemic.

"God is our strength and song." Isaiah 12:2

**Windows ON: FPC Member and Former Member
ROBERT KAPPES and JERRY SLOAN**



Robert G. "Kap" Kappes, FPC member, passed away November 26, 2020 in Athens, OH.

He was elected to the OU Athletic Hall of Fame and to the Miami University Cradle of Coaches.

He was born in Cleveland, OH to the late John and Winifred Seale Sloan.

Kap attended Western Hills High School and Miami of Ohio University where he excelled at his studies and as a member of the varsity football team.

Kap is survived by his wife of 70 years Jo; children, Steve (Kathleen), Peggy Rupp (Bruce), Linda Librizzi (Ted); ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Jerry enjoyed two successful careers—Public relations executive at Ford Motor Company and American Motors Corporation and then as a professor in the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.

At Miami, Kap met his wife Jo and they married shortly after graduation. He was a teacher and football coach at Western Hills High School. In 1958, Kap joined the football coaching staff at Ohio University as an assistant coach and as the interim head coach in 1978 until he retired in 1993.

He was buried on November 30th in Memory Gardens in Athens.

He was a devoted family man and loved by many. While in Athens, he and wife, Jeanne, were members of FPC. While at FPC, they established the Sloan Christian Education New Covenant Fund.

Remembrances in honor of Kap may be made to the Ohio University Football Program.

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Jerry L Sloan, former FPC member, passed away December 10, 2020.

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 3 – Carla Boyle  
Dorothy Bryant
- 3 – Mike Boyle
- 6 – Nicholas Jagers
- 7 – Tim Jagers
- 8 – Paul Mullins  
Davis Ann Kramer
- 10 – Annica Strickmaker
- 11 – Brad Graves  
Debra Rentz

- 13 – Abbey Heinrich  
Bethany Jagers
- 16 – Rita Oberholzer
- 18 – Charlene Culbertson  
Keith Wiens
- 21 – Emma Hauser
- 22 – Bobbi Conliffe  
Susan Loughridge
- 23 – Patricia Palmer
- 25 – Matthew Brient  
Dick Robe  
Eric Yehl

- 27 – Wanada Baxter-Potter
- 28 – Amy Bianco
- 30 – Anna Wright

**JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

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

**Kroger Rewards Program - Join Today!**

First Presbyterian received \$80.80 from 17 households Krogers for May-July, 2020 - JUST FROM YOUR GROCERY SHOPPING and using the Rewards Program! A total of sixteen families used the rewards program for FPC for those months. Won't you join others in the program and earn \$\$ for FPC just for doing your shopping at Krogers, at NO cost to you!

**How to register?** Go to: [www.krogerrewardsprogram.com](http://www.krogerrewardsprogram.com) to establish your account.

Next - click the button for "Ohio" and then scroll down to the bottom and click the "enroll" button.

You are required to have an email address and create a password.

You will need your 12 digit Plus Card number that can be found under the bar code on the back of your Plus Card.

Once you have an account established you may need to click "My Account" and then again click "Edit Kroger Community Rewards."

**If you registered last year—YOU MUST REGISTER EVERY YEAR!** To link your account, use AFPC's Kroger non-profit number [NPO] 84190 or select First Presbyterian Church from a drop down list. Any questions? Phone Krogers - 1-800-KROGERS. *[Your Plus Card can be linked to only one non-profit charity.]*



## Mike Ferguson | Presbyterian News Service

LOUISVILLE - A Synod of the Northeast webinar explored why such texts as the 13th and 22nd psalms are “in your face” and “I” psalms that give voice to anyone who prays them, said the Rev. Dr. Beth Tanner, a vice president, dean of Academic Affairs and the Rev. Dr. Norman and Mrs. Mary Kansfield Professor of Old Testament Studies at New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey.

“We talk about the psalms and put them in the mouth of David, or ‘the psalmist,’” she said, but that “blunts our ability to use the psalms. This intercessory person keeps us from having a full-throated conversation with God ... Everyone gets to be an ‘I’ in the psalms - the king, president, pastor, synod leader,” as well as the people in the pews. “We all stand before God in the psalms,” Tanner said.

“They allow the people to speak their truths to their power,” said the Rev. Eric Thomas, the interim pastor at Siloam Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, New York. “Where in the world are you, God? The God who is sovereign is big enough to hold the ‘where in the world are you?’” The psalms are unique, Tanner said, in that they’re the only words of the people to God and, at the same time, are Scripture. “They were given to us by God, and we in return give the words back to God,” she said. Many are feeling blue this Christmas season, and Thomas said he’s felt “sangry” lately — both sad and angry. “Christmas in New York has been removed from us because of safety precautions,” he said, including holiday traditions such as taking a crowded subway to visit the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree or attending a Pops concert at Lincoln Center.

Tanner said the pandemic “has exposed the myth of America’s happy machine. Look at how we grieve,” she said, citing a company that grants an employee a week off to grieve her father’s death, “but we expect you to be back on Monday and we expect everything to be fine.” “Part of it is the Protestant work ethic: you keep going until you collapse from everything going on around you. We aren’t supposed to share pain or sorrow or weakness. That happens in private.” Thomas said he also laments congregants’ inability “to grieve properly, to exercise our funeral rituals. I talk to people about the impossibility of being with a grieving family and negotiating safety with them over how many people can be in the sanctuary at one time.”

“How do we present our whole self before God even if we are broken, even if we broke it? You can be your full, broken, human, complicated self before God,” she said, citing as examples Moses in Exodus 32 (“Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people”) and the Syrophenician woman in Mark 7 (But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”). “I can’t fix Black Lives Matter or the pandemic, much as I would like to,” she said. “The psalms give me the chance to vent before God, and white folk don’t get a bigger space than anybody else does. You are the ‘I’ standing before the Creator. It helps justice be heard, and it democratizes the way we stand before God.”

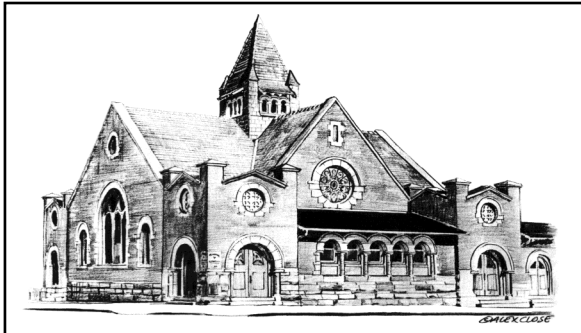
“If the psalms are about anything,” Tanner said, “they’re about human agency. Pray the psalms and you will learn what it means to be fully human.” Still, Tanner said, the psalms teach us that “sometimes we have to fight for our faith. We are unaccustomed to that, but the person praying the psalms is grabbing onto God and saying, ‘I am going to hang on with everything I’ve got, even though nothing I am doing is making any sense right now.’” Both the Old and New Testaments “were shaped in the midst of empire,” she said. “These are folks who were persevering when everyone around them was telling them, ‘Give it up!’ For all their imperfections, they remained faithful to God. The psalms teach us to do that.”

“God is God enough to listen to us speak to God with hot sauce - with anger, sadness and frustration,” Thomas said. “Just as I am without one plea? We have many pleas, and God gives us permission that in Jesus, God was reconciling the world to God’s self. We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth. Part of that truth is feeling sad and angry and abandoned, and yet having the trust to find safety and rest and wholeness.



www.athensfpc.org

January 2021



**First Presbyterian Church**  
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Athens, OH 45701



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

**Pastor:** Rev. Robert E. Martin

**Church:** Corner of Court and Washington Streets

**Office:** 9 North College Street

**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday - 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Clerk of Session:** Andrew Stuart

**Choir Director:** David M. Tadlock

**Organist:** Janice Robison

**CE Coordinator:** Nana Jenkins

**Bell Choir Director:** Tyler Thress

**Administrative Assistant:** Jane A. Baker

**Phone:** (740) 593-3351

**FAX:** (740) 593-3352

**E-Mail:** office@athensfpc.org

**Web:** www.athensfpc.org

**Worship Service:** The service can be seen on YouTube.

**Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 12:00 Noon in the church library  
(via "Zoom")

**Newsletter Helpers:** Jane Baker, Hugh Culbertson, Lillian Dinos, Nana Jenkins, Helen King, Susan Loughridge, Barb Martin, Robert Martin, Danny Moates and Harold Robison.

**February 2021 Newsletter Deadline: Noon, January 25th**

**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.