

W I N D O W

MARCH 2026

The Monthly Newsletter

of First Presbyterian Church
Athens, OH



March 2026

Sunday, March 1st 2nd Sunday in Lent

10:30 a.m. - Communion
during Worship

Tuesday, March 3rd 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Lenten Soup and Study

Sunday, March 8th 3rd Sunday in Lent

Daylight Savings Time
Begins
10:30 a.m. - Worship

Tuesday, March 10th 5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten Soup and Study

Sunday, March 15th 4th Sunday in Lent 10:30 a.m. - Worship

Tuesday, March 17th 5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten Soup and Study

Sunday, March 22nd 5th Sunday in Lent 10:30 a.m. - Worship

Tuesday March 24th 5:30-7:00 p.m. - Lenten Soup and Study

Sunday, March 29th Palm Sunday

10:30 a.m. -Puppet Minis-
try during Worship



From the Pastor....

Dear Friends,

As we move further into the season of Lent, anticipating Holy Week and journeying to the cross with the disciples and Jesus, I think back to Ash Wednesday and where we began with the invitation to observe a holy Lent. We were invited to consider how we can prepare to celebrate and renew our life in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, leading toward the promise, hope, and rejoicing of Easter. In many ways, the revelation and reassurance of the empty tomb feel even more mysterious this year.

The fear and longing of the women that first morning, the reassurance from Jesus not to be afraid, and his charge to “go and tell” seem increasingly relevant right now. It feels like the world needs the resurrection love of Easter more than ever.

At the beginning of Lent, we were marked with ashes—an outward sign of God’s expansive mercy and the inclusive forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ—reminding us of our mortality and our need for repentance. The ashes remind us of God’s deep love for us as beloved children of God. And they mark the beginning of a Lenten journey that we must approach as a practice throughout this season.

After such a challenging and traumatizing few months that have faced our nation, we have seen clearly the frailty and uncertainty of human life—and our need to turn away from all that separates us from God and one another.

As people of faith, we also recognize the possibility of expansive mercy and inclusive forgiveness.

In my Ash Wednesday meditation I invited us to consider how this Lent might help us fast from anger, division, and fear, while focusing on works of love toward our neighbors that further kindness, humility, and justice. There is an urgency in our nation and in the world to rush toward the joy of Easter, but we must take our time. Our fasting and works of love, our prayerful reflection and penitent practices, our full observance of a holy Lent—all of this gives us courage to accept the healing God offers to us and to the world so that we may move with God in the way of peace.

This Holy Lent has reminded me once again that there are challenges along the way, to be sure. Change, confusion, difficult choices also often mark transition. It doesn’t feel the same, I’ve heard some of you say. That’s true; in transition, some things will change. But even amidst change, what remains consistent is key: we are God’s church, carrying our firm message of hope for a just, loving, joyful, sustainable, and peaceful community.

Like God’s people throughout history, we follow God’s leading, ready to step into God’s future. We’re on the way, in faith and in strength. We are God’s church.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Rob Martin

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

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Dear Church Family,

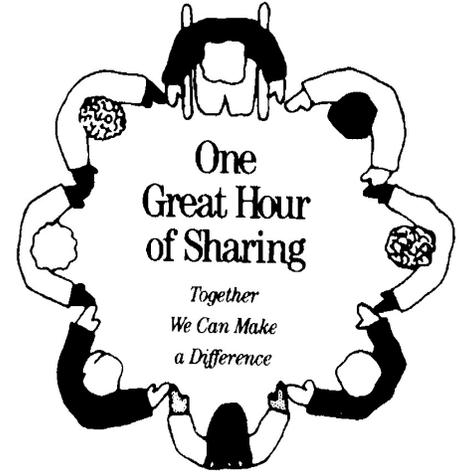
In Isaiah 58, the prophet exclaims, “Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in” (Isaiah 58:12). As the people of Israel returned from the cloud of exile and struggled to rebuild their lives, Isaiah questioned their efforts: [Are you not called] “to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them?” (Isaiah 58:7).

When we give to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), we are combining our efforts with thousands of churches across the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to repair peoples’ lives — people who are hurting, oppressed,

lost or on the margins of society. The exact people about whom Isaiah is speaking of. The people we are called to connect with every day, but especially in the light of the Good News of the resurrection.

I invite you to visit the OGHS website (pcusa.org/oghsmap). Find a partner on the map and see how your gifts are used by the ministries these offerings support all over the world and offer prayers for those who will receive support through this offering. Small changes which, when added together here and around the globe, make huge differences in the lives of our siblings in need.

This is an opportunity for our congregation to recommit to our participation to do our part to participate in God’s ongoing repair of the world God so loves. Look for your envelopes beginning on Palm Sunday.



Easter Flower Order Form



Please Include Form With Your Order

Order Deadline-March 16th

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

Each plant is \$12, choice is first come-first served: lily, tulip or hyacinth.

Number of plants you would like to purchase: _____

In memory/honor of _____

Choose:

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

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

\$ Amount Enclosed _____

Name _____

FPC and Christian Education “Calendar at a Glance”

March 8th - Daylight Savings Time begins - “Spring Forward”
March 8th-14th - Athens City Schools/Ohio University Spring Break

Pi Day Celebration

Pi Day is celebrated on March 14th because the value of Pi is 3.14159... The tradition on Pi Day is to eat pie. Dessert pies, meat pies, vegan pies, pizza pies, etc. Members and friends of the church may bring their favorite pie to share during Fellowship Hour on Sunday, March 15th. Please include the ingredient list. Please let the church office know by Friday, March 13th which pie you will be bringing.

Sunday, March 22nd - 9:45 a.m. - Pretzel Making

All children and youth are invited to make pretzels before church starting at 9:45 a.m. on March 22nd. The pretzels will be baked during worship and then enjoyed during Fellowship Hour.



Women’s Book Study - Fridays at Noon via Zoom

Join Women’s Book Study on Fridays at noon via Zoom as we discuss *The Sacred Art of Lovingkindness* By Rami Shapiro. For more information or to join, please contact the church office at 740-593-3351 or office@athensfpc.org or Joan Nease at christianed@athensfpc.org.

Children’s Sunday School

Grade school and pre-school children are invited to attend Sunday School during Worship. The pre-school children are learning from the *Growing With Gratitude* series and the elementary class lessons are from the *Amazing Adventures* curriculum with stories about Jesus’ ministry. If you would like to help with a class, please, contact Barb Martin at barbaramartin729@msn.com or phone the church office at 740-593-3351. Lesson plans will be provided for all volunteers.



Upcoming Events

Palm Sunday-March 29th
Holy Week– March 29-April 4th
Maundy Thursday-April 2nd
Good Friday –April 3rd
Easter Sunday– April 5th

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

The winter has been a bit hard on the Parish programs, but at the same time interesting. Two Sundays in January church was held at the Hare Home, which helped bring the already close congregation closer.

Monday Bible School continues to meet, and the group all share some kindness that has been part of their life. At one of the meetings Sophia, who with her family is here for a semester from Argentina, and her best friend Jojo, bought each other candy for Valentine's Day as one of their acts of kindness.

On Sunday, March 15th from 11:30 to 2:00 the Parish will hold a bean soup luncheon at the Amesville Presbyterian Church to raise money for Parish camp, which will be held June 21 to 26, 2026 at Geneva Hills. The money will be used for camper-ships for kids and other camp expenses. The cost of the luncheon is

by donation. Come and be part of the great fellowship that happens and at the same time contribute to the camping program.

The blessing boxes at both the Amesville Elementary School and the New England Church have been heavily used this winter because children and youth have missed many days of school. Community folk have been very generous in their blessing box contributions.

Parish Folk wish Rob and Barb Martin happy retirement years as they look forward to this phase in their lives. Athens First Presbyterian Church and its pastors have been very important partners in the life of the Amesville/New England Parish.

~Catherine Hare



Prayer Concern Requests and Visitation

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

Easter Season Events/Services

All Services Available In-person and Via YouTube

Lenten Soup and Studies - March 3rd, 10th, 17th, March 24th
5:30 p.m. - Soup Supper
6:00-7:00 p.m. - Lenten Study

Palm Sunday Service - March 29th, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday Service - April 2nd - 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Good Friday Service - April 3rd - Noon, Sanctuary

Easter Service - Bell Choir and OhioBrass - April 5th, 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary



March 2026 Worship

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

March 1st **Blessed to be a Blessing**

**First Reading Genesis 12:1-4a*
Psalm Psalm 121
Second Reading Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
Gospel John 3:1-17

March 8th **Successful Failure**

First Reading Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm Psalm 95
**Second Reading Romans 5:1-11*
Gospel John 4:5-42

March 15th **To see and be seen**

First Reading 1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm Psalm 23
Second Reading Ephesians 5:8-14
**Gospel John 9:1-41*

March 22nd **Wild Water** (Baptism of Cricket Jane Brandt)

First Reading Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm Psalm 130
Second Reading Romans 6: 1-5
**Gospel Mark 1: 4-11*

March 29th **Triumph and Tragedy**

Liturgy of the Palms Readings:

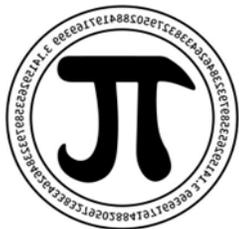
Psalm Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
**Reading Matthew 21:1-11*

Liturgy of the Passion Readings:

First Reading Isaiah 50:4-9a
Second Psalm Psalm 31:9-16
Second Reading Philippians 2:5-11
Gospel Matthew 26:14-27:66



PI DAY



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

We are asking you, the members of the church to bring your favorite pie to share during fellowship on Sunday, March 15th. Please include ingredient list. You can let the church office know by Friday, March 13th, which pie you are bringing. We will provide whipped cream and vanilla ice cream.

Windows ON: Ghana School Project Ghana + Ohio

Thanks to the hard work of Lois Harkins and Samuel Amany, a much-needed school project of support and love came to fruition in December. The Ghana + Ohio connection came into being when Samuel suggested that Lois should visit Ghana and their school system where Samuel had taught.

Lois thought that was a great idea and wanted to spearhead a project of support for both academic and athletic dreams of the schools in Ghana. She was able to secure grants from Alpha Delta State Ohio Education Foundation's Educational Services Project Grants, seed money from family and friends, and donations from Athens First Presbyterian Church to purchase athletic uniforms and equipment and academic materials for the Village School, as it was deemed to have the greatest need.

Samuel assembled a Ghana Team to work with each of the five schools, determining needs and numbers of students, wholesale suppliers, and developing communication with school contacts. Lois' job was to assemble an Ohio Team to help with organization and recordkeeping to ensure fiscal responsibility.

The project was able to provide the following academic supplies: two

desktop computers, one printer, tools to engrave computers and printers, three cartons of computer paper, three replacement ink cartridges, 200 green backpacks with Ghana + Ohio, 300 kindergarten exercise books, 800 primary-junior high exercise books, three alphabet charts, three number charts, two graphing boards, one teacher wooden math set, 75 class student wooden math sets, one set of kindergarten supplies (coloring books, class books, pencils, crayons, sharpeners, erasers, teacher markers), two sets primary supplies (class books, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, highlighters), two sets junior high supplies (class books, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, highlighters, pens).

The project also supplied the following athletic supplies: 48 running vests with matching shorts for volleyball and track for 5 schools, 96 soccer jerseys with matching shorts for 5 schools, 12 volleyballs for 5 schools, 12 soccer balls for 5 schools, 1 volleyball net for high school and community use, one set of uniforms for each of the 5 schools for soccer, volleyball, and track. An additional set of uniforms was purchased for district level competitions.

A Fellowship Hour program is being planned in March to hear the full story of Lois and Samuel's trip with pictures and time to share their many experiences of their trip to Ghana.

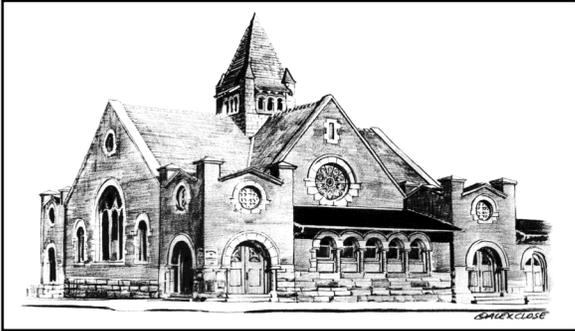


Windows ON: GHANA SCHOOL PROJECT PICTURES



First Presbyterian Church
9 North College Street
Athens, OH 45701

March 2026



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

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



Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robert E. Martin

Church: Corner of Court and Washington Streets
Office: 9 North College Street

Office Hours: Monday - Friday - 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Clerk of Session: Andrew Stuart

Choir Director: David M. Tadlock

Organist: Janice Robison

CE Co-Directors: Richard and Joan Nease

Bell Choir Director: Peter Haley

Administrative Assistant: Debbie Perry

Church Custodian: Tom Medley

Phone: (740) 593-3351 **FAX:** (740) 593-3352
E-Mail: office@athensfpc.org **Web:** www.athensfpc.org

Worship Service: In person service and can be seen live on YouTube. It is also recorded and under Worship Archives.

Bible Study: Tuesdays at 12:00 Noon in the church library and via Zoom

April 2026 Newsletter Deadline
Monday, March 26th

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.