

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

SEPTEMBER 2025
NEWSLETTER



“and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:24-25





Ashtabula Times

PRESBYTERY LISTENING SESSION

Hello friends across the Presbytery of the Western Reserve!

As you may (or may not) be aware, the members of the PWR's Vision/Mission Task Force have been hard at work for about 2 ½ years – talking to people around the Presbytery, gathering information, listening to stories, interviewing committee members, consulting with national staffers, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of our current way of doing things – and in recent months have created a proposed new organizational design and potential staffing plan. The Task Force remains excited about the possibilities and opportunities inherent in these proposals, and is continuing to move forward.

However, this summer has brought some unanticipated changes and challenges, and the Task Force is mindful of the fact that we are not the only ones caught in this liminal period – a time where we are no longer where we were as a Presbytery, but also not quite yet where we need to be. So we are applying the brakes a bit, acknowledging the presence of some anxiety within the body of the Presbytery, and proceeding at a slower pace.

As we continue in this work, we would like to invite those of you who have been such an important part of this process to join us in some Listening Sessions: a time to converse, reflect, and share with each other, as we prepare for next steps. We will be offering Listening Sessions at three different times and locations, and we would encourage you to find one that works for you, and come spend part of an evening with us. All Sessions will go from 6:30-8:00pm, and light refreshments will be provided.



Listening Sessions will be held as follows:

- Monday August 25th at Rocky River Presbyterian Church (Rocky River)
- Wednesday September 3rd at Trinity (soon to be Unity) Presbyterian Church (Ashtabula)
- Wednesday September 10th at Pioneer Memorial Presbyterian Church (Solon)

Please RSVP using the registration form at <https://www.preswesres.org/listening>, just so we have a rough idea of how many folks will be attending each session. We would not want to run out of snacks!

Thank you for your ongoing support and patience, and we look forward to being with you in the next several weeks.

Your Vision/Mission Task Force –

Matt Bauhof

Zoe Garry

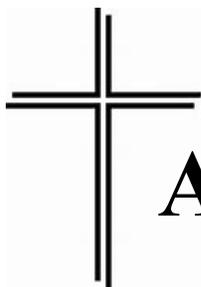
Ben Graves

Sara Gresh

Susan Vlcek

David Wigger

Laura VanDale, staff



Ashtabula Times



All Services are at
10am

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Liturgical Day</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Anthem</u>
9/7/2025	23rd Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	Special Music
9/14/2025	24th Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	3 Church Choir
9/21/2025	25th Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	3 Church Choir
9/28/2025	26th Sunday in O.T.	Trinity	3 Church Choir
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

BIBLE STUDIES

Our Bible Studies resume Wednesday Mornings at 10am in Unity's Sewing Room, we will be studying Revelation. Thursday Evenings we will gather at 7pm in Unity's Fellowship Room. We will be studying Ruth and 1 Samuel. Everyone is welcome and no prior knowledge or understanding is needed. Feel free to bring your own Bibles but not required. Contact Rev. Mark with any questions.





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JOINT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for September 21, 2025, following worship

MISSION RESULTS FOR JULY & AUGUST:

Pentecost collection completed 6/8/2025 with funds distributed to Presbytery and Stacy's House

School supplies collected to date went to Ashtabula Area Teacher's Association Stuff the Bus
Remaining will be distributed as needed.

Women's outing to Steele Mansion had 12 attending for dinner and tour of the Mansion in Lake County

2025 AGENDA

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

September: Raffle Baskets for HOMESAFE will be created by the committee.

PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING (Peacemaking and Reconciliation) for PCUSA begins. Envelopes will be in the pews. The 25% kept locally will be donated to **HOMESAFE**.



September: St. John's School Needs of the nurse: Toothbrush, toothpaste (travel size), lip balm, deodorant (travel size), Feminine products, disposable razors, shaving cream (travel size) 3T-5T boys' and girls' underwear Bins to be placed in sanctuary for collection.



October: PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING final collection date is October 5

CATHOLIC CHARITIES BLANKET AND LINEN COLLECTION

November: CATHOLIC CHARITIES BLANKET AND LINEN COLLECTION ADOPTION OF CHILDREN FOR CHRISTMAS FROM CHILDREN SERVICES

December: CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING HAT, GLOVE AND MITTEN TREE AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



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.

East Side preparation for Rummage Sale

Pam Bloom and Edie Makynen: co-chairpersons



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MEETING SCHEDULE

Game Day—Tuesday, September 2nd, 16th, and 30th, 11:30am at Unity

Town Hall Meeting—Wednesday, September 3rd, 6:30pm at Unity

Joint Ministerial Relations Committee—Tuesday, September 9th, 6:30pm at Unity

ROMEOS—Tuesday, September 9th, 9am at Deb’s Diner

Merging Committee —Wednesday, September 10th, 6:30pm at Unity

Tri-Church Lunch Packing—Thursday, September 11th 10am at Unity

East Side Session—Monday, September 15th, 6:30pm at East Side

Trinity Property/Finance—Wednesday, September 17th, 6pm at Unity

Trinity Session—Wednesday, September 17th, 7pm at Unity

Outreach —Sunday, September 21st, after worship at Unity



EASTSIDE’S BIRTHDAYS

14th Paul Cleveland
21st Berniece Boggs



EASTSIDE’S ANNIVERSARIES

6th Gerry & Nora Giangola



PRAYER LIST

Genny Wallace, Berniece Boggs, Jim & Rose Booth, Jim & Caroline Johnston, Courtney Wetzel, Randy Cotton, Cliff Titus, Dale Fassett, Pam Headman, Rese Drozd, Candy McCoy, and Joanna Fisher



Ashtabula Times

RUMMAGE AND BAKE SALE

East Side PRESBYTERIAN rummage and bake sale will be held Friday, Sept 5th 9-3 & Saturday, Sept 6th, 9-1. Becki will be looking for volunteers to get the items ready, work the days of the sale and to work the bake sale on Friday & Sat.



Starting Aug 13th she will be working most days at the church starting at 9 am, and will welcome those who would like to give a few hours of their time. Other workers will be there to help you get started. The work is repetitive and not hard. It might involve, sorting items, washing items, dusting items, matching pieces of jewelry and displaying items on tables. It also involves laughs and fun.

Lunch is furnished Friday, day of the sale, for the workers there. Please see Becki if you are able to donate a few hours before or during the sale. The final day to donate items is August 26th. Any questions please call Becki at 863-258-0863.

NOTES FROM FIRST PRES.

Wednesday Sept 3 - Task Force meeting at 12pm in Memorial Lounge

Friday Sept 5 - Red Cross Blood Drive in Fellowship Hall 12-5pm

Sunday Sept 7 - Deacons meeting following worship in Memorial Lounge at First

Sunday Sept 21 - Session meeting following worship in Memorial Lounge at First

CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE

The Merging Committee of Unity Presbyterian has begun to plan and to prepare to time for Trinity and East Side to Celebrate their communities. Trinity will gather from 11am–1pm on September 13th and East Side will gather from 11am–1pm on September 27th. Each Church will have pictures, memorabilia, food, music and a time for telling stories in their sanctuaries. Please contact the members of the committee if you would like to contribute with old pictures, items or a story, written or spoken and/or sorting. The committee members are:



Craig Reiter

Mary Belding

Pam Bloom

Beth Dougherty

Cathy Burnham

Rosemary Peck

Edie Makynen

Ellen Jacobs



Ashtabula Times



2025 per capita is \$40.00

REPORT FROM MERGING COMMITTEE

The Merging Committee met on August 13th with both sessions and the Administrative Commission from the Presbytery to discuss the steps needed to move forward with the merger of East Side and Trinity.

Rev. Shane Nanney represented the Presbytery. He led a lively, joyful and positive discussion on how we got where we are, and what we do together as church. He presented a list of steps needed for East Side and Trinity as we move to merge into Unity Presbyterian Church:



1. Presbytery must formally approve the merger in order for the clerk of the PWR to get our new PIN number.
2. Register with the State of Ohio
3. New tax ID
4. Elect a new session with representatives from both churches
5. New by-laws
6. New manual of operations
7. Transfer deeds to new name
8. Decide what materials we keep and what we will get rid of and how we will get rid of it
9. When will we do services to close East Sde and Trinity and when will we open as Unity
10. What is the time frame we are trying to shoot for
11. What are we going to do with the Cluster Library at East Side
12. What do we need from the Presbytery. The PWR is here to help!

We are moving ahead with several of the steps. The Presbytery meeting is September 26th, and our approval for merger should be on the docket (#1).

We are diligently working on by-laws. (#5) Rather than just pasting the two by-laws together, we are looking at how we will be church, and how our by-laws will lead to that end.

Some of the legal state issues are being taken care of by Trinity's CPA. (#2&3)

We look forward to moving as quickly as possible, while being careful and prayerful in all we do.

Questions or thoughts may be shared with any member of the Merging Committee:

Craig Reiter, Rosemary Peck, Edie Makynen, Ellen Jacobs, Beth Dougherty, Cathy Burn-



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REPORT FROM TRINITY'S SESSION

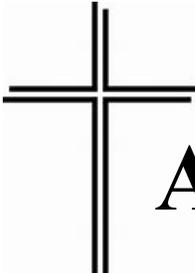
Session held its regular meeting on August 20th. All elders were in attendance. Normal business was carried out including:

- The minutes of June's meeting were approved.
- The Financial reports were approved for filing.
- The clerk's report included
 - ◊ A thank you note from Mark and David Strong concerning the service for Martha Strong.
 - ◊ The 2024 Session Minutes Review was received with no exceptions.
- The Minister's report included:
 - ◊ A spreadsheet of his calls and visits
 - ◊ A reminder of the Town Hall meeting September 3rd
 - ◊ Vacation for Rev. Mong was approved for October 6-12.
- Committee reports:
 - ◊ Worship and Music: request for servers of communion and ushers for September.
 - ◊ Discussion of celebration of Life for East Side and Trinity.
 - ◊ Fellowship: There were 55 in attendance at the luncheon following the funeral service of Marth Strong.
 - ◊ There were 85 in attendance at the worship/picnic at Lake Shore Park
 - ◊ Property and Finance: The roof repair is scheduled for September or October.
 - ◊ Deacons: Met with East Side planning the Celebrations of Life.
 - ◊ Merging: Met jointly with both sessions and the Administrative Commission from the Presbytery to look at plans for moving forward.
 - ◊ Ministerial Relations: met and discussed an issue at each church. The committee supports Rev. Mong's decisions and actions.
- Pam Bloom will be elder-on-call for September.



Meeting
Minutes

Mary Belding, Clerk of Session



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REPORT FROM EAST SIDE'S SESSION

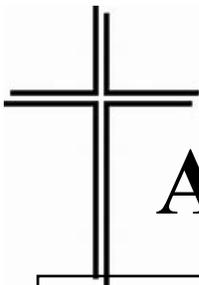


**MEETING
MINUTES**

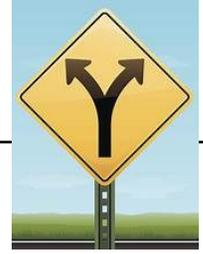
- The meeting opened with prayer.
- The Minutes were reviewed and approved.
- The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and approved.
Session approved the purchase of two Humidifiers using memorial funds.
- Pastor's Report:
 1. Next Presbytery meeting will be September 22, 2025
 2. The Town Hall Meeting will be on September 3, 2025, at Unity, at 6:30 pm. The Vision Task Force of the Presbytery of the Western Reserve will be leading a listening session for the Presbytery concerning the new structure and staffing.
 3. Bible Studies are resuming this week. Wednesday at 10:00 AM and Thursday at 7:00 PM at Trinity.
 5. Concerts in the Park concluded August 12, 2025. Profit from the concert refreshments was \$1,101.07.
- Buildings and Grounds: The roof on the Church has been replaced.
- Audit Committee is being formed for the annual audit.
- Nominating Committee is reviewing elders and deacons needed.
- Personnel: Employee Reviews will be done in October.
- Outreach: Twelve People attended the Retreat at the Steele Mansion. \$100. from the Pentecost Offering went to Stacey's House. The school supplies collected went to the Ashtabula Area Teacher's Association for distribution because G.O. Ministries were only giving out bookbags.
- Worship and Music: Liturgists are scheduled for the remainder of the year. Marty Burnham will direct the Bells for Christmas at First Presbyterian Church. Bell Ringers are needed.
- Merging Committee will begin purging items at East Side that need to be gotten rid of.

The meeting closed with prayer.

Cathy Burnham, Clerk of Session



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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Robert Frost once wrote, *Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, And sorry I could not travel both.* Such is the daily struggle for a believer in Jesus Christ. Every believer, each and every day stands at the crossroads where two roads diverge into the world. For the Christian, the two roads which diverge into the yellow wood are on one hand the way of God, and the other the way of the world. And sorry us cannot travel both.

Choices must be made, decisions must be thought out, lots must be cast, tasks must be completed; these are the substance of our everyday lives. Each choice, each decision, each task results in us standing where the two roads diverge into the yellow wood and sorry us cannot travel both. Each road takes us to a different place. Each road takes us by a different route. Each road takes us with different traveling companions. Each road takes us on a different walking surface. Each road takes us for different purposes. Therefore, we cannot walk both roads, because both paths diverge.

Such is the way of God and the way of the world. The two ways diverge. The two ways take us to two different places; one to life, one to death. The two ways take us by a different route; one by cross, one by staff. The two ways take us with different traveling companions; one with Christ, one with ourselves. The two ways take us on different surfaces; one with hardship, one with ease. The two ways take us for different purposes; one for others, one for self. The two ways diverge and we as Christians cannot travel both.

We must chose every moment which path to take, the way of God or the way of the world, because we cannot walk upon both. To leave the way of God is to take the way of the world, to leave the way of the world is to take the way of God. Those who take the path of God are *like trees planted by streams of water for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.* We must chose every moment which path to take, because we cannot tread upon them both.

Which one are we taking? To where are we going? By which route are we taking? With whom do we go? On what are we walking? Why are we going? If we were to consider these things and not find Christ in any of the answers, then maybe, just maybe we are one the wrong path. The good news for you and for me, is that because of Christ we can turn around and get on the right path. Because of Jesus Christ, anyone can make a U-turn off the wrong path and get onto the right path. Such is the love and power of Jesus Christ. Love to take us back and power to ensure it happens.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, we constantly are standing at the crossroads where the two ways of life diverge into the yellow wood of the world and into the Kingdom of God; we cannot tread upon them both. One might be well-worn by the feet of many others. One might be easier and less demanding. One might be more pleasurable. One might be smooth and freshly paved. But only one leads to God and therefore to life. To quote Frost, *I shall be telling this with a sigh, Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.*

In Christ,
Rev. Mark