In this lecture, we will discuss…

✧ What are helpers and why are they useful
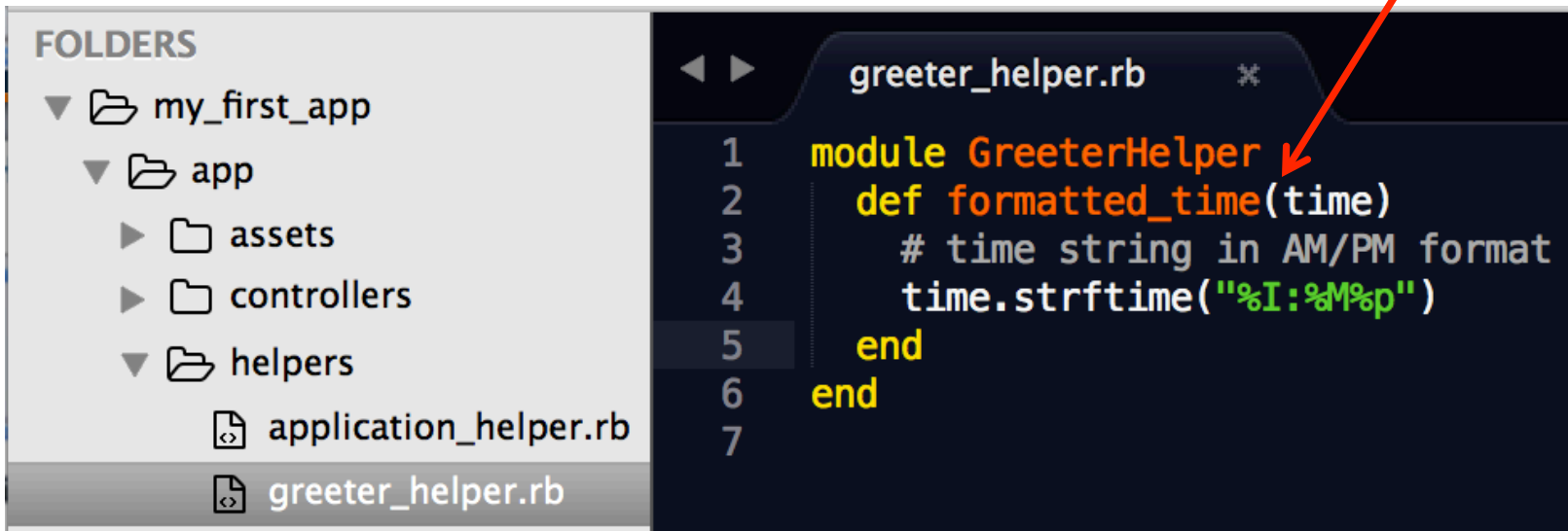
✧ Why use the `link_to` Rails helper

Helpers

✧ We've made the **current time available** through `@time` instance variable (controller)

✧ But what if we want to format **how the time looks**?

  • Should that code go in the View? | Non-reusable… |

  • Controller? | Should be "view format" agnostic |

Helpers to the rescue!

Helpers

✧ (empty) `greeter_helper.rb` module generated

✧ Let's **add** a **helper method**

Available in ALL views

```
FOLDERS
▼ 📂 my_first_app
  ▼ 📂 app
    ▶ 📁 assets
    ▶ 📁 controllers
    ▼ 📂 helpers
        📄 application_helper.rb
        📄 greeter_helper.rb
```

greeter_helper.rb

```ruby
1  module GreeterHelper
2    def formatted_time(time)
3      # time string in AM/PM format
4      time.strftime("%I:%M%p")
5    end
6  end
7
```

Helpers: New View

FOLDERS

- ▼ 📂 my_first_app
  - ▼ 📂 app
    - ▶ 📁 assets
    - ▶ 📁 controllers
    - ▶ 📁 helpers
    - ▶ 📁 mailers
    - ▶ 📁 models
    - ▼ 📂 views
      - ▼ 📂 greeter
        - 📄 goodbye.html.erb
        - 📄 hello.html.erb

hello.html.erb

```
1  <h1>Greetings, <%= @name %></h1>
2  <p>The time now is <%= formatted_time(@time) %> </p>
3  <p>This page has been viewed <%= @times_displayed %> time(s)</p>
4
```

localhost:3000/greeter/hello

Greetings, Michael

The time now is 05:21PM

This page has been viewed 1 time(s)
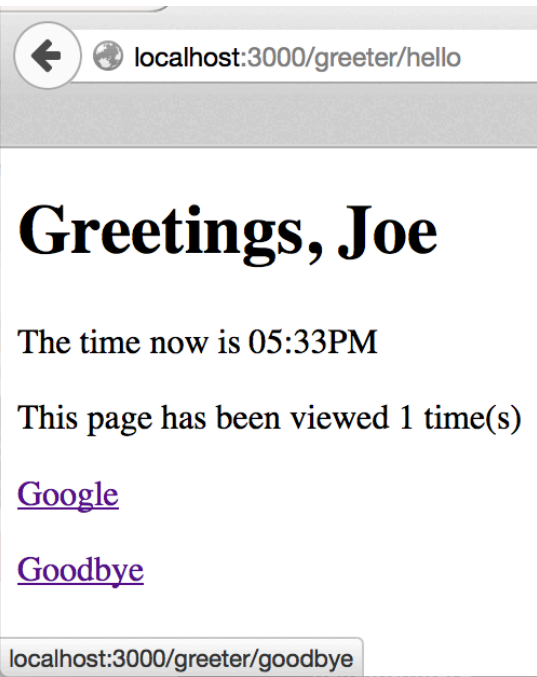
Rails Built-In Helpers: `link_to`

- ✧ Rails provides **many built-in helpers**

- ✧ `link_to name, path`

  - Hyperlink generator **that displays** the `name` and **links** to the `path`

  - Path could either be a **regular string** or a **route defined in the routes.rb file** ending with `_url` (full path) or `_path` (relative path)

  - `_url` and `_path` used **interchangeably**, but according to the spec full path is **required in cases of redirection**

`link_to` in action

localhost:3000/greeter/hello

Greetings, Joe

The time now is 05:33PM

This page has been viewed 1 time(s)

Google

Goodbye

localhost:3000/greeter/goodbye

---

hello.html.erb ✕

```
<h1>Greetings, <%= @name %></h1>
<p>The time now is <%= formatted_time(@time) %> </p>
<p>This page has been viewed <%= @times_displayed %> time(s)</p>

<p><%= link_to "Google", "http://www.google.com" %></p>
<p><%= link_to "Goodbye", greeter_goodbye_path %></p>
```

greeter_goodbye derived from routes.rb
(See "Prefix" column in rake routes)

Summary

✧ Helpers are **"macros" / "formatters"** for your view

✧ When using `link_to`, there is **no need** to change things if a path changes

What's Next?

✧ Introduction to HTTParty