

WINDOW

AUGUST 2022

The Monthly Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church
Athens, Ohio



Psalms 113:3
From the rising of the
sun unto the going
down of the same the
LORD'S name is
to be praised.

David - clipart

From the Pastor....

August 2022

Sunday, August 1st

10:30 a.m. - Communion
during Worship

Sunday August 14th

10:30 a.m. - Worship

Sunday, August 21st Rally Day

Welcome Back Sunday
10:30 a.m. - Puppet
Ministry during Worship

Friday, August 26th Office regular hours resume on Fridays

Sunday, August 28th

10:30 a.m. - Worship

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

After one of the recent mass shootings, feeling more emotionally exhausted than I could remember, I picked up a Bible and began reading Ecclesiastes. I'm not sure why because that's not a book I typically turn to. But the bleak opening words of Qohelet (the "Teacher") seemed oddly comforting:

*All things are wearisome;
more than one can express;
the eye is not satisfied with seeing,
or the ear filled with hearing.
What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what
will be done;
there is nothing new under the sun.*

And suddenly, a book that rarely appealed to me spoke with force. I read Ecclesiastes in a single sitting, embracing the writer's sense of despair. For the first time, I was glad for biblical angst — for his frustration, resignation, ambiguity, and feelings of dread. It felt strangely affirming. In his commentary on Ecclesiastes, Peter Enns argues that the opening verses summarize the purpose of the entire book. He offers a contemporary translation of the familiar "all is vanity" discourse as follows:

*"This is what Qohelet is saying:
At the end of the day, life is
frustratingly absurd. The cycles
of nature are screaming that
message to you. You live.
You exert a lot of energy, but
nothing new happens. Just like
the sun, wind, and rivers.
Then you die. And one other thing:
after you die, you will be quickly
forgotten."*

Enns continues, "We should allow the force of this declaration to hit us. This is not an academic observation, made from a distance. It is more a cry — perhaps shout — of a desperate man at the end of his rope. To paraphrase the force of the Hebrew: 'Everything is absolutely — I said absolutely — absurd.'"

As I write this, the news is on in the background. There was a recent story talking about offering women's health services in states in order to work around the new laws against abortion. A different report covered developments in the January 6 hearings. Both commentators compared what was happening now to situations of the early 1970s — in one case, pre-Roe, and in the other, during Watergate. There is nothing new under the sun. The words of Qohelet echo through the ages: Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has already been, in the ages before us. It is all so absurd, I think of the news. It isn't new. But it is absolutely absurd.

In effect, we'll never really understand life, this repeating history, the endlessness of absurd existence. This chasing at the wind, these cycles, these things that just happen to us human beings. As Enns reminds, "Everything is absurd because, at the end of the day, we cannot grasp life, as we cannot grasp the wind."

Ironically, when I grasp the truth that life is ungraspable, I experience a deep sense of being grounded in my life. Yes, my heart says, I understand. Beyond words, beyond explaining. Instead, I know that somehow letting go of grasping invites me into living with new appreciation

(continued on page 2)



Rally Day
Welcome Back Sunday

August 21st

(continued from page 1)

for the present moment. We are born, we die. We experience the entire array of emotions throughout. We know injustice. We despair of oppression. And yet . . . we keep going. "Life is not controllable," says Sister Jon Chittester, "it is only doable." Wisdom for life isn't something we get. It is something we do.

Exactly what is wisdom literature is supposed to do. In Ecclesiastes, Qohelet presses toward the edges of despair. And maybe that's exactly what is needed — delight and despair. The dance at creation and the darkness of death. Wisdom is

knowing both, insofar as they can be known. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

"The Book of Ecclesiastes," claims Joan Chittester, "is an antidote to the problem of aimlessness and disorientation, of personal fragmentations and nagging despair. Ecclesiastes invites us to see life as a mosaic made up of small pieces of human experience common to us all but lived uniquely by each one of us. Ecclesiastes calls us to the universal of life so that we can understand it before we lose it, enjoy it before we miss it."

Not everything happens for a reason. Life can be so absurd. But everything that happens matters. Because it is the one life each of us has. Wisdom: Not grasping, letting go. Not chasing the wind, but being carried by the breeze of the Spirit. "Merest breath," said Qohelet, "All is mere breath." (*this is the Robert Alter translation.) Is that futility? Perhaps not. After all, creation began with God's breath. All is mere breath. Perhaps it is wonder. And the path to wisdom for living.

~Pastor Martin

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

Jenny Bent, Mark Hare and Keila and Annika are back in Costa Rica, continuing their work as Presbyterian Co-mission workers after spending two weeks in Ohio. The girls are back in school after a three-week summer break. While home, they were part of the ARC camp at Geneva Hills (for people with developmental disabilities) where they enjoyed working and playing with other Hare family members; visited Jenny's brother in Detroit, took part in some Amesville community events; worshiped at the Amesville Presbyterian Church, and did many errands.

A three-day in-person Vacation Bible School was held the middle

of July using the theme "*Serving Jesus by Loving Others*." While the attendance was small, there was a group of church people (including three teen-age boys), who shared their gifts and talents, and the time was thoroughly enjoyed by all. An offering of \$200 was sent through UMCOR (United Methodist) for helping Ukrainian refugees.

Days for Girls Kits (kits of menstrual supplies) completed by women of the Parish and women from Granville have been mailed to the Dumay Clinic in Haiti by the Healing Art Missions, and will hopefully arrive soon to meet a need of teen-age girls. The group continues to work on kits, so more will be able to be mailed.

The Blessing Box, supported by the Amesville-New England Parish and set up in front of the Amesville Elementary School is being used by folk in the Amesville Community, using the motto "*take what you need, leave what you can*."

The Education and Mission Committee will soon be planning to begin Monday in-person after school Bible School, which has not been held for two years.

Worship is held each Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. at the Amesville Presbyterian Church. Worship leaders have included: Steve Hays, Helen King, Bethany Fulton, David Maze and Kathy Elasky.

FPC Church Elders:

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

2023: John King, Linda Parsons, and Susan Loughridge

2024: Harvey Ballard, Anne Kemmerle, Katie Tadlock, and Keith Wiens

FPC Board of Deacons:

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

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

2024: Margaret Bourke, Bobbi Conliffe, Nancy Hartley, and Carol Perry

Rally Day 2022 Sunday, August 21st

Come celebrate and kick-off the 2022-2023 Christian Education year on Sunday, August 21st! FPC's Christian Education theme this year is "Along the Way: Compassion Walks Together with Others". Rally Day activities include a visit from FPC's puppet friends during the worship service at 10:30 a.m., Children's Church, and a classroom open house and Fellowship downstairs after the service at 11:30 a.m. Show your support for FPC's teachers and the Christian Education program by participating in this fun morning!

If you have a passion for compassion, please come share it with the church as FPC members and friends celebrate and begin the new education year. Members and friends of the congregation who volunteer in the community are invited to showcase their agencies during Fellowship on Sunday, August 21st. Tables will be available to display information. Please email Richard and Joan (christianed@athensfpc.org) or phone the church office (740-593-3351) to help the CE Committee plan for this exciting event.

2022-2023 Handbell Choir

The Handbell Choir will begin rehearsals on Wednesday August 24th, from 6:00-7:00 p.m., in the overflow area of the sanctuary. In light of recent COVID-19 numbers, the handbell choir will continue to mask and distance as appropriate. Please consider joining FPC this year as the handbell choir explores repertoire composed specifically for handbell ensembles, experiment with creatively integrating bells into worship.

All levels of skill and experience are welcome.

Interested ringers can call or email Tyler Thress at (740)243-0705 or tylerthress@yahoo.com.

Christian Education News

Rally Day August 21st (see above)

Women's Book Study Fridays 12:00 Noon via Zoom

Join Women's Book Study on Fridays at noon as those attending discuss *What Do Our Neighbors Believe? Questions and Answers on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (second edition)*. 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.

Summer Children's Church

Summer Children's Church continues in person, hoping that COVID numbers will remain low. Lessons are from the book *Building Faith Brick by Brick: An Imaginative Way to Explore the Bible with Children* by Emily Given. Children hear a Bible story, engage in discussion, and then recreate the story with Lego building blocks. Volunteers are needed to lead a class. Lesson plans will be provided for all volunteers. Class sizes are usually small in number. Please contact Barb Martin at barbaramartin729@msn.com or phone the church office at 740-593-3351 if you would like to help.

Youth Gathering and/or Retreat

Presbytery Youth Task Force is looking into offering three fall regional gatherings for youth in grades 6-12 on Sunday, September 18th from 2:00-4:00 p.m., to be held at Washington Courthouse First, Columbus Covenant, and Granville First. Also, Presbytery Youth Retreat at Camp Akita in Logan, Ohio on November 12th and 13th. More details will be coming.

Academic School Year Begins

Ohio University classes begin August 22nd
Athens City School classes begin August 24th

Windows ON: Property Committee

CHURCH OWNED NORTH COLLEGE STREET PARKING LOTS

First Presbyterian Church has been leasing the two parking lots adjacent to the Putnam House office to the City of Athens for many years.

The upper lot has five spaces reserved for church staff and apartment tenants and the remaining twelve spaces were used by Athens City Police and other City department vehicles. The City made

available to the public the 34 spaces in the lower lot on a monthly basis and more recently as metered spaces.

The lease with the City of Athens expired July 29th and the City has chosen not to renew the lease. Athens City Chief of Police is in negotiations to rent eight (8) spaces in the upper lot for police use.

FPC will make available to rent the four (4) remaining spaces in the upper lot and the thirty-four (34) spaces in the lower lot. The spaces will rent for \$90 a month or \$1,080 per year. If you know of anyone who would be interested in renting a parking space please contact Jane Baker, (740) 593-3351, 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.

Windows ON: Church Support Committee

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income and Expenses, 2022			
Offering Budgeted for 2022	\$265,371	Offering Received to Date	\$171,668
Other Income Budgeted for 2021 (endowment, parking lot lease, Putnam apt. rent, interest)	\$182,127	Other Income Received to Date	\$ 81,309
Total Income Budgeted 2022	\$447,498	Total Income (Received to Date)	\$252,977
Current Assets (checking & petty cash)	-----	Total Cash on Hand	\$ 57,119
Expenses Budgeted in 2022	\$447,498	Expenses to Date	\$221,974
Other Endowment and Contribution Activity in 2021			
Special Offerings (Christmas Joy, Pentecost, One Great Hour of Sharing, and Peacemaking)	\$3,835	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.)	\$2,343	Disbursed to appropriate agency or group	
Memorial Gifts (Dale Hoffman, Joan Kappes, Dawn Stout, Margaret Stumpf, Clarice Swisher, and Marlene Wein-furtnier)	\$1,950	Disbursed as directed by donors	
Offering gifts designated for the Discretionary Fund (Local Emergencies)	\$1,423	To be distributed by the Pastor for local emergencies	
Local Emergencies (Special)	0	Community donations for a refugee family. Flow-through account for FPC to pay family bills.	
Gifts supporting AFPC Mission Projects	\$4,173	Used for AFPC mission work projects	
Gifts Supporting Trail Mix Ministry	0	Used to buy supplies.	
Church World Service - Blanket Fund	\$1,376	Sent to Church World Service	

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 – Marilyn Neason
David Tees | 18 – Burt Stumpf |
| 2 – Gayla Parks | 19 – Jeff Butner
Darlene Holtzmeier |
| 4 – Elliott Poore
Bodie Stewart | 20 – Brandon Key |
| 5 – Aubrey Hayborn
Debbie Perry | 21 – Liam Morgan
Penny Shelton |
| 8 – Jane Baker | 23 – Andersen Trachsel |
| 9 – Matthew Jagers | 24 – Mike Sostarich |
| 10 – Les Cornwell | 25 – Terry Baxter-Potter
Melanie Tees |
| 11 – Terry Eiler | 27 – Alexia Gyftopoulos |
| 12 – Patricia Frost | 29 – Holly Dahlman |
| 13 – Aaron Wright | 31 – Rachel Lawson |
| 16 – Flavius Mokake | |
| 17 – Randy Longenecker
Betty Lowe | |

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

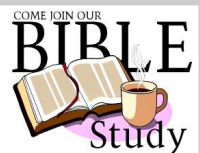
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|---|
| 6 – Kevin and Janet Morgan |
| 9 – Mike and Ellen Sostarich |
| 15 – Tom and Clara Joe Fisher |
| 16 – Rob and Barb Martin |
| 17 – Alan and Susanne Boyd
Charlie and Gayla Parks
David and Melanie Tees |
| 19 – Guy and Linda Philips
Judd and Kim Stephenson |
| 26 – Craig and Jean Seitz |
| 27 – Tim and Bethany Jagers |
| 28 – Ken and Theresa Kerr |
| 30 – Bob Stewart and Penny Shelton |
| 31 – James and Patricia Frost |

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

**August 2022 Worship**

*Italic - first reading and *Bold - Sermon text*



August 7th	First Reading Second Reading	Isaiah 1:1, 10-20 and Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 Fear Not <i>Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16</i> and Gospel Luke 12:32-40
August 14th	First Reading Second Reading	<i>Isaiah 5:1-7</i> and Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19 Biblical Family Values <i>Hebrews 11:29-12:2</i> and Gospel Luke 12:49-56
August 21st	First Reading Second Reading	<i>Jeremiah 1:4-10</i> and Psalm 71:1-6 Sabbath Lessons <i>Hebrews 12:18-29</i> and Gospel Luke 13:10-17
August 28th	First Reading Second Reading	<i>Jeremiah 2:4-13</i> and Psalm 81:1, 10-16 Humble Pie <i>Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16</i> and Gospel Luke 14:1, 7-14

Mission / Outreach Committee OHIO UNIVERSITY CATS' CUPBOARD



Covid continues to take a toll in the Athens area, though a somewhat less serious toll than a year ago. However, Cats' Cupboard, the food and other life-necessities program to meet the needs of Ohio University students, has grown in customers served. 3,000 pantry visits for the year ending June 2022 represents a 30% increase over the previous year.

By year's end, 516 students and OU staff had signed up to receive items as pantry members, according to Merilee Meyer, program coordinator, of the OU Dean of students office. If one counts students' family members, at least 739 people have been served.

Members and friends of FPC and the community at large donate many items to the pantry which students do not, Meyer notes. All donations are vital and are greatly appreciated, she says. Meyer hopes they will continue. Meyer's phone number is 740-593-1800.

Large package donations are also appreciated. Items such as bathroom

tissue and laundry soap. Large packages are sometimes available at stores for a low unit price. Student volunteers at the Cupboard can break them up into smaller boxes or packages.

Cereal, especially oat meal and multi-variety packs of individual size cereal go quickly, according to Meyer. Grab-and-go items like macaroni and mashed potato cups are also popular. Most anything that can be microwaved is also welcomed. Students in dorms have microwaves but not access to a regular oven or stove. Most shoppers are single and do not need large cans of veggies or sauces.

Items that are especially needed include sugar, flour, peanut butter and pasta. Asian and other snacks are always needed.

Recently the Cupboard received a large donation from the Southeast Ohio Food Bank. Community Food Initiative (CFI) provides green beans, strawberries and other fresh produce. The Atrium Café in

Athens donates small packages of coffee, rice and other products. And the Athens Food Rescue collects items from grocery stores, bars and other establishments. These items are nearing the end of shelf life or may be blemished, but still a healthy food.

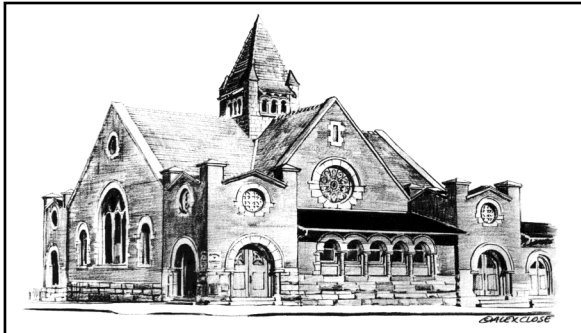
Each month, Meyer and her staff prepare a list of needed items. Wendy Toadvine then shops for items on the list. Alan and Sue Boyd take these items to the pick-up point, at Baker Center the second Tuesday each month. There is also a box for donations on the second floor. Items can also be dropped off at the Boyd's home, 63 Elmwood Place by 9:00 a.m. the that Tuesday.

Monetary donations are always needed to purchase items on the "need" list. Checks can be made out to FPC with "Cats' Cupboard" in the memo line. Drop them in the offering plate on Sundays or mail to the church office at 9 North College Street.



www.athensfpc.org

August 2022



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

Summer Office Hours: Monday - Thursday - 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Friday - 8:30 a.m.-Noon

Clerk of Session: Andrew Stuart

Choir Director: David M. Tadlock

Organist: Janice Robison

CE Co-Directors: Richard and Joan Nease

Bell Choir Director: Tyler Thress

Admin. Assistant, Financial Secretary, Office Custodian:
Jane A. Baker

Church Custodian: Tom Medley

Creative Design and Digital Media Administrator:
Linnea Stevens

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

September 2022 Newsletter Deadline
Monday, August 22nd

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.