

W I N D O W

DECEMBER 2021

The Monthly Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ohio



December 2021

**Sunday
December 5th
2nd Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. - Communion
and Creche Presentation
during Worship
In-Person and live on
YouTube

**Sunday
December 12th
3rd Sunday of Advent
Music Sunday**
10:30 a.m. - Worship
In-Person and live on
YouTube

**Sunday
December 19th
4th Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. - Worship
In-Person and live on
YouTube
4:00 p.m. - Blue
Christmas Service

**Friday
December 25th**
Begins at 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Organ Music
Christmas Eve Service

**Sunday
December 26th**
10:30 a.m. - Worship
In-Person and live on
YouTube

From the Pastor...

They are not too glaring, not too faint. And in our house they are everywhere: in our fireplace, on the piano, around our row of ceramic houses and churches on the console table. I've only stopped with my bedecking of all things in twinkle lights because we ran out of AAA batteries. While retail stores play "We Need a Little Christmas" I'm thinking more along the lines of "I need a few more twinkle lights."

For Christians, this is a season when we acknowledge that there is a darkness only God can overcome. As far as light shows go, I'm a huge fan and that goes for many of us. Festivals of Light abound throughout the world in both spiritual and secular contexts:

- The Hindu festival of Diwali involves conquering darkness with light.
- The Jewish celebration of Hanukkah, which started this year on November 28th, recalls when a single jar of oil lasted eight days so that the Jews could rededicate the temple in Jerusalem.
- Loi Krathong involves floating a small basket of lights down a river to thank the goddess of water in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries. This festival is often celebrated along Yee Peng when lanterns are released into the skies as believers ask for forgiveness of past sins.
- Winter Illuminations is a festival in Japan to remember the 1995 Kobe earthquake.

- Kwanzaa requires the lighting of a single candle each night for a week to lift up seven common principles of African American culture.

Seriously, there are literally hundreds of light shows out there. We like our light festivals for many reasons and one is that they are pretty and awe-inspiring. And there is religious significance – although sometimes it's mostly about the beauty. I need beauty right now.

Yes, Jesus is returning according to the liturgical calendar and we Christians are recalling that The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. And there is sorrow and distress and something new to worry about called Omicron. And Stephen Sondheim is dead.

And if you, too, need beauty and you aren't sure that even God can help, please look for the twinkle lights. They will be subtle, but they are popping up all around us. Yes, they make things appear more magical, and there is also a promise attached that goes far beyond commercialism. The promise is that there is hope even when we don't see it. Hope is more like a flicker than a blinding torch. It's easy to miss it when it comes in twinkle form but it's out there and in here. May something twinkle with light in your life today.

Grace and Peace,
Rob Martin

*"For unto you is born
this day in the city of
David a Savior, which is
Christ the Lord."
– Luke 2:11*

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

Sunday School

Sunday School continues with the Home Sunday School Lesson Bags for pre-school through elementary grades. FPC will be offering a confirmation class this fall, led by Rev. Martin.

Deciding What's Best for Your Family - Whether you plan to attend online-only, or feel comfortable coming back to in-person gatherings, FPC will meet you where you are to help you stay connected to your First Church family. The church has transitioned from a pre-recorded worship service to livestream for online worship. Church staff and members are working to provide the most magnetic worship both in the sanctuary and online.

Encouraging You to Get Your COVID Vaccine - Everyone seems to be in an in-between time. It's clearly not the way it was, even just a few months ago, but this pandemic is not over yet either. So, as everyone lives in the midst of this in-between time, FPC is trying to move forward in a way that is safe and also meaningful.

Prayers for Your Grace – Rev. Martin shares, “It was a difficult decision to suspend worship over a year ago, but it's a far more complicated decision about how and when to reopen. So, we solicit your prayers as we make these decisions and your leaders, lay leaders and staff engage in that process.” Plans are subject to change depending on the ongoing health situation in our community. The Church will continue to seek the guidance of Session for criteria to advance to the next steps of the reopening of all of FPC programs.

Women's Book Study Continues on Fridays at noon - in person and by Zoom

“Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief” by Rowan Williams - If you like reading or want to get in touch with your inner bookworm, dive deeper with discussions on books, please plan to join in the Women's Book Study group this fall. Gain different perspectives, broaden your horizon and grow with friends! Please contact the church office if you are interested - 740-593-3351 or office@athensfpc.org.

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.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 2 – Lyntha Eiler | 17 – Nina Bierlein |
| 6 – Trevor Key | Carolyn Allen |
| 10 – Perry Lloyd | 21 – Lois Harkins |
| Dawn Stout | Zachary Strickmaker |
| 13 – Adalyn Broadbent | 22 – Linda Philips |
| Florence McGeoch | 24 – Heidi Marty |
| 15 – Theresa Kerr | Wendy Toadvine |
| 16 – Kevin Eskey | 29 – Kimberly McKinley |
| | 31 - Debbie Coon |
| | Jim Gleason |

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 - Ron and Calista Strickmaker
- 18 - Paul and Joyce Mullins
- 20 - Larry and Mindy King
- 21 - Don and Dawn Stout
- 23 - Neal and Sandy Nesbitt
- 26 - Corey and Elizabeth Howell
- 27 - Don and Mary Ellen Borchert
- 28 - Travis and Mink Neely

**New Advent Celebration
Take and Make Christmas Ornaments**

Instead of an Advent Celebration Dinner and Crafts Event this year, FPC members and friends may pick up materials to make and decorate Christmas ornaments at home. The supplies will be distributed on Sunday, December 12th in the Fellowship Hall from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Alternate times and delivery can be arranged.

Please reserve your supplies by December 5, 2021 so we have enough. Contact Joan Nease at (740) 416-2341 (text/phone), christianed@athensfpc.org, or the church office at office@athensfpc.org, (740) 593-3351.



paper ornament



clear plastic bulb ornament to decorate



*felt poinsettia ornament
(bit more complicated)*

**December 19th - 4:00 p.m. - Sanctuary
“Almost Longest Night” Service**

Typically held the week prior to Christmas, this worship opportunity, which is also known as a “Blue Christmas” service, acknowledges that grief, loss, struggles, and darkness can make it difficult to share in the traditional joyous celebrations of Christmas.

Christmas Poinsettias for the Sanctuary 2021

This Advent and Christmas season FPC will again be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettia plants. If you would like to honor or remember a loved one by purchasing one or more poinsettias for use in decorating the sanctuary, **please inform the church office by December 3rd.** You can Email: office@athensfpc.org; Phone: 740-593-3351; Mail: 9 North College Street, Athens, OH 45701 or put a note in the offering plate on Sundays.

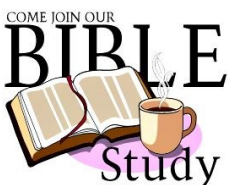
The cost of each plant is \$10.00, payable at the church office (with Poinsettia in the Memo line).

Please specify if you want to pick up the poinsettia following the Christmas Eve service, or give it to the Deacons for distribution.

December 2021 Worship

*Italic—first reading and *Bold, italic—preaching text*

- 5th First Reading Malachi 3:1-4 and Cantic Luke 1:68-79 “Voices in the hard Places of Life”
Second Reading *Philippians 1:3-11* and ***Gospel Luke 3:1-6**
- 12th First Reading Zephaniah 3:14-20 and ***Cantic Isaiah 12:2-6** “Shout!” “Proclaim!” and “Sing for Joy!”
Second Reading Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18) 19-25 and *Gospel Mark 13:1-8*
- 19th First Reading *Micah 5:2-5a* and Cantic Luke 1:46b-55 “A Song of Deliverance”
Second Reading Hebrews 10:5-10 and ***Gospel Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)**
- 24th Christmas Eve
First Reading *Isaiah 9:2-7* and Psalm 96:1-13 “Keepers of Christmas”
Second Reading Titus 2:11-14 and ***Gospel Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)**
- 26th First Reading *1 Samuel 2:18-20,26* and Psalm 148 “He Grew Up”
Second Reading Colossians 3:12-17 and ***Gospel Luke 2:41-52**

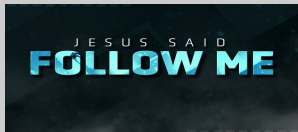


Windows ON: Church Support - Finance Committee FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2022 BUDGET

Session reviewed a draft budget at their November 18th meeting. It contains a modest 2% raise for church staff with most other budget categories remaining the same for 2022. Thus far FPC has received fifty-four pledges totaling \$181,316 toward the pledge goal of \$230,000. This includes twenty-one pledges of the same amount as 2021, sixteen pledges increasing, four pledges of reduced amounts, seven new pledges, and six pledging to give as able in 2022. Thanks to all who support FPC and the church's mission partners with your gifts of time, talent, and treasure.




2022 Pledge Card



2022 Stewardship Campaign

The theme of the FPC 2022 Stewardship Campaign is "Jesus said 'Follow Me'"

Matthew 4:19 And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.'



Name: _____

Address: _____

PLEASE CHECK AND COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE: [] Below is my pledge amount for the 2022 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.

Windows ON: Church Support - Finance Committee FINANCIAL REPORT

Income and Expenses, 2021			
Offering Budgeted for 2021	\$252,400	Offering Received to Date	\$215,420
Other Income Budgeted for 2021 <small>(endowment, parking lot lease, Putnam apt. rent, interest)</small>	\$158,704	Other Income Received to Date	\$136,850
Total Income Budgeted 2021	\$411,104	Total Income (Received to Date)	\$352,271
Current Assets (checking & petty cash)	-----	Total Cash on Hand	\$44,723
Expenses Budgeted in 2021	\$410,936	Expenses to Date	\$328,627
Other Endowment and Contribution Activity in 2021			
Special Offerings (Christmas Joy, Pentecost, One Great Hour of Sharing, and Peacemaking)	\$3,046	Sent to Presbytery (40% of Pentecost is retained for local use/25% of Peacemaking offering is retained for local use)	
Offering Gifts (Athens Co. Food Pantry, Good Works, My Sister's Place, Planned Parenthood, Habitat for Humanity, etc.)	\$4,559	Disbursed to appropriate agency or group	
Memorial Gifts (Ron and Mary Jane Black, Ralph Izard, Jack and JoAnne Kerr, Kenny and Nada Kerr, Glen Knudson, and Ray and Shirley Strickmaker)	\$690	Disbursed as directed by donors	
Discretionary Fund Gifts (Local Emergencies)	\$1,841	To be distributed by the Pastor for local emergencies	
Local Emergencies (Special)	\$100	Community donations for a refugee family. Flow-through account for FPC to pay family bills.	
Gifts supporting AFPC Mission Projects	\$4,053	Used for AFPC mission work projects	
Gifts Supporting Trail Mix Ministry	\$0	Used to buy supplies.	

**Windows ON: Amesville/New England
THIS MONTH'S NEWS**

Thanksgiving boxes were distributed to ten families in the community by the Food Pantry of the parish. These were contributed to the Parish by the Tappers Plains Church.

On Sunday, November 21st, the congregation celebrated communion and also held a Remembrance Sunday where a candle was lighted and a bell rung for each loved one mentioned who had died recently. This service was meaningful for all present. Dr. David Maze conducted the service.

A collection in a Christmas Stocking is being gathered from November 21st to December 19th to be given to a family or individual to use as they choose during the holiday season.

The Parish will be providing a meal for the Good Works community for Friday Night Life at The Plains UMC on December 10th.

On Sunday, December 19th, the Athens First Presbyterian Church Bell Choir under the direction of

Tyler Thress will be presenting special music at the worship service.

A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 7 p.m. at the Amesville Presbyterian Church.

Parish friends and neighbors wish all of our friends at the Athens First Presbyterian Church a blessed Christmas Season. "Joy to the World...the Lord is Come!"

Presbyterian Youth Triennium

Mandatory pre-event "Get together": Sunday, July 17th - 5:00-7:00 p.m. (Location TBA)
Triennium is set for July 24 - 27, 2022 in Indianapolis. This national youth conference for those entering 9th grade through graduating seniors (and chaperones!) is an AMAZING event.

Registration deadline: January 15, 2022 and reserved with application and \$100.00 deposit. The cost is \$700.00 (includes transportation via Presbytery rented bus, hotel stay booked through Indy Housing Bureau, meals and program costs). PSV is contributing \$100.00 per youth.

**Windows ON: Mission Outreach Committee
HABITAT NEWS**

Habitat for Humanity held a bodacious rummage sale on Saturday, November 13th. Thanks to all who donated or bought items and especially those who helped put the sale on. It earned \$1,308.50 toward Habitat's next house.



Prayer Concern Requests and Visitation

Prayer request slips are available in the narthex or contact the church office for prayer requests. 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, or let the church office know. 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



Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's Advent Devotional booklet and helped make it happen. Booklets are available, online and in print. FPC and the Christian Education Committee prays the entries will bring inspiration as everyone prepares to celebrate the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

Windows ON: Mission / Outreach Committee OHIO UNIVERSITY CATS' CUPBOARD

The Ohio University Cat's Cupboard project continued in November to serve a growing number of students and their families, thanks partly to contributions from many FPC members and friends. The number of students signing up to 360 for the fall semester. When one counts the the students' family members who also received food and other life necessities, the total stands at about 525, according to Charlie Fulks of the OU Office of Student Life, Coordinator for the project.

Church members and friends, and also others in the Athens area, contribute in two ways, by providing cash and food. Then Wendy Toadvine or Carolyn Allen shops for food and other items on the needs list. Often much needed items are not contributed regularly to the church office or to the Cupboard personnel on the fifth floor of Baker Center. Then Wendy and Carolyn can shop with the monetary donations to help fill in the needed items.

Unfortunately, the account has almost run out of money at this time. Church members and friends are asked to contribute what they are able to. Checks should be mailed or taken to the church office, 9 North College Street, Athens, OH 45701, with "Cat's Cupboard" in the memo line.

Fulks, along with Kathy Fahl, interim Association Dean of Students and Graduate Assistant Karah Davis in the Dean's office, offer heartfelt thanks to members and friends of FPC for their generous support.

Items can be brought to the church office at any time. Wendy, along with Helen King and Alan and Sue Boyd, take the contributions to the fourth-floor entrance to Baker Center or a storage area on the fifth floor of Baker Center between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. In addition, a box for donations has been set up on the second floor of Baker Center.

The need for such a food pantry remains great as the CoVid pandemic hangs on. There is still a special demand for food palatable to international students. Many of them will remain in Athens over winter break, which lasts for about ten days beginning December 2nd.

FPC members and friends, Peace Corp volunteers, and residents of Elmwood Place on Athens' east side have contributed generously.

Kathy Fahl, Charlie Fulks and Karah Davis express deep appreciation for FPC's support.



FPC Church Elders:

2021: John Hauser, Anne Kemmerle, Katie Tadlock, and Keith Wiens

2022: Carolyn Allen, Pamela Harvey, Sandy Nesbitt, and David Tees

2023: Carl Franz, John King, Linda Parsons, and Susan Loughridge

FPC Board of Deacons:

2021: Joyce Beauvias, Nancy Hartley, Marla Longenecker, Danny Moates, and Marge Shelton

2022: Mary Costello, Harold Robison, Andrew Stuart, and Patrick Tegge

2023: Martha Johnson, Helen King, Mindy King, Debi Orr-Roderick, and Wendy Toadvine

Windows ON: Session Approves New Position CREATIVE DESIGN AND DIGITAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR

At the Session October meeting, a new job position within First Presbyterian Church, Creative Design and Digital Media administrator was approved. That seems like a mouthful, but it represents a position that would oversee the Sunday live broadcasts as well as build and maintain FPC's social media presence. FPC not only has the FPC Website, but now has a digital presence on Facebook and Twitter. There may be more that FPC can do! Session is anticipating the job to begin in January of 2022. FPC members and friends will be kept posted.

CREATIVE DESIGN AND DIGITAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR

Overview: The Creative Design and Digital Media administrator will work with the Pastor and Session to develop the style, tone, and brand of First Presbyterian Church. They will be responsible for developing web-based and digital content to advance FPC's mission and key objectives.

Qualifications (desired):

- Bachelor's Degree in Communications, Public Relations, Marketing, Graphic Design, or related field of study along with a minimum of two years' experience in development, design, and production of various communication components
- Knowledge of Word, Adobe, Google.
- Demonstrated competence in writing and graphic design
- Creative vision for effective communications, initiative and energy to upgrade and improve current communications
- Experience designing and maintaining websites in WordPress
- Photography and videography experience preferred

Essential duties and responsibilities:

- Development and design of digital media and video content
- Collaborate with ministries to develop a communication plan, look, and feel of projects
- Ensure brand identity and message consistency
- Create and maintain a church-wide social media plan; serve as the primary manager of all social media channels
- Collect and communicate social media metrics that describe the effectiveness of the church's social media ministry
- Provide copywriting and editing for church communications
- Curate media for use on website and social media
- Work with the Pastor to prepare the weekly e-newsletter, ensuring accuracy in writing, grammar, and style
- Create and edit video content for Sunday worship
- Provide photography services at events and gatherings for use in publications

Essential knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Writing, reading, proofreading, critical thinking
- Interpersonal skills that enable effective collaboration with other ministry leaders and staff
- Ability to organize and initiate work with minimum supervision
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple projects and adapt production timelines to changing conditions
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a team to assess needs and produce results
- Commitment to excellence, attention to detail and accuracy
- Availability on Sunday mornings and weekends to record, and photograph worship or events

For further information contact:

Rev. Robert Martin, at the church office 740-593-3351 or rmartin@athensfpc.org

Please send your letter of interest and resume to:

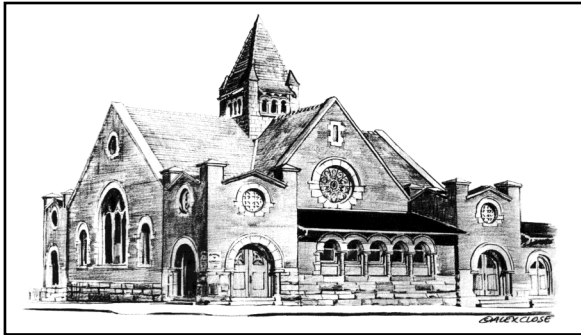
Athens First Presbyterian Church, 9 North College Street, Athens, OH 45701

Or electronically to: office@athensfpc.org

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Beginning date is anticipated for January of 2022.

www.athensfpc.org

DECEMBER 2021



First Presbyterian Church
9 North College Street
Athens, OH 45701



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. 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 Directors: Richard and Joan Nease

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: 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

Newsletter Helpers: Jane Baker, Hugh Culbertson, Lillian Dinos, Nana Jenkins, Susan Loughridge, Barb Martin, Rev. Martin, and Harold Robison.

January 2022 Newsletter Deadline:
Monday Noon, December 20th
(early due to the holidays)

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.