

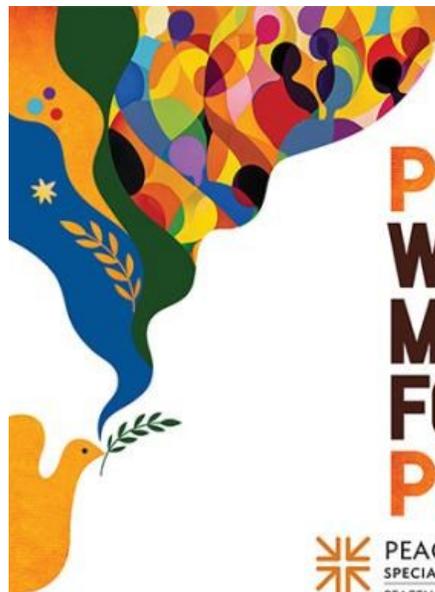
UNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1342 PROSPECT ROAD
ASHTABULA OH 44004
www.trinityashtabula.org

OCTOBER 2025
NEWSLETTER



“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall
be called sons and daughters of God.”

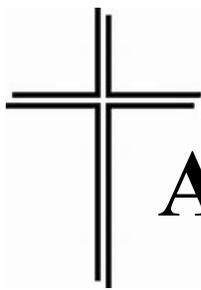
Matthew 5:9



PURSU
WHAT
MAKES
FOR
PEACE.



PEACE & GLOBAL WIT
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION



Ashtabula Times



All Services are at
10am

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgical Day</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Anthem</u>
10/5/2025	27th Sunday in O.T.	First Pres.	Special Music
10/12/2025	28th Sunday in O.T.	First Pres.	Special Music
10/19/2025	29th Sunday in O.T.	First Pres.	Special Music
10/26/2025	30th Sunday in O.T.	First Pres.	Special Music
11/2/2025	All Saints Day	Trinity	3 Church Choir
11/9/2025	32nd Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	3 Church Choir
11/16/2025	33rd Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	3 Church Choir
11/23/2025	Christ the King Sunday	Trinity	3 Church Choir
11/30/2025	1st Sunday of Advent	Trinity	3 Church Choir
12/7/2025	2nd Sunday of Advent	First Pres.	Special Music
12/14/2025	3rd Sunday of Advent	First Pres.	Special Music
12/21/2025	4th Sunday of Advent	First Pres.	Special Music
12/24/2025	Christmas Eve	First Pres.	Special Music
12/28/2025	First Sunday of Christmas	First Pres.	Special Music

REPORT FROM MERGING COMMITTEE

The Merger Committee is hard at work organizing and scheduling the list of items necessary to complete the Merger of East Side and Trinity in a timely fashion.

The Presbytery has approved the merger as presented and will now provide our new PIN number.

The by-laws have been prepared and reviewed by the Committee and will be discussed at the town hall meeting in October.

The manual of operations is the next item for the committee to review, revise and present.

A tentative outline of events needed to complete the merger has been prepared and will guide us in completing the tasks as needed.

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for October 22, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.





Ashtabula Times

JOINT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Meeting held September 21, 2025, following Worship

COMPLETED MISSION PROJECTS FOR 2025:

The Pentecost collection was completed and will be forwarded to Stacy's House.

School Supplies delivered to Dragon Empowerment Center at First Christian Church. These items will be distributed to students from the individual centers at the Wade Avenue Campus and Junior High.

Raffle Baskets, approximately 8, were delivered to Homesafe for their annual fund-raiser event.



2025 AGENDA

Please retain so you can choose how you wish to share your blessings with these mission projects throughout the year.

- **Peace and Global Witness Offering to be collected Sept 1 – 10/5 – 25% of funds collected will be given to Homesafe.**
- **Collection for St. John's Nurse for kids in need. Bin placed in sanctuary with list of items. We will collect through October.**
- **Catholic Charity Blanket Collection – October/November**
- **We have agreed to donate 800 water bottles to the Bethlehem Experience. These bottles will be labeled with scripture and the names of the churches donating.**
- **Children Services Adoption – November**
- **Christmas Joy Offering**
- **Hat, Glove, Mitten Tree – December to be put up at First Presbyterian**



UNITY WOMEN'S GROUP – Old Mill Winery 10/22 at 4:00- p.m.

NEXT MEETING – October 19, 2025, FOLLOWING WORSHIP



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

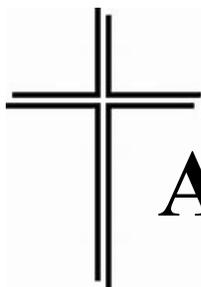
RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program)

For information visit ashtabulagiveback.org or contact Stephanie Blessing – Ameri core – 440-670-9125 to volunteer

G.O. Ministries

Breakfast at First Baptist Church M-F – Feeding homeless 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Pam Bloom and Edie Makynen: co-chairpersons



Ashtabula Times

MEETING SCHEDULE

Game Day—Tuesday, October 14th, and 28th, 11:30am at Unity
 Town Hall Meeting—Wednesday, October 1st, 6:30pm at Unity
 Tri-Church Lunch Packing—Thursday, October 9th 10am at Unity
 Worship and Music—Monday, October 13th at 6:30 at Unity
 ROMEOs—Tuesday, October 14th, 9am at Deb’s Diner
 Joint Ministerial Relations Committee—Tuesday, October 14th, 6:30pm at Unity
 Trinity Property/Finance—Wednesday, October 15th, 6pm at Unity
 Trinity Session—Wednesday, October 15th, 7pm at Unity
 Deacons—Sunday, October 19th following worship at First Pres.
 Outreach —Sunday, October 19th, after worship at First Pres.
 East Side Session—Monday, October 20th, 6:30pm at East Side
 Merging Committee —Wednesday, October 22nd, 6:30pm at Unity



EASTSIDE’S BIRTHDAYS

3rd Alex Burnham
 14th Jim Booth
 28th Gary Quine
 31st Kelly Bodnark



EASTSIDE’S ANNIVERSARIES

15th Becki & Paul Cleveland

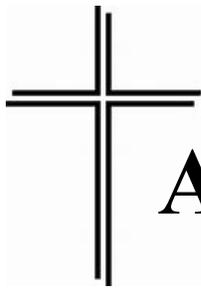
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

A huge, sincere note of thanks goes out to all of those who helped with the preparation of the Celebration of Life event for East Side Presbyterian Church. Thanks to the Trinity Deacons and Friends who provided an amazing amount of delicious food and for manning the kitchen. And thank you to all the 80+ people who attended to reminisce and renew old friendships from the past. We are truly blessed!

PRAYER LIST



Genny Wallace, Berniece Boggs, Jim & Rose Booth, Jim & Caroline Johnston, Courtney Wetzel, Randy Cotton, Dale Fassett, Beverly, Kay, Pat Ford, Those Suffering from Addiction, Riese, Tim, Keith Soy, Friends in tough times, Barb Beatty, and Joanna Fisher



Ashtabula Times



Ashtabula County Choral Music Society

Free Concert

Donations appreciated

Presented in collaboration with Hubbard House Underground Railroad Museum
Songs of Emancipation will be featured

LET FREEDOM SING

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
October 4, Saturday

1 P M

First Congregational Church
41 East Jefferson Street
Jefferson Ohio

ashcochoralmusicsociety.org



Ashtabula Times

REPORT FROM TRINITY'S SESSION

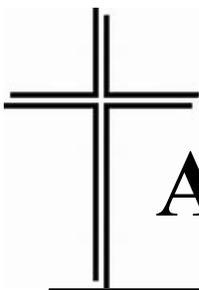
Session held its regular meeting on September 17th. Normal business was carried out including:

- The minutes of August's meeting were approved.
- The financial reports were approved for filing.
- The clerk's report included a note from Jessie Smith reporting on her on-going participation in the Cultivating the gift of Preaching initiative and thanking session for their support.
- The Minister's report included:
 - ◇ A spreadsheet of his calls and visits
 - ◇ A reminder of the Town Hall meeting October 1st.
 - ◇ There will be a leadership meeting Nov. 8th with both sessions looking at committees for session responsibilities
- Committee reports:
 - ◇ Worship and Music report of communion
 - ◇ Memorial has \$7,101.36 in the fund at this time
 - ◇ Property and Finance reported the Merrill Lynch fund has been moved to the Operating Fund
 - ◇ Personnel will be doing job evaluations
 - ◇ Ministerial Relations is in the process of tabulating its evaluation of Rev. Mong
 - ◇ Presbytery
 - ◆ Our merger will be on the docket for approval September 22.
 - ◆ There was discussion about the Listening meeting with the vision Mission Task Force
- Bids were received for refinishing the floors in the halls, entry ways, Fellowship Hall and Kitchen. Session approved a contract with Service Master. The church building will be closed during the process.
- Nancy Sabo will be Elder-on-Call for October.



Meeting
Minutes

Mary Belding, Clerk of Session



Ashtabula Times

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

Rev. Mark will be leading a workshop for both Sessions of Trinity and East Side to begin discernment about Unity's future committees on Saturday, November 8th from 10am to Noon at Unity. If you are currently serving as a Ruling Elder or will be nominated for a Ruling Elder next year, you are invited to attend and we look at all the responsibilities of Session and how the new joint Session wants to delegate tasks to its committees.



PRESBYTERY OF THE WESTERN RESERVE



Commissioners Cathy Burnham, Hobart Shiflet and Mary Belding attended the Presbytery meeting on September 22nd. On the consent agenda was the merger of East Side and Trinity. Because the presbytery approved our merger, we are now officially Unity Presbyterian Church

CAREGIVERS GROUP FORMING

If you are a caregiver for a parents, spouse, child or neighbor, Rev. Mark is starting a caregivers support group for you. We will be meeting with each other to vent, to encourage, and to learn as we give care to others. Please contact Rev. Mark by email at markmong49@gmail.com or call the church offices to inform of your interest. Thanks.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Congregational Meeting



The Congregation of Trinity Presbyterian will be meeting on Sunday, October 26th following worship in First Presbyterian's Sanctuary for its annual meeting to elect officers for 2026 and to approve Rev. Mark's terms of call. If you are an active member of Trinity, please plan to attend and give your attention to these matters. Thanks.



Ashtabula Times

PLAN OF UNION

This is the tentative timeline and plan for what and when the merger will look like:

Phase One (September 2025 to April 2026)

- Dissolve and Rename corporations
 - Consolidating Financial Accounts
 - Transferring deeds
 - Charter the Rolls
 - Closing Services
 - Opening/Charter Service
-

Phase Two First Congregational Meeting of Unity (April 2026)

- Approve Bylaws
 - Approve Manual of Operations
 - Elect Elders and Deacons
 - Approve Terms of Call
 - Elect Nominating Committee
-

Phase Three First Session Meeting of Unity (April – May 2025)

- Approve Budget
 - Elect Clerk, President, Treasurer
 - Set Communion dates
 - Set Meeting dates
 - Delegate Committees
 - Approve Employee job descriptions and salaries
 - Appoint Moderators of Committees
 - Moderators choose committees and begin work
-

Phase Four (May 2026 – November 2026)

- Sort and Move items to Unity
- Move Office and Staff to Unity
- Begin Good Future Accelerator to discern East Side's redevelopment
- Continue to work on Shaping our worship services together
- New Members Class and Transferring memberships
- Focus on creating the new normal for members and leaders



Ashtabula Times

REPORT FROM EAST SIDE'S SESSION

Rosemary Peck reported that the Deacons from both churches were working well together visiting shut-ins and serving home Communion,

The Minutes were reviewed and approved.

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and approved.

Pastor's Report:

1. The Presbytery meeting will be September 22, 2025
2. The Town Hall Meeting will be on October 1, 2025, at Unity, at 6:30 pm. We will be looking at proposed by-laws for Unity and discerning our relationship with First Presbyterian in 2026.
3. Bible Studies are resuming this week. Wednesday at 10:00 AM and Thursday at 7:00 PM at Trinity.
5. Discussed a Leadership Workshop tentatively scheduled for November 8, 2025.
6. New caregiver support group is forming.
- 7 Deadline for the newsletter is September 29, 2025.

Clerk's report: received and accepted Ruth Best's resignation as a Deacon effective December 31, 2025.

Buildings and Grounds: No issues currently.

Audit Committee will meet in September for the annual audit.

Nominating Committee met three times, and one deacon is still needed.

Personnel: Employee Reviews are being completed. They need to be returned to Personnel as soon as possible.

Outreach: School supplies to be delivered next week. Baskets went to Homesafe. 25% of the Global Peace Offering will go to Homesafe.

Seventy Five Invitation for the Celebration of Life to be held at East Side Presbyterian Church on September 27, 2025 from 11 AM to 1:00 PM.

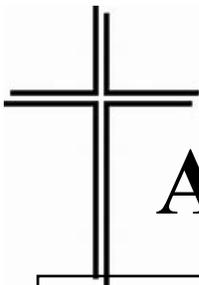
Worship and Music: Bell Ringers are needed for Christmas Eve Service.

Merging Committee are revising by-laws.

Cathy Burnham, Clerk of Session



**MEETING
MINUTES**



Ashtabula Times



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I may not be a great baker or cook, but I do enjoy making the attempt. One of my favorite recipes is confetti cake. You take a package of sprinkles and put some of the package in the batter and you withhold the remainder of the sprinkles until the cake is baked and iced and then sprinkle the remainder of the candy on top of the icing. The result is confetti on top and confetti inside the cake. Great for birthdays and serves 8-10 people.

But while you want to withhold some of the candy to put on the top of the cake, you don't want to withhold anything to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians, *always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.* The context of this verse is Paul's great chapter on resurrection and how the resurrection of Christ gives victory to those called into Christ. Since the body of Christ is loved and gifted by Christ and Christ withholds nothing from the Church, the Church can learn to love and give without withholding anything from God and from each other.

Do we as the Body of Christ in Ashtabula, Ohio give ourselves fully though? You keep some of the candy to put on later, do we withhold something from our community and from God for ourselves or do we fully give away ourselves? The most obvious concern is always our financial resources, which were important for the Corinthians to contribute to the collection for Jerusalem. But, what about our time and our spiritual gifts also? Do we withhold our time, doing what we will, or do we give our time, doing what Christ wills? What about our energy and intelligence, do we contribute them or withhold them for personal agendas and plans? I have no doubt that we give something, but do we truly give **fully** though?

Give yourselves to the **work** of the Lord. We can give ourselves fully to some things but what about the work of the Lord: fully to mission work, or fully to people work, or even fully to the work of merging together. I can rake the leaves, I can winterize the house and put all of myself into those chores, but can I give myself fully to the work of discernment that God is calling Unity into? The difficult and challenging work of study and correction, growth and transformation? Building relationships with strangers, struggling with new bylaws, policies and budgets? Or do we withhold our time and energy for other tasks and ignore and avoid these tasks commanded by Christ?

Perhaps the real struggle is that we are unsure that if we invest fully in this merging process that we will have real results worth the effort and hardship of growth. But if we give ourselves to this work of the Lord, we are reminded that we *know that our labor in the Lord is not in vain.* In vain means empty or without result. Perhaps the reason we withhold from God now, is because we want to know that our investment will have a payoff. But the nature of faith is not knowing the result before action but an action of entrusting oneself to God and allow God to bring forth the result.

We are at a critical time in the new life of The Unity Presbyterian Church of Ashtabula, where all of us are called to discern and to work out this new life together to which we have been called. That will only bring forth fruit to the glory of God if we all, *give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord.* Not to withhold for ourselves out of fear or anxiety but in faith, *knowing that our work is not in vain,* trusting and giving. Whether we are working on bylaws and policies, or furniture and food, let us give all of ourselves to the work, and allow God, as the Master Baker to create, and I think we will come to find that what God creates can be great for our Birth-Day and serve all. Amen.

In Christ,
Rev. Mark