

COMMUNIQUE



A Publication of
First Presbyterian Church
405 East Corsicana Street
Athens, Texas 75751

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 927

Phone: 903-675-3530

Church Email:
Secretary@fpcathens.com

Website:
www.fpcathens.com

Find us on  
we have 2 pages for you to
First Presbyterian Church
Athens, TX
& FPC Athens Youth

Be sure to check-in on Facebook
when you visit the church
campus

FEBRUARY 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

February is the month of love! Hearts, cupids, and candy flood the stores and cause us to turn our thoughts to those of beauty and love. But we need to understand that the love we celebrate in February is not for a day or a month. As we see in the Song of Solomon, that love is eternal.



Song of Solomon 4:10 says, "How beautiful is your love My sister, My bride." But when you look at the original Hebrew, it says something quite different. It reads: "How beautiful are your LOVES." The Song of Solomon is ultimately about God and us. He's the Bridegroom. We are the Bride. The Bridegroom is speaking about the LOVES of the Bride. The Lord is saying to us, "How beautiful are your LOVES." It is not enough to love God every now and then. We must love Him every day, not one day, but every day with a new love. If we love God with an old love, the love we had in the past, our relationship with Him will become old and dead. God does not ask for that of you. He wants you to love Him with today's love, a love that is different from yesterday's, a love that grows. Scripture tells us that your LOVES are better than wine. Open your heart today with a new love – a new opening and a new surrendering – so that God can say, "How beautiful are your loves."

God Bless, *Woody*



SESSION REPORT

January Stated Session

- Called Grace Presbytery Meeting on January 21, 2023, to vote on Council's Stated Clerk nominee and to vote on the General Presbyter Search Committee nominee.
- March 4, 2023 is the Stated Meeting at Trinity in McKinney.
- Session approve the 2022 Church Statistical Report to be sent to Grace Presbytery.
- Members for PM&B were approved for 2023. They are Kara Davis, Claire Grant, Lolly Smith, Sharon Chasey and Eric Davis. Marshall Endsley will serve as treasurer and Donna Ward as Clerk.
- Mike Babler and Kim Scott will serve on the Elder Nominating Committee for 2023. Five members from the congregation will be selected at a future Congregational Meeting.
- Session approved Eddie Lassiter to conduct the 2022 financial audit for the church.
- Information was given to Session members on purchasing an AED church package, which will be discussed at February's Session meeting.
- Motion to replace old windows in the main building (administrative offices) was approved by Session at the cost of \$9,000.
- Motion was made to transfer \$25,000 from the 2022 Operating Fund Surplus to the Trust Capital Fund for the purpose of establishing a Reserve for the future replacement of the aging Sanctuary HVAC system. The motion was approved.
- Building and Grounds plans to implement a schedule to clean HVAC filters and maintenance of units.
- The roof on the fellowship hall will need to be replaced in the near future.
- Joan King is working with Woody to form a church outreach program for members not currently attending church.
- Positive feedback to Session on the church pictorial directory.
- New Presbyterian Cross will be installed on the outside of the fellowship hall, facing Corsicana Street.

Respectfully Submitted, Donna Ward - Clerk of Session

MEMORIALS RECEIVED

FOR...

Sue Harris



Community Prayer Box

Please continue to spread the word about the community prayer box located behind the Cain Family Building. If you have a prayer request, please do not hesitate to ask for prayers from your church family & friends. We are called to pray for one another.

Columbarium News

For many centuries, cemeteries were commonly found in churchyards, allowing churches to minister to the spiritual needs of their members. But there is a modern alternative which churches are offering their members: the Columbarium.

A Columbarium is a collection of niches designed to house urns inscribed with the person's names and dates of birth and death.

The principal benefit a Columbarium affords church members and their families is the opportunity to select their final resting place in the shadow of the church where their loved ones can visit and meditate at any time.

The Columbarium is part of First Presbyterian Church and functions under the authority of the Session. A Columbarium Committee oversees operation of the Columbarium.

If you wish to discuss the purchase of a niche within the Columbarium, please contact the church office.



Those In Our Church Family

Those Who Are In Need Of Our Visits & Prayers

At Lakeland Assisted Living:

Fred Davies

At Oak Wood Assisted Living:

Fran Jones

Susan Underkoffler

Mark Carlson

Prayers For Those Serving In The Mission Field

Kurt Esslinger & Hyeyoung Lee - PCUSA Mission co-workers

Those Who Are Grieving

The Family of Sue Harris

The Family of Tod Besser (stepdad of Grace Dollgener)

The Family of Mike Sonnier (friend of Sandy Perkins)

The Family of Steven 'Sully' Sullivan (nephew of Jolene Taylor)

Those We Love Needing Prayer

Evelyn Jackson (cousin of the Lively's)

Lotus McKissick (granddaughter of Colleen Spurlock)

Kay Johnson (MIL of Monique Fisher)

Joe & Jen McSweeney (family of Sandy Perkins)

Beau Justice (friend of Susan Sparkman)

Anthony Chiles (friend of many)

Steven Helf (friend of many)

Don Howard (friend of Mary Hortman)

Those We Love In The Armed Forces

Si Robson, U.S. Army Ranger, Missouri

son of Willy & Sheri Robson, grandson of Fran Jones

Those Away at School

Chloe Wright

Madison Rhodes

Hannah Davis

Alec Elfarr

Olivia Whatley

Elaine Hendrickson

Collin Maddock

Tate Elfarr

Toby Rhodes

Session

Class of 2023

Mike Babler

Margaret Breedlove

Kim Scott

Lolly Smith

Class of 2024

Scott Cruce

Kathryn Hendrickson

Rick Stroupe

Nancy Williamson

Class of 2025

Kara Davis

Claire Grant

Joan King

Steven Yarbrough

And the prayer of faith will save the one
who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.
And if he has committed sins, he will
be forgiven.

SUNDAY



SCHOOL

All are welcome! Please join us; you'll be glad you did! Call the church office at 903-675-3530 with any questions.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Disciples Class

The Disciples Class makes use of "The Wired Word" or similar materials, which blends national or world events of the previous week and relevant Bible verses to guide our discussion. For Lent, we will be using The Thoughtful Christian study, "Meeting Jesus at the Table." This promises to be a fascinating study about not only meeting around the communion table, but also many other tables throughout the Bible. Come join us. Our class encourages enthusiastic discussion and is led by four different teachers. We meet in the conference room of the main building. The first Sunday of Lent is February 26.

Disciples Contact Person: Lacey Ward

Rotation of Teachers: Carol McNatt, Sheri Robson, Lacey Ward & Linda Horton

Location: Conference Room in the Main Building

Time: 9:40 am Sunday morning

Friendship Class

We began a new study on Sunday, September 11, 2022, called "How to Study the Bible Through the Jesus Lens" by Michael Williams. Come join us if you want to explore more of God's Word. For more information, please contact Donna Meredith at (903) 286-2085 or donnafoster-meredith@gmail.com.

Friendship Leader: Mike Babler

Location: Main Church Building, Friendship Classroom

Time: 9:45 am Sunday morning

Seekers Class

We are continuing our study, "Approaching God: How to Pray" by Steve Brown. This is the second book in his series. We would like to invite you to join in us during our time of study and fellowship. The class meets upstairs in the main church building.

Seekers Contact Person: Will Davies

Location: Main Church Building, Upstairs east side; Seekers Classroom

Time: 9:45 am Sunday morning

Sunday Nursery Remains the Same for All Children in the Children's Building

In order to accommodate our younger families and visitors with infants and toddlers, we will continue to staff the Children's Building with two workers for children, infants to 5th grade. Nursery workers are available during both worship services, as well as during the Sunday School hour.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Meet in the Children's Building
every Sunday 9:45-10:30**

- **Ages 3 and up - Teacher:** Kathryn Hendrickson and Susan Sparkman with rotating assistants/substitutes.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

All Youth ages **6th - 12th grades** meet for Sunday morning classes in the Youth House located by the Main Parking lot.

Middle School & High School

Teachers: Ken Lemmon; Claire Grant; Cathie Scarborough
Substitutes: Jim & Karen Brack

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



MEN FOR HIM

Men for Him sang at First Methodist Church in Malakoff on January 29 and will sing in an evening service at Lake Athens Baptist Church sometime in February. We will sing at the 11:00 service here at First Presbyterian Church on March 12.

We started our practice after the holidays on Tuesday, January 3rd, and we will continue to practice weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 in the Fellowship Hall at First Presbyterian Church. We will be working hard on our music for our annual concert which will be May 7 at 3:00 p.m. so mark your calendars for that date!

The chorus sings four-part barbershop style religious music and is made up of men from area churches.

If God has gifted you with a singing voice, you may want to consider using that gift with the chorus. We invite and encourage you to visit a practice and check us out. We have fun, create lasting friendships with men from other churches and share our witness through music. If you would like more information, please feel free to call me at 214-478-2386.

Ted Schroeder, Director
Men for Him

THANK YOU

To Presbyterian Church Members:
It gave me great pleasure to receive your acknowledgement of my 103rd birthday.
Thank you each and every one of you.
Ken Ferris

Women of the Word Bible Study Thursday Mornings @ 9:30 in Upstairs Classroom



Women of the Word meets each Thursday morning at 9:30 in the upstairs classroom in the main building. All women are invited to attend. For further information please contact the church office.

CHURCH LIBRARY

The cold weather is here, so do you need a new book to lose yourself in or maybe revisit one you haven't read in a long while? Then, we want to invite you to visit the church library and take one home. The library is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm and on Sunday from 8:30 am to Noon.

Easy book check-out instructions are posted. We welcome suggestions for new books, videos or CD's to order, and book donations in honor or in memory of someone special. For questions or help, contact Emily Carlson (emily.carlson1976@gmail.com) or Kim Scott (kscott7938@aol.com).

The library is located in the church office area, past the front desk, 2nd door on the right.



PW - Presbyterian Women
 CFB - Cain Family Building
 FH - Fellowship Hall
 FHC - Fellowship Hall
 Classroom
 CB - Children's Building
 YH - Youth House
 CR - Conference Room
 FC - Friendship Classroom

FEBRUARY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 6:00 pm—Sally's Soup Ministry Meeting (FHK) 6:00 pm—Christian Ed. Committee Mtg. (FC)	2 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 4:30 pm—YES (YH) 6:00 pm—MOPS (FH)	3	4 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
5 <i>Communion</i> 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary)* 2:00pm—Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	6 9:00 am—AGAPE Quilts (CFB) 5:00 pm—Missions/Community Concerns Committee Meeting (FC)	7 5:30 pm—PM&B Meeting (CR) 6:30 pm—Men for Him (FH)	8 12:00 pm—ENCATA (CR) 1:00 pm—Athens Homeless Coalition Meeting (FC) 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 6:15 pm—Session Meeting (FHC)	9 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study	10	11 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
12 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary) 2:00pm—Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	13 9:00 am—AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	14  6:30 pm—Men for Him (FH)	15 12:00 pm—ENCATA (CR) 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC)	16 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 6:00 pm—MOPS (FH)	17	18 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
19 <i>Transfiguration of the LORD</i> 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary) 2:00pm—Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	20 <i>President's Day</i> 9:00 am—AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	21 6:00 pm—FNS Fat Tuesday Supper (FH)	22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 12:00 pm—ENCATA (CR) 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 6:00 pm—Ash Wednesday Service (Sanctuary)	23 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 10:00 am—CASA (FH) 4:30 pm—YES (YH)	24 <i>Love In Action</i> 	25 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
26 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary) 2:00pm—Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	27 9:00 am—AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	28 6:30 pm—Men for Him (FH)				

FEBRUARY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Robbie Richardson	2	3 Joan Meadows Cindy Wofford Felecia Cain	4
5	6 Donna Meredith	7 Andrea Meadows	8 Janet Skelton	9	10 Lou Sutton	11 Rosalie Babler
12 Joe Whatley	13	14 Carmen Hunt	15 Dolores Herrington	16 Si Robson IV	17	18
19 Sheri Robson	20 Donna Dunbar	21	22	23 Ann Boyles	24 Damon Douglas	25
26	27 John Kidwell	28 Madison Rhodes				

BIRTHDAYS

CHURCH MINISTRIES

HC Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is continuing to serve those within our community. CHECK OUT THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE MAIN BUILDING FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS THAT THEY ARE IN NEED OF. You can bring them and drop them off in the box under the "NEWS" bulletin board in the main building and they will get where they are needed most.

They are open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and always need volunteers to work.

Questions? Contact Mamie Downing or the church office for more information.

Soup Kitchen

**** VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Contact Sharon Chasey if you can help or for more information 903-292-1639, 903-477-7498 or email skchasey@aol.com.



We are currently only serving 50-100 people on the last Tuesday and the following Thursday of each month, providing "take-out" service of soup, sandwich & dessert. Serving time is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..

Sally Soup Ministry

Join us on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, for our next meeting. These meetings rarely last more than 30 minutes, and it is always a good time to have fellowship and share any concerns about members of our precious flock.

If haven't had the privilege of joining us in the past, please pray about joining us as we get back to the work of this ministry.

Know someone that is sick, just had a baby or been in the hospital? Please let us know so that we can provide them with some soup that is prepared by this ministry.

Questions?

Please contact Claire Grant at clairewgrant@aol.com or Steve Sparkman at srsparkman@yahoo.com, if you would like more information about this ministry or how you can volunteer.



821 Ministries/Rebecca Project

Each Saturday morning at 9:00 am, in the Fellowship Hall where the volunteers prepare and then deliver home-cooked meals to the elderly, shut-ins and homeless.

Delivery drivers, and others, are needed weekly. Will you pray about volunteering? We would love to have you with us.

Questions? You can find out more about this on their Facebook page or by contacting the church office.

Love in Action

Eric & Kara Davis will be preparing the monthly meal from FPC-Athens on **Friday, February 24, 2023** Please be watching for the email listing the needed items that will be sent on February 15, 2023.

Questions? Contact Eric Davis at ericbdavis35@gmail.com



AGAPE QUILTS

Happy New Year from the Quilters!

After a short break and getting together for brunch on New Years Day, 10 of us along with spouses gathered at my home.

We got back to work the next Monday, happy to be together again.

We made 4 quilts and spent time cleaning, organizing and folding our fabrics.

Sharon and I stopped by the soup kitchen a couple of weeks ago and delivered our latest batch of 24 quilts. Now we have 8 left, but we are happy to pass them on to the homeless in our community.

Next week we will take 12 more to them.

We are so happy to be working together to meet the need for our homeless community.

We want to say THANK YOU again to RagTime for our NEW shipment of material.

Stop in and see us soon to see what AGAPE is all about. Until next time!

With "Sew" Much Love,

Sofia



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Submit your items for the Communique by the 15th of every month!

Email news & photos to secretary@fpcathens.com

MOPS Group (Mothers of Preschoolers)



MOPS meets the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6 p.m. Childcare available. Open to ALL moms ~ For more info: Contact Melanie Endsley (903-804-6444). Find us on Facebook: *MOPS of Athens*,



FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

Would you be interested in providing a meal for our MOPS families? If so, contact Alashia Walls at (903) 676-7528.

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) meets twice per month at FPC Athens and provides free childcare and meals to community mothers and their children. The group supports local families and welcomes new members!

Update from Missions & Community Concerns Committee:

2022 proved to be a very good year for Mission work at the First Presbyterian Church. We participated in 11 missions total, had 108 volunteers, that worked together for a total of 5,209 hours with a total financial giving of \$63,366.95. FPC Athens definitely has a heart for giving.





If you have a giving heart and feel moved to join our Mission/Community Concerns Committee, we would love to have you. Please contact Kara Davis or Claire Grant to find out how you can serve in 2023.

THANK YOU

As the month of February comes to an end, so does my time with FPC-Athens. You have all been a blessing to work with and for. I will never be able to express my love for each and everyone of you. It has been my privilege to know you and I will take a bit of each one of you with me as I embark on this new path God has placed us on. My husband, George, and I will be moving to Topeka, KS to work with a fairly young church, doing neighborhood ministry in Old Town Topeka. We will continue to pray for the ministries of FPC-Athens and for its members; we would also ask that you remember us in your prayers as we minister in this new community. This is not Goodbye, just see ya later, for one day we will be together again. With much love, Traci Dechaume

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT





FPC-Athens Congregational Life Committee
Presents

FAT TUESDAY SUPPER



2023




GAMES



Tuesday, February 21st

6:00 pm

This Supper will be catered
Everyone is asked to bring a dessert



**Fellowship Hall
405 East Corsicana St.
Athens, TX 75751**

Everyone is encouraged to bring your neighbors, family,
friends and co-workers

RSVP to the church office by Wednesday, February 15, 2023

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

SEND MAIL TO: P.O. Box 927

Athens, TX 75751

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
BULK MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ATHENS, TEXAS 75751
PERMIT NO. 46

FEBRUARY '23 COMMUNIQUE

NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE ONLINE OR VIA EMAIL!

- * Go to www.fpcathens.com and click the tab "Church Communique".
- Fill out the form on the bottom of the page, choosing either electronic or printed copy.

Join Us On Sundays
Worship at 8:30 a.m.
in the Fellowship Hall
Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
see newsletter for locations
Worship at 11:00 a.m.
in the Sanctuary
Child Care
Children's Bldg.
(For both services &
Sunday School)

Pastor

Rev. Woody Meredith
woody@fpcathens.com

Director of Music

Janis Capelle

Organist & Bell Choir Leader

Mamie Downing

Business Manager

Marshall Endsley
marshall@fpcathens.com

Office Administrator

(Facebook/Messenger/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster)

Traci Dechaume
secretary@fpcathens.com

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Next Deadline:
February 15th

Email announcements, articles,
information, etc. to
secretary@fpcathens.com

We Are

*A family of Disciples,
touched by God's grace,
called to share Christ
through Worship,
Ministry & Outreach*