

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR:**

What's the best party you've ever been to? Maybe it was a birthday? A wedding? A college party or New Years? Or maybe just one of those events that just seems to happen. Laughter, food, dancing. An event you talk about and remember for years to come. Maybe even a memory so strong that you want to replicated it again, but it was so magical that other attempts to recreate that party just fall short.

What's the best party you've ever been to? Do you have a memory?

I'm a typical "oldest child" and having fun and lightening up does not come natural to me. This was especially true when I was younger. I couldn't see the point. I'm so grateful for good friends who have helped me relax and have some fun. I've taken their admonition "Lighten up" to heart. As a matter of fact, I've often heard the voice of Jesus say, "Lighten up!" Life is hard. Life is short. Sometimes a good party is what the moment requires.

I'm so excited about our Fall Festival on October 25th after worship... or maybe as a continuation of our worship! I love it when people plan a good time. Like I said, fun does come to me naturally, but when planned, I'm ready to join in.

I was reminded of this during my weekly visit to the "We Wash Everything" car wash. This car wash intentionally employs people coming out of prison, out of rehab, or out of homelessness. I bring lunch and we have a conversation about the bible passage I'm preaching that coming Sunday. In that conversation Latimer said,

"Pastor, how many rehab facilities are there in Athens?"

I didn't know. He pressed me to guess. I couldn't.

He said, "Let me ask the question this way. How many churches are on the square in Athens? How many are close to downtown? How many out New Cut Road? How many down Hine Street? How many out 72?" Again, I wasn't getting the point. He made it plain. "Everyone of those churches should be a place for hurting people to get well. Every church is a rehab center. We often forget that we are a hospital for broken people."

Often in the gospels, Jesus is partying with the "wrong" people. The primary accusation of the good church folks and religious leaders was that Jesus was the friend of sinners. He ate with those sinners and tax collectors. You know who knows how to party? A person deeply loved. A person set free. A person who experiences wholeness and healing in their life. Or as the story goes, "We had to celebrate for this son of mine was lost and is found. He was dead and now is alive."

May God continue to make us the kind of church that welcomes and loves people through whatever they are going through. May all of our parties and fun reflect the joy, delight, and acceptance we have come to know in Jesus.

Serving Together On the Square,

Jim



PRAYER REQUESTS:

THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY:

Brandon Noel - Army
 Sean Miller - Army
 Adam Naves - Marines
 Damien Williams - Army
 Kevin O'Neill-Army Nat. Guard
 Joshua Hargrove - Deployed
 Jay Tulley- Middle East
 Terrance Wilson- Deployed
 Justin Ruf- Army Air Guard
 Joshua Wilcox - Marines
 Billy Nelson- Air Guard

FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Hazel Ruf (Mason Ruf's mother, home)
 Gary Kilgo (Health, Kay Baugher & Carol Quillen's family member)
 Karen Ferguson (Potter's Hand)
 Keith Clem (Healing, cousin of Chris Paysinger)
 Amy Cotten (Potter's Hand)
 Telula Thornton (Healing and Comfort, mother of Karan Baker)
 Martha Taylor(Healing, mother of John Cagle)
 Silvey Family (Healing, daughter, 3 years old)
 Maryann McKee (Healing, friend of Carol Copeland)
 Shannon Underwood (Healing, daughter of Barbara Welborn)
 Cadence Brooks (Healing, student of Cindy Witt)
 Karryl Anderson (Healing, Mexico mission supporter)
 Gerry Smith (Healing for knees and back, cousin of Jan Ruth)
 Tim Swymer (Healing, Lauren Cagle's uncle)
 Ronnie Cottles (Healing, father-in-law of Michae & Gail Cottles)
 Leigh Ann Looyenga (Healing, friend of Gina Haraway)
 MaryJo Ghadimi (Healing, friend of Matt Robinson)
 Allison Hargrove Bains (Sympathy, niece of Diann Copeland)
 Great Uncle of Rosie Sims (Hospice)
 Widower Heath, Children Bess and David (Grieving Laura Christopher,
 friend of Suzanne Paysinger)
 Judy Cramer (Healing, neighbor of Jan Ruth)
 Sue Guyer (Healing, sister of Bonny Noel)
 Macie Garrett (Healing, 12 years old, great niece of Christy Arnett)
 Evelyn Walker (Health/Healing, daughter of Sarah Pearson Walker)
 Maureen Mathes (Healing/Health, cousin of Jan Ruth)
 Margaret Gray (Health, mother of Travis Gray)
 Jody Bullard (Health/Healing, friend of Joyce Amptmeyer)
 Mary Roper (Healing, family of Matt Robinson)
 Heather Hopcraft (Health/ Healing, comfort, family of Matt Robinson)

CHURCH FAMILY:

Marv & Elizabeth Price (Health)
 Doris Welch (Home)
 Dean Steele
 Susie Fogg (Home)
 Sharon Massey
 Melvin & Ruth Clem (Health)
 Duane Counter (Healing)
 Suzanne Weeks (Healing)
 Jac Catlett
 Diane Lynn (Health)
 Gale Cottles (Healing)
 Charlotte Lyle (Healing)

The Ministry Collaborative (TMC) Story Telling Project

Last month the Session voted for a cohort as part of this Storytelling Project. Six to nine people from FPC will participate in the cohort for twelve to fifteen months. The purpose of the cohort is to help congregations tell the stories that shape us and our community, attend to the story of God's redemption, and the ongoing story of God in the world. Then participants will learn how to tell stories about where our story and God's story intersect.

What is required? Openness to learn. Ability to attend a 2-hour once-a-month meeting of the cohort and participate in some retreat-style gatherings. (Depending on the group, maybe a single night away at Camp Maranatha.) The group will receive materials and coaching from TMC at no cost. Funding will also cover retreats. (The Lilly Foundation is financing this project.) YOU DON'T have to be a good or natural storyteller to be part of this group. Storytelling is a skill to learn and practice, not a gift or quality to possess. We are hoping for a multi-generational group. We could use a few people in the 25-49 age group.

If you are interested, contact Jim at jim.truesdell@fpcathens.org for more information.

Extended Communion

Are you an ordained elder?

Preferably not currently serving on the Session?

Are you looking for a mission that is both very rewarding and a greatly needed service?

Something that requires only an hour or so a month on Communion Sundays, whenever you are available?

Then serving extended Communion is a great personal mission for you!

Our congregation has a long history of serving Communion at home or in the hospital for church members (and sometimes family and friends) who are not able to get to the church for Communion with the rest of the congregation. However, over the past number of years, an organized effort to do so had slipped away.

In December of 2024, the Session approved restarting regular extended Communion, beginning in January of 2025. Since then, a group of regular volunteers has served extended Communion to 6 to 8 each Communion Sunday.

Please prayerfully consider whether this is a personal mission for you. If God so calls you, please answer as Isaiah did, "Here I am, Lord, send me".

Then contact Don Payne or Tom Clem.

Nominating Committee

Each year we elect 3 new elders to serve the church. Elders are spiritual leaders who discern the work of the Holy Spirit and provide for the governance of God's people. God calls imperfect people to this work. Nevertheless, the Spirit raises up people of integrity who love of God and strive to love neighbor. This year the chairperson of the Nominating Committee is Brad Green. He will help the Nominating Committee prayerfully and thoughtfully call people to this important work.

Please include Brad and the Nominating Committee in your prayers. Ask God to identify the right leaders for this time.

If you are asked to serve, be open. Here are the some of the basic responsibilities of an elder.

1. An elder is growing in faith and obedience to Jesus. My goal is that every elder believe that they have grown in faith during the 3 year term of service. This is my primary goal for each elder. The work will get done, but we're not going to lose our soul doing it.
2. An elder knows how to use their gifts and is willing to learn new things to serve others.
3. Each elder will chair a standing committee (Worship, Education, Property, etc) or a special work group (Stewardship or Nominating).
4. Attend "elder training" before term starts. (4 hours: to cover the Book of Order requirements) Probably one Sunday afternoon this fall.
5. Attend 10 session meetings a year. We have 30 minutes of prayer together at the start of each meeting. (Being with Jesus before we work for Jesus.) And most meetings are 90 minutes.

October 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	PLAYIN' AND PRAYIN' REVIVAL 5PM	PW CIRCLE RODGERS CENTER 1:00 PM	9:00-12:00 PM THE POTTERS HAND POTTERY STUDIO CHOIR PRACTICE 6:30	1	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3
4 COMMUNION 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 FELLOWSHIP 10AM WORSHIP	5 PLAYIN' AND PRAYIN' REVIVAL 5PM	6	7 9:00-12:00 PM THE POTTERS HAND POTTERY STUDIO CHOIR PRACTICE 6:30	8	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10
11 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 FELLOWSHIP 10AM WORSHIP	12 PLAYIN' AND PRAYIN' REVIVAL 5PM	13 MISSION SHOWER DAY SESSION MEETING REVIVAL 6PM	14 9:00-12:00 PM THE POTTERS HAND POTTERY STUDIO CHOIR PRACTICE 6:30	15	16 OFFICE CLOSED	17
18 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 FELLOWSHIP 10AM WORSHIP	19 PLAYIN' AND PRAYIN' REVIVAL 5PM	20	21 9:00-12:00 PM THE POTTERS HAND POTTERY STUDIO CHOIR PRACTICE 6:30	22	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24
25 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 FELLOWSHIP 10AM WORSHIP	26 PLAYIN' AND PRAYIN' REVIVAL 5PM	27	28 9:00-12:00 PM THE POTTERS HAND POTTERY STUDIO CHOIR PRACTICE 6:30	29	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31

SUBMISSIONS FOR GRAPEVINE AND THE MONTHLY CALENDAR SHOULD BE SENT BY EMAIL
(FPCATHENS@FPCATHENS.ORG) OR BY PHONE (256-232-0122) BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH.

October Birthdays

2nd Price BOYD

5th Charles PATTERSON

7th David WHITTEN

11th John COLVIN

12th Carol CREECH

14th Courtney GREENE

14th Destiny SIMS

15th Margaret Ellen JACKSON

15th Dennis Boydstun

16th Marv PRICE

17th DeAnna MCNEILL

18th Richard CHRISTENSEN

24th Judy MUNROE

25th Kat GREENE

30th Gina GARTH



Dear friends at First Pres,
Thank you so much for your continued
generosity to Faith Ministry and the
families here in Mexico. Your dedication
truly means the world to us. We are
hoping to see some folks from the church
down here soon, and in the meantime,
know that your support makes a difference.
Blessings,
Colleen Hernandez



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

The Churchwide Special Offerings — One Great Hour of Sharing, World Communion Offering, and Christmas Joy Offering — are ways Presbyterians collectively participate in ministries of justice, hunger, disaster, Christian formation, education, peacemaking, leadership development and global witness.

Offering Seasons for 2026



One Great Hour of Sharing | Season of Lent

Received during the season of Lent, especially Palm Sunday or Easter

pcusa.org/oghs

Resources distributed in January



World Communion Offering | Season of Preparation

Received during the Season of Preparation, especially World Communion Sunday

pcusa.org/wco

Resources distributed in July



Christmas Joy Offering | Season of Advent and Christmas

Received during the season of Advent, especially the Sunday before Christmas

pcusa.org/christmasjoy

Resources distributed in October

REMITTING FUNDS:

Congregations

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PO Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Mid Councils

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PO Box 643751
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3751

CONTACT:

special.offerings@pcusa.org
800-728-7228, ext. 5047
pcusa.org/specialofferings



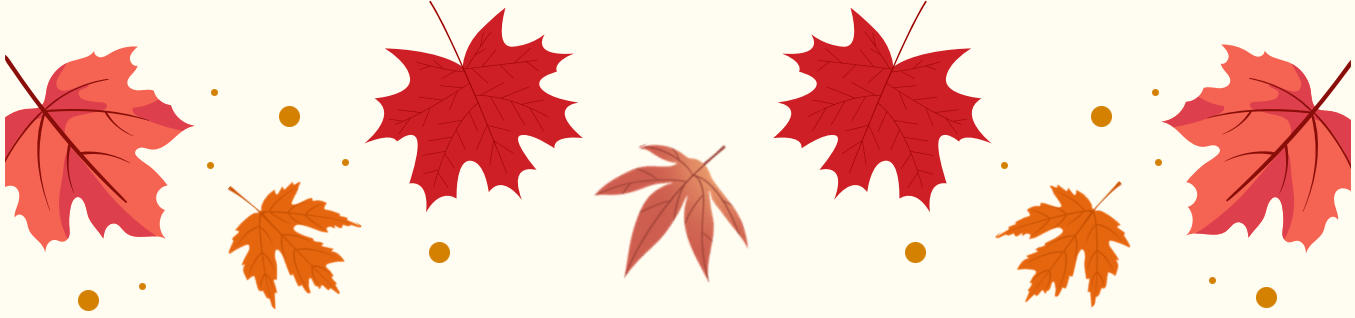
ONE GREAT
HOUR OF SHARING



WORLD COMMUNION
OFFERING



CHRISTMAS JOY
OFFERING



You Are Invited To The

FPC

Fall Festival

**Trunk or Treat (Wear your Costumes) | Arts & Crafts |
Kid's Game | Chili Lunch (11:00 AM Revival)**

OCTOBER

SUNDAY

25
REVIVAL

AT 12:00 PM



October 25th Chili Cookoff Submission Requirements:

- 1. Traditional beef chili will be judged in the competition. If you are bringing an alternative chili, wonderful, just let kelly know. However, we are comparing apples to apples in competition.**
- 2. Prepare about 20 servings of Chili. Preferably, serve from crockpot. Your submission must be anonymous.**
- 3. There will be a Judges Award and a People's Choice Award.**

To register to be a chili cookoff competitor please email Kelly Wessler at FPCathens@Fpcathens.org

