

May 2025

**Sunday, May 4th**  
**3rd Sunday of Easter**  
10:30 a.m. - Communion,  
During Worship

**Sunday May 11th**  
**4th Sunday of Easter**  
**Mother's Day**  
10:30 a.m. - Worship

**Sunday, May 18th**  
**5th Sunday of Easter**  
10:30 a.m. - Worship

**Sunday, May 25th**  
**6th Sunday of Easter**  
10:30 a.m. - Worship



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

# WINDOW

MAY 2025

The Monthly Newsletter of  
First Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ohio



## From the Pastor....

**Psalm 42:7 "Deep calls to deep at the  
thunder of your cataracts; all your waves  
and your billows have gone over me."**

I first heard the line years ago from my grandmother. I don't remember the occasion, but I'll never forget the comment because it seemed so out of character for the family matriarch. "When bad things happen," she said, eyes almost averted, her head shaking slightly, "they always come in threes."

I had no clue where she got that idea, nor why she believed it. Grandma Hoyt could not have pointed anywhere in scripture for that idea, as she well could have for most of her foundational beliefs. But this ancient bit of folklore—does it have pagan roots?—never fully left her mind and heart. "Bad things happen in threes." She wasn't—isn't—the only one to say it or believe it. Google it sometime.

Can it be true? I don't know that anyone could do the research. But it must have seemed a valid perception for generations of human beings caught in the kind of downward spiral that the writer of Psalm 42 must have been in while putting pen to papyrus. And, as we all must sadly admit, often as not perception creates its own realities.

Is it silly? Sure. If we expect it to be true, we may be silly. But the sheer age of that odd idea argues for some ageless relevance.

Whether or not it's true isn't as important perhaps as the fact its sentiment has offered comfort and strength to human suffering.

True believers expect something more than they've already gone through, some additional misery if they have already been stung twice.



By repeating the old line, Grandma was steeling herself for the next sadness, anticipating that three would mean the end of sorrows, at least for a while.

My guess is that ancient folk wisdom finds a place in the human psyche not because it's true, but because it's comforting: it brings order to chaos. Sad to say, there are three coming, but at least that's it.

Interesting, I think, that Eugene Peterson uses the word chaos in his version of this verse: "chaos calls to chaos," he says. And he's just as right as anyone, I suppose, for it's impossible to claim biblical inerrancy when it comes to a verse like this. The KJV says "waterspouts" where the NIV says "waterfalls," wholly different phenomena. The fact is, nobody really knows what specifically is meant by "deep calls to deep."

And yet everyone who's faced a march of consecutive sadnesses knows very well. *"When sorrows come, they come not single spies but in battalions,"* Shakespeare says in Hamlet, an even more depressing assessment than Grandma's.

We really don't know what the writer means here, but many readers of Psalm 42 somehow get it. Our lives on occasion feel like Thomas Hardy novels, when things simply seem to get worse and worse and worse, and don't get better.

There are no vivid pictures embedded in the line "deep calls to deep," but that doesn't mean there isn't meaning enough for most of us to find ourselves in it. We can't avoid the painful reality of the soul that's sliced opened

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to us in Psalm 42: the singer who  
believes in the light but sees nothing but  
darkness around him. And maybe,  
thankfully, what's there is the outline  
of a third bad thing.

~Pastor Rob



*Church office will be closed on  
May 26th in observance of  
Memorial Day*



### **May Birthdays**

- 1 – Adrienne Nagy
- 2 – Kevin Gillespie  
Kimberly Goldsberry  
Samantha Hauser
- 5 – Guy Philips  
Ron Strickmaker
- 9 – Betsy Parks Joslyn  
Jennifer Strickmaker
- 10 – Kent Knudson

- 11 – Tom Fisher  
Craig Seitz
- 12 – Susan Kaneshige
- 14 – Lillian Dinos
- 15 – Noah Heinrich  
Lucas Kemmerle
- 16 – Stacey Strickmaker
- 17 – Dia Knudson
- 19 – Jason Heinrich  
Scott Musick
- 20 – Alan Goldsberry  
Samuel Goldsberry  
William Goldsberry  
Sara Hughes
- 23 – Don Borchert  
Angela Yehl
- 24 – Fiona Mitchell Yun  
Bonnie Savage
- 26 – Reece Bacak  
Sandy Nesbitt  
Jean Seitz

- 28 – Miriam Garcellano  
Catherine Hare
- 31 – Joe Malesick

### **May Anniversaries**

- 19 - John and Helen King
- 20 - Jeremy and Lisa Yehl
- 23 - Kevin and Terri Gillespie



### **FPC Church Elders:**

- 2025** Adrienne Nagy, Andrew Stuart, and David Tees
- 2026** Sharon Huge, Linda Parsons, Jane Woodrow, and Hugh Woods
- 2027** Harvey Ballard, John King, Susan Loughridge, and Sandy Nesbitt

### **FPC Board of Deacons:**

- 2025** Alan Boyd, Mary Costello, Kim Jordan, Becky Pankratz and Ellen Sostarich
- 2026** Helen King, Joyce Mullins, Harold Robison, Riley Smoot, and Ayse Suer
- 2027** Carolyn Allen, Margaret Bourke, Bobbi Conliffe, Lois Harkins, and Carol Perry



## Christian Education News



### Presbyterian Youth Triennium - Louisville, Kentucky - July 28-July 31

The national youth conference, Presbyterian Youth Triennium, will take place this year from July 28-July 31, in Louisville, Kentucky. Thousands of high school age youth and their adult youth workers will participate in four days of worship, recreation, bible study, outreach, and faith formation all around the theme of “As If We Were Dreaming”. Scholarship funding is available - please contact the church office at 740-593-3351 or [office@athensfpc.org](mailto:office@athensfpc.org) for more information.



### 2025 Graduates and Volunteer Recognition Sunday

FPC will be honoring all high school and college graduates from the church and church volunteers from the Choir, Bell Choir, and Christian Education teachers and helpers on May 18th. Please let the church office know of folks who should be included by May 14th to facilitate inclusion in the bulletin insert.

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

Join Women's Book Study on Fridays at noon as we discuss *The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible* by A.J. Jacobs. For more information or to join, please contact the church office at 740-593-3351 or [office@athensfpc.org](mailto:office@athensfpc.org) or Joan Nease at [christianed@athensfpc.org](mailto:christianed@athensfpc.org).

### Children's Sunday School

In May, the preschool/kindergarten class will be hearing about the lessons that Jesus taught. The elementary class will explore how Jesus prepared the disciples to lead the church. For more information contact Barb Martin at [barbaramartin729@msn.com](mailto:barbaramartin729@msn.com)

## Upcoming Events

*Mother's Day* - May 11, 2025

*Athens High School Graduation* - May 24, 2025

*Memorial Day* - May 26, 2025

*Outdoor Worship Service and Pentecost* - June 8, 2025

*Father's Day* - June 15, 2025

*Independence Day* - July 4, 2025

*Copperheads Faith Night at the Ball Park* - Date to be determined

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

Almost 60 people were in attendance for the Easter Service, led by Carrie-Ator James, circuit rider for the Hocking Valley District of the United Methodist Church.

Communion was celebrated; two groups played choir chimes...a group of younger children and one of teen-agers; and fellowship enjoyed during the passing of the peace.

Monday Bible School continues to meet with up to 12 children and youth attending. The group has been studying different phases of Jesus' life.

Parish Camp is being held at Geneva Hills Outdoor Education Center near Lancaster from June 22-27, 2025. Bible Study/Morning Watch will be based on the

theme "Jesus Cares and so Should We."

There are openings for both counsellors and campers. The cost of five days at camp is \$125, with campership help available for those who may need help defraying the camp fee. If anyone is interested in being a counselor for the camp session, please contact Catherine Hare, 740-448-6401 or [harecf@frontier.com](mailto:harecf@frontier.com).

The next meeting of the Parish Ministry Committee is Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at the church.

Church worship is every Sunday at 10 a.m. with various people leading worship each Sunday.



## Windows ON: Church Support Committee FINANCIAL REPORT

Income and Expenses, 2025			
Offering Budgeted for 2025	\$250,000	Offering Received to Date	\$111,801
Other Income Budgeted for 2025 (endowment, parking lot lease, Putnam apt. rent, interest)	\$187,000	Other Income Received to Date	\$64,960
<b>Total Income Budgeted 2025</b>	<b>\$437,000</b>	<b>Total Income (Received to Date)</b>	<b>\$176,761</b>
Current Assets (checking & petty cash)	-----	Total Cash on Hand	\$36,336
<b>Expenses Budgeted in 2025</b>	<b>\$468,739</b>	<b>Expenses to Date</b>	<b>\$127,705</b>
Other Endowment and Contribution Activity in 2025			
Special Offerings (Christmas Joy, Pentecost, One Great Hour of Sharing, and Peacemaking)	\$4,035	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.)	\$613	Disbursed to appropriate agency or group	
Memorial Gifts (Martha Bratton)	\$388	Disbursed as directed by donors	
Offering gifts designated for the Discretionary Fund (Local Emergencies)	\$360	To be distributed by the Pastor for local emergencies	
Gifts supporting AFPC Mission Projects	\$450	Used for AFPC mission work projects including Cat's Cupboard	
Church World Service - Blanket Fund	\$1,504	Sent to Church World Service	



## Windows ON:

LOUISVILLE — As a spiritual care provider for 25 years — the last 16 as a memory care chaplain — the Rev. Kathy Fogg Berry was a great choice to present a webinar on “When Words Fail: Spiritual Care and Dementia,” which aired Wednesday. The Schlegel-University of Waterloo Research Institute for Aging at Conrad Grebel University College offered the webinar.

Berry’s 2018 book is “When Words Fail: Practical Ministry to People with Dementia and Their Caregivers.”

To begin her presentation, Berry displayed a clip of dandelion petals being blown off in a breeze. She called it “a good analogy for what it’s like to have dementia. You lose memories kind of randomly, and it’s unique for every individual experiencing dementia,” Berry said. As such, “we need to be creative in how we communicate with them and relate to them, and build a relationship of trust and care.”

When communication is compromised, it can cause frustration, anger, fear and confusion to people experiencing dementia. That can also be true for those who have had a stroke, suffered head trauma or have been diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. It’s “a double-edged thing,” she said, since people visiting or building a relationship with someone experiencing dementia “can feel awkward not knowing what to say.” “We need to learn to practice more than words,” Berry said. “We need to be creative sometimes.”

Common spiritual needs for those experiencing dementia are unconditional love, reassurance, support, encouragement, trust, acceptance, inclusion and hope, Berry said. She suggested doing a spiritual assessment with the person or their caregivers or both, although not all at once.

Ask questions like these:

What gives you comfort, peace, strength, purpose or hope?

What helps you feel closest to God or most complete? Examples can include nature, family and friends, prayer, meditation, music, worship, art, animals, one’s faith community, and exercise.

What spiritual or religious rituals, symbols and practices are important to you? These can again include prayer, worship, meditation, and scripture, along with yoga, music, icons, candles and scents.

“We all have things that nurture our spirit,” Berry said. “We need to ... find out what that is for each person. By doing that, we can offer person-centered care.” “One last piece of advice she gave: “When words fail, simply love,” Berry said. “That’s the most important thing we need to do.”

### May 2025 Worship

*Italic—first reading and \*Bold—preaching text*

May 4<sup>th</sup> Tender Words

First Reading Acts 9:1-6 (7-20)

Psalm Psalm 30

Second Reading Revelation 5:11-14

**\*Gospel John 21:1-19**

May 11<sup>th</sup> The Good Shepherd

First Reading Acts 9:36-43

Psalm Psalm 23

Second Reading Revelation 7:9-17

**\*Gospel John 10:22-30**

May 18<sup>th</sup> The Home of God

First Reading Acts 11:1-18

Psalm Psalm 148:1-14

**\*Second Reading Revelation 21:1-6**

Gospel John 13:31-35

May 25<sup>th</sup> And all shall be well

First Reading Acts 16:9-15

Psalm Psalm 67:1-7

Second Reading Revelation 21:10, 21:22-22:5

**Gospel John 5:1-9**

First Reading

**\*Preaching Text**

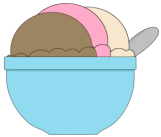


### Prayer Concern Requests and Visitation

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](mailto:office@athensfpc.org)

## 2025 Concerts and Ice Cream Socials

Ice cream and sorbet socials will once again take place after the Ohio University “Under the Elms” Concerts. The social will be held on the front porch at Putnam House (church office). Join in fellowship and enjoy some ice cream! More details to follow in the June issue of WINDOWS.



## *Welcome to the 3rd<sup>d</sup> Annual Trail Prayer Walk*

**Saturday, May 17, 2025 10:00 a.m.**

*Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of God's hands.*

Hockhocking Adena Bikeway

BEAUMONT PARKING AREA\*

Hamley Run Road, The Plains, Ohio

Restroom open 24/7

Near mile 11 on the bike path

We will gather Saturday morning at the Beaumont parking area and walk the bike path heading north towards Nelsonville. We'll walk along the Hockhocking Adena Bikeway, where we will be surrounded on both sides by plentiful spring wildflowers in bloom in the Bluebell Preserve. Following the walk you are encouraged to join us for lunch at the Eclipse company store in The Plains.

You can hear the movement of animals, birds, and insects. To make your walk more interesting, bring a nature identification book or download apps like iNaturalist or Merlin Bird ID.







### MISSION TRIP 2025 July 20-26 Point Pleasant West Virginia



Come join your fellow members this summer as we volunteer our time and talents once again to the West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and workcamps. Since October 2001, WVMAW has brought 40-75 volunteer groups per year to work in West Virginia. Their work has consisted of home repair and reconstruction, deconstruction, playground restoration, parks cleanup, streambank stabilization, and vacation Bible schools, among other things. But more than just working with hammers and nails, the groups have built relationships with people in West Virginia, changing lives in the name of Jesus Christ. WVMAW is supported in part by The Presbytery of West Virginia, The Synod of the Trinity, and gifts from churches and individuals. It has a close relationship with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, particularly in times of disaster recovery.

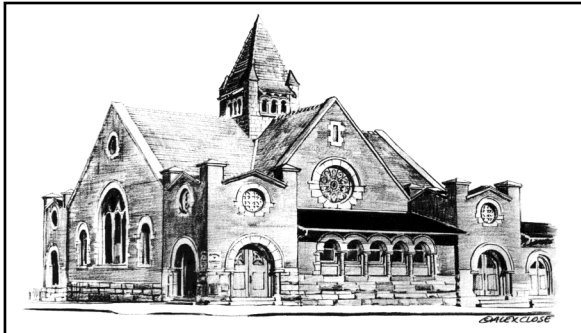
Groups stay in the Presbyterian Church in Point Pleasant. Two Sunday school rooms are converted into dormitories with bunk beds to accommodate approximately 18 people each. There are four showers. There is a fully equipped kitchen with two stoves, a commercial refrigerator, upright freezer, and microwave, silverware, plates, cups, pots, pans, and cooking utensils.

The cost for week-long mission experiences is \$300/person, scholarships available.



www.athensfpc.org

May 2025



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



Phone: 740-593-3351

Fax: 740-593-3352

Email: [office@athensfpc.org](mailto:office@athensfpc.org)

Web: [athensfpc.org](http://athensfpc.org)

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:** Anna Crum

**Administrative Assistant:** Debbie Perry

**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

**June 2025 Newsletter Deadline**  
**Thursday, May 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.