

# WINDOW

JANUARY 2022

The Monthly Newsletter of  
First Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ohio

*January*  
*May you have a blessed 2022!*



## January 2022

### Sunday

#### January 2nd Epiphany Sunday

10:30 a.m. - Communion during Worship  
In-Person and live on YouTube

### Sunday

#### January 9th Baptism of the Lord

10:30 a.m. - Worship  
In-Person and live on YouTube  
Congregational Meeting to Elect New Officers

### Sunday

#### January 16th

10:30 a.m. - Worship  
In-Person and live on YouTube  
Congregational Meeting for Installation and Ordination of Officers

### Sunday

#### January 23rd

10:30 a.m. - Worship  
In-Person and live on YouTube

### Sunday

#### January 30th

10:30 a.m. - Worship  
In-Person and live on YouTube

## From the Pastor....

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman..... Galatians 4:4). This is the only time that the apostle Paul mentions Christmas. Even so it is a glancing reference, the briefest of allusions: “God sent his Son, born of a woman.” No mention of a manger, no angels, shepherds, or wise men. Paul does not discuss Bethlehem or Joseph. We learn about them from Luke and Matthew. Even though Paul is the most prolific author of the New Testament, in all his writings Christmas scores half a line: “*God sent his Son, born of a woman.*” Yet in no way does this downplay the purpose of Christmas. Paul summarizes the purpose of Christ’s coming this way: “*God sent his Son to make us God’s children.*” We belong to God because Jesus has come into the world to claim us. His life, his death, his resurrection gathers us in. Through our faith, we are welcomed by God. That’s what Christmas is all about.

I would stop there, were it not for a little phrase that Paul slips in. The first Christmas arrives, says Paul, “*when the fullness of time had come.*” He says it comes “in the fullness of time.” I don’t know what that means. This is a New Year. On January 1st another twelve-month cycle begins. Centuries ago somebody decided there were twelve months in a year, that all the months had somewhere between 28 and 31 days, that the months circle around again and again like a cat chasing its tail. And Paul speaks of the “fullness of time.” What does he mean by that?

We can say that time rolls along. January 1, 2022 is the day when all the calendars

are discounted. You can’t sell them for full price after the date changes. Today a fifteen dollar calendar is suddenly available for \$1.99. Simply put, it loses value after a certain date. Maybe that’s why the Dollar Store still can’t move that stack of 2021 pocket calendars at the bottom of their bin. Nobody wants them, even if the store considers them valuable enough to keep on the shelves. We can also say time runs out. Food has an expiration date. You wouldn’t know that by looking in my refrigerator, but the health department says it is true. Perhaps it is time to toss that airtight packet of Tofu Curry that I picked up at the grocery store back in September. It may still be good. I don’t want to find out. It is past its time.

Some are worried that the world has an expiration date: Covid, Delta variant, Omicron variant, too many erratic elements that could blow everything up. Lives have expiration dates. Hate to bring that up, but it is true. We expire sometime after we turn stale. The ancient poet of the Psalms observed this without pinning it down to an actuarial table. “The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.” (Psalm 90:10). Our days are numbered and somebody in heaven is counting them. Knowing this is the beginning of wisdom. We resist the reality. The last time we sang the hymn, “Our God, Our Help in Ages Past,” we got to the line that says, “Time like an ever-rolling stream soon bears us all away.” A member said to me, “I don’t like that verse.” None of us do. It is a reminder that time runs out.

*(cont. on page 2)*

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

*(cont. from page 1)*

Yet “in the fullness of time,” Jesus arrived. In the fullness of time. Malcom Gladwell says that some moments reach a “tipping point.” Big things happens when enough little things line up. Ideas converge. Opinions accumulate. A revolution begins when enough people think it is needed, when enough people are willing to risk their own necks to create a change. Some people look at the global circumstances surrounding Jesus’ birth, and declare God has reached a tipping point: the empire was heartless, people were cruel to one another, sinners were destroying their lives.

So, God stepped in and said, “It’s time to send Jesus.” True enough, Christ has come and begun to make a difference. Yet last time anybody checked, the empires are still heartless, people are still cruel, and sinners are still making a mess of most things.

That Greek word for “fullness” is a wonderful word, a word that suggests abundance. Full as in “spilling over.” Here is the sense of it: when the time is filled up, when the moment is pregnant with possibilities, when something new is just waiting to burst forth, everything was ready for God to come. I pray that with the time

we have left, we fill it with the praises of God and blessings for our neighbors. And let this be a year full of mercy, that we leave behind in this tired old year all our lingering hurts and grudges, and embrace the healing that Christ has come to give. And I pray that, among all our resolutions, we resolve to be the children of God. To be content as God’s children. To receive the blessings of God with a thankful heart, and to pass them along to others with generous hearts and hands.

Happy New Year.  
Happy Abundant New Year.  
~ Rev. Martin

### 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.

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 – Carla Boyle  
Dorothy Bryant
- 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
- 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

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

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

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

**Bell Choir**

Bell Choir will resume rehearsals on 1/12, from 6-7pm. Anyone interested in joining, regardless of skill-level or experience, can contact Tyler Thress at (740) 243-0705 or tylerthress@yahoo.com

**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



**Women’s Book Study  
will resume on January 7th at noon - in person and by Zoom  
and will begin discussion on page 90**

“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.

**2022 Per Capita - \$40.00**

It is distributed as follows:

- Presbytery of Scioto Valley - \$27.80
- Synod of the Covenant - \$3.25
- General Assembly, \$8.95

**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.



**January 2022 Worship**  
*Italic—first reading and \*Bold—preaching text*

- |      |  |                                 |
|------|--|---------------------------------|
| 2nd  | First Reading Jeremiah 31:7-14 and Psalm 147:12-20<br>Second Reading <i>Ephesians 1:3-14</i> and <b>*Gospel John 1:(1-9) 10-18</b> | “Epiphany”                      |
| 9th  | First Reading <i>Isaiah 43:1-7</i> and Psalm 29<br>Second Reading Acts 8:14-17 and <b>*Gospel Luke 3:15-17, 21,22</b>              | “Baptism of the Lord”           |
| 16th | First Reading <b>*Isaiah 62:1-5</b> and Psalm 36:5-10<br>Second Reading 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and <i>Gospel John 2:1-11</i>        | “Prophetic Longing”             |
| 23rd | First Reading Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 and Psalm 19<br>Second Reading Titus 2:11-14 and <b>*Gospel Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)</b>        | “The Danger of Truth Telling”   |
| 30th | First Reading <b>*Jeremiah 1:4-10</b> and Psalm 71:1-6<br>Second Reading <i>1 Corinthians 13:1-13</i> and Gospel Luke 4:21-30      | “The World Is Too Much With Us” |

## Windows ON: Presbyterian Women THIS MONTH'S NEWS

Nine PW members met at Wyngate on December 15th to listen to a CD of Christmas music, (What a Wonder) and sing carols along with the Westminster Presbyterian Church Choir, organ and harp, of Minneapolis, MN.

Cynthia Wyant and Jeanette Richards were welcomed as guests. Thanks to Martha Johnson for hosting, and to Lillian Dinos for leading the singing.

PW plans to meet on January 26, 2022, at Wyngate -- weather permitting . Helen King volunteered

to lead the discussion of Lesson Two of the new study, FOLLOW JESUS. Study books are available in the church office for \$7.00 each.

PW will not meet if schools are closed or delayed. Phone 740-592-3853 if you need more information.

\*God of new beginnings, thank you for the past year — joyful moments and growing moments, the celebrations and the defeats. Give all the strength to entrust this new year to you, knowing that with you there is a future filed with hope. Amen.

*\*Blessing for the New Year*  
*May this new year be filled with blessings and with grace, and may we always have hope for tomorrow.*  
*\*Nilsen Family*



### 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.

### Update on Pledges

59 pledge cards have been received with a total of \$191,816 pledged  
2022 goal for pledges is \$230,000.

There is still time to pledge! 2022 pledge card is below.  
2022 Per Capita is \$40.00 *(details of breakdown on page 3)*

### 2022 Pledge Card

JESUS SAID

## FOLLOW ME

*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:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**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: Mission / Outreach Committee OHIO UNIVERSITY CATS' CUPBOARD

The Ohio University Cats' Cupboard project finished 2021 in fine shape, thanks partly to Athens FPC members and friends. At the conclusion of the Cupboard's final pick-up of the year on December 14th, contributions for the month weighed over 3,000 pounds, compared with roughly 5-600, on average for 2021.

The project received support from the very top level of university administration, according to project coordinator Charlie Fulks. Ohio University President Hugh Sherman came to the pick-up point at Baker Center's main entrance on the fourth floor to help collect food and other items and take them to the Cupboard's storage room on the fifth floor. This leaves the storage area in good shape for the rest of 2021 and the beginning of spring semester on January 3rd.

Many students get food and other items they desperately need by coming to the storage area on the fifth floor of Baker Center. Each

month Charlie and his staff provide a list of needed items. Then Wendy Toadvine or Carolyn Allen shops for things on the list. Alan and Sue Boyd take these items to the pick-up point at Baker Center. Some needed items, especially food appealing to international students, are seldom contributed by members of the church and other supporters in Athens and on campus. Wendy and Carolyn use FPC contributions to help fill in the blanks of needed items.

FPC members and friends are urged to bring items by Monday afternoons of any given week to the church office. Cupboard staff are on hand to accept items between 9:00-11:00 a.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Also, a box for donations has been set up on the 2nd floor of Baker Center.

Church members and friends are asked to also contribute monetary donations as they are able. Checks can be submitted to Jane Baker at the church office, or dropped in the

offering plate on Sundays, with "Cats' Cupboard" on the memo line of the check.

The need for a food pantry remains great as the pandemic continues. Many students will remain in Athens for a bout ten days beginning on December 22nd, though OU will be closed during that time.

FPC members and friends, Peace Corps volunteers, residents of Elmwood Place on Athens east side and various student groups contribute generously. Anyone with questions can phone Charlie Fulks at 740-593-1800. Jane Baker can be reached at the church office at 740-593-3351.

Fulks, along with Kathy Fahl, interim Associate Dean of Students and grad student Karah Davis coordinate the project and offer sincere thanks for FPC's generous 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

## Presbyterian Disaster Assistance National Response Team assesses short- and long-term needs

by Rich Copley | *Presbyterian News Service*

MAYFIELD, Kentucky — Davis Mills looked down at the painting in a box in the back parking lot of First Presbyterian Church in Mayfield, Kentucky, late Saturday afternoon and said, “That’s what it used to look like.” “Used to” was as recently as a little over a week before that afternoon, before a deadly tornado barreled through downtown Mayfield the night of Dec. 10, destroying numerous downtown buildings, including First Presbyterian Church. One church family considered taking refuge in the church’s basement as the storms approached. “Their decision not to go was a great decision because the whole church is in the basement now,” First Presbyterian Church member Danny Upton said.

As the sun set and temperatures dipped into the 30s on Saturday, Mills and his brother Stuart tried to make quick work of salvaging items from the remains of the building at the corner of Broadway and 9th Street in this town of just over 10,000 people in the southwest corner of Kentucky. They pulled out tables, chairs, documents like an old black-and-white photo of the church building, and a framed letter describing how the church was the first religious organization in Mayfield, established in 1832, and that in 1915, “a new and most beautiful building was completed to meet the demands of the growing organization.”

Jenny Sims started playing organ in that building when she was 15. She and her husband Bob were married there. Their children were baptized in that church building, which stood for more than 100 years. The personal history was about all Sims could bring herself to relay Sunday morning as First Presbyterian Mayfield gathered in the break room of Kendor Wood, a kitchen cabinet door manufacturer in Mayfield owned by Upton and his wife, Juanita Upton. “Christmas can be anywhere,” Upton said, recalling, “Jesus was born in the stable. So, it starts wherever we are, and it’s not the building that you meet in or the place, it’s the people.

While Mayfield was by most estimations the hardest struck community by a monster tornado that stayed on the ground for more than 200 miles, the storms that produced it spun off numerous tornadoes in the Midwest.

While many church-based disaster response programs are geared toward first responses like chainsaw crews and feeding programs, PDA concentrates on addressing immediate financial needs through grants, helping local Presbyterians serve and connect to services, and planning for long-term recovery, which in the case of many people impacted by these tornadoes is going to be a major effort.

Cathy Lewis, a Central Presbyterian Church member and owner of Gather on Main restaurant, said through some friendship connections she was contacted by World Central Kitchen. Gather on Main has been preparing hundreds of box lunches for the World Central Kitchen to distribute in places like downtown Mayfield. “We’re not a lot of help in the field,” Lewis says. “We can’t drive front loaders and bulldozers. This gives us a way we are able to help.” Lewis and Webster both invoke this thought: “Kind acts are like snowflakes. Alone they are small, but together they cover everything.”

The weekend before the tornado struck, the Yuletide season brought First Presbyterian Church together with its neighboring Downtown Mayfield churches — First Christian Church and Mayfield First United Methodist Church — as they held an Advent walk together. The Sunday after the tornado, the members of First Presbyterian and First Christian held a joint communion service between their former buildings. “They had a spiritual moment together with God the week before this happened. What’s that about?” Melloan said. “I think God, of course, was in the middle of this and helped them learn more about each other so they can lean on one another.”

“We’ve always tried to be of service to the community,” said Melinda Craig, First Presbyterian Church’s clerk of session. “It’s a little bit disconcerting to be at the other end.”

In his sermon, Rev. Don Barger reflected on the time Jesus was born into, the brutal rule of Caesar Augustus. “What was there to celebrate 2,000 years ago in Judea, and what is there to celebrate today in Mayfield?” he asked. But the fulfillment of the promise that was celebrated then is the same promise to be celebrated today, Barger said.

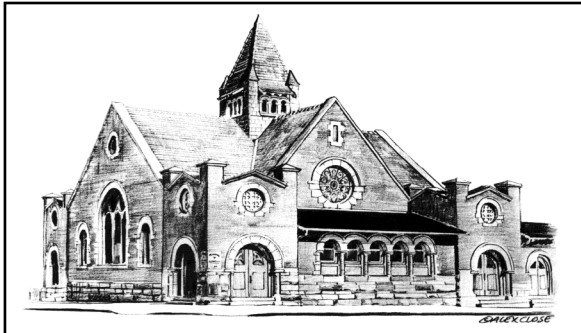
This Friday night, on Christmas Eve, First Presbyterian Church will gather again at Broadway and Ninth to once again celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, just as it has at that corner most Christmas Eves since 1915.

What is there to celebrate, Barger asked, and then answered his own question: “Light and life cannot be destroyed.”

*Contribute to: [disaster Relief-USA Disasters & Emergencies \(DR000015\)](#)*

www.athensfpc.org

January 2022



**First Presbyterian Church**  
9 North College Street  
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 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](mailto:office@athensfpc.org)      **Web:** [www.athensfpc.org](http://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, Susan Loughridge, Joan Nease, Rev. Martin, Harold Robison and Tyler Thress.

**February 2022 Newsletter Deadline:**  
**Monday Noon, January 24**

**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.