

MARCH 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

As we enter this Lenten Season, preparing ourselves for the Risen Christ, a traditional discipline of Christ's followers, which seems to be lost today, always comes to mind, fasting. When people first hear the word "fasting", they often think of giving up food and/or drink. However, let me invite you, in the weeks to come, to fast from something that tempts you, something that has power and influence over you, or something that keeps you and your family from spending time with God. This might be TV, phone apps, etc. Perhaps it is something more serious. Whatever it is, the Holy Spirit is already helping you to identify it; that one thing that is pulling you away from God rather than bringing you closer. Whatever it is, take a break from it. That is what this season is about! We've made fasting sound like some form of self-imposed method of torture, when it is a gift from God, and a means by which we are called to reconnect with Him. What temptation keeps your attention and love from God? Consider taking a break from taking a break from your relationship with God.



God Bless,

Woody



COMMUNIQUE


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

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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

SESSION REPORT

February Stated Session

- Session approved the election of four Session members to the Personnel Committee. They are Steve Yarbrough (Chairman), Mike Babler, Scott Cruce, and Claire Grant. Serving as ex-officio are Woody Meredith, Marshall Endsley and Donna Ward (Clerk).
- Officers of the Corporation are Claire Grant and Kim Scott, who were approved by Session.
- Kara Davis and Scott Cruce moved to approve the 2023 PM&B Distributions. Motion was approved. Distribution sheet is attached.
- Windows in the administrative part of the church building will be replaced, at a cost of \$9,000 (\$4,500 has been paid up front).
- Toilets in the Fellowship Hall have been repaired and clean up completed from broken valves.
- New sign (cross) has been installed on the Fellowship Hall outside wall, facing Corsicana.
- A liaison is needed for the ARK. If you are interested, please contact Kara Davis or Claire Grant.
- A presentation on the Hope Springs Water Well will be given at the April Family Night Supper.
- Communion and Offering will remain the same and will be revisited in several months, to see if we feel that we can resume passing Communion and the Offering.
- Easter Lilies will be ordered as soon as we find out price and availability.
- The Worship Committee approved purchasing new choir robes after a total price is calculated.
- Ash Wednesday Service, Maundy Thursday Service, and Good Friday Service will be held at 6:00 p.m.
- Both the 8:30 and 11:00 services on Easter, will be held in the sanctuary.
- There will be Holy Week services as in years past. More information will be available as soon as the ministers meet to discuss details.

Respectfully Submitted, Donna Ward - Clerk of Session

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.

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.

James 5:15 (ESV)

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

Colleen Spurlock Kelly Ketelboeter

Those Who Are In Need Of Our Visits & Prayers

At Lakeland Assisted Living:

Fred Davies

At Oak Wood Assisted Living:

Fran Jones Susan Underkofler Mark Carlson

Prayers For Those Serving In The Mission Field

Kurt Esslinger & Hyeyoung Lee - PCUSA Mission co-workers

Those Who Are Grieving

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)

Wayne Webb (friend of many)

Megan Hartin Allen (granddaughter of Sharon Harding)

Colleen Randel (friend of S. Harding & C. Scarborough)

Bari Hart, Trenn Parnell

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

Elaine Hendrickson

Olivia Whatley

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

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 donnafoostermeredith@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



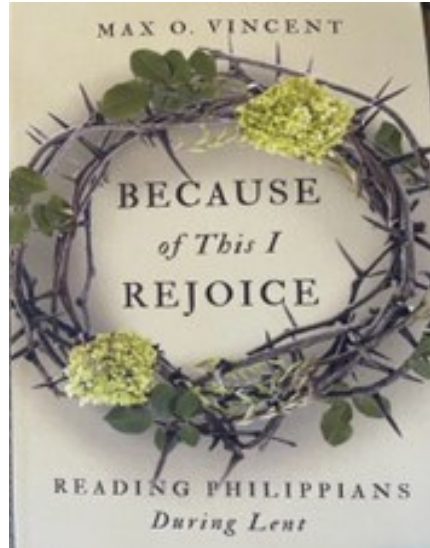
MEN FOR HIM

Men for Him will sing at the 11:00 a.m. service at First Presbyterian on March 12. The chorus sang at the 6:00 p.m. evening service at Lake Athens Baptist Church on February 19 and at Eastern Hills Church of Christ on February 26 between their two morning worship services. Be sure and add the date May 7 to your calendar for the annual concert which will be held at Athens First Methodist Church at 3 p.m.

Men for Him practices weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 in the Fellowship Hall at First Presbyterian Church. 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

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



Women of the Word Bible Study began a new Lenten study on February 16 using the book "Because of This I Rejoice—Reading Philippians During Lent" by Max O. Vincent. The study will continue through Lent ending on April 6. This six-week Lenten study of Philippians offers a series of meditations about joyfully

practicing spiritual disciplines. A passage from Philippians structures each chapter, and additional scripture passages and reflection questions at the end of each chapter will be discussed at each session.

The group gathers at 9:30 for fellowship and starts the study at 9:45. The book may be purchased on Amazon and other online retailers. We invite all women to join us.

CHURCH LIBRARY

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.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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

**Email news & photos to
secretary@fpcathens.com**



CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT



FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER

We had lots of good food and fellowship at our "Fat Tuesday" Family Night Supper in February. If you missed it, you missed a blessing. Make a plan to join us in March for our next gathering.



Saying
Good-bye is
never easy!



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

MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12:00 pm—ETCADA Women & Men 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 5:30 pm—Christian Ed. Committee Mtg. (FC) 6:00 pm—Sally's Soup Ministry Meeting (FHC)	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)	7 5:00 pm—Missions/Community Concerns Committee Meeting (FC) 6:30 pm—Men for Him (FH)	8 12:00 pm—ETCADA Women & Men 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 6:15 pm—Session Meeting (FHC)	9 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 4:30 pm—YES (YH)	10	11 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
12 <i>Daylight Saving Begin</i> 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary) ***Men for Him Singing 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—ETCADA Women & Men 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC) 6:00 pm—FNS - "Game Night" (FH)	16 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 4:30 pm—YES (YH) 6:00 pm—MOPS (FH)	17 <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18 9:00 am—Rebecca Project (FH)
19 8:30 am—Worship Service (FH) 9:45 am—Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Service (Sanctuary) 2:00pm—Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)	20 9:00 am—AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	21 6:30 pm—Men for Him (FH)	22 12:00 pm—ETCADA Women & Men 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC)	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)	29 12:00 pm—ETCADA Women & Men 5:00 pm—Bells (FHC)	30 9:30 am—Women of the Word Bible Study 4:30 pm—YES (YH)	31	

MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Angela Lassiter Joan King	2	3	4
5 Rick Stroupe Sophie Wright	6 Amy Smith	7 Martha McSweeney Miles Gonzales	8	9	10 Ronnie Babcock	11
12 Rick Stroupe Sophie Wright	13	14 Ken Scott Melanie Whatley	15 Paula Barton Steele	16 Janis Capelle	17	18
19 Margaret Breedlove	20 Patrick Moore	21 Sue Murray Adam Lemmon	22	23	24	25
26	27 Rachel Scotchmer Eric Davis	28 Carolyn Brinkman Bill Poncik Lennon Endsley	29 Sharon Harding	30	31 Lolly Smith	

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, March 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, March 24, 2023** Please be watching for the email listing the needed items that will be sent on March 15, 2023.

Questions? Contact Eric Davis at ericbdavis35@gmail.com



AGAPE QUILTS

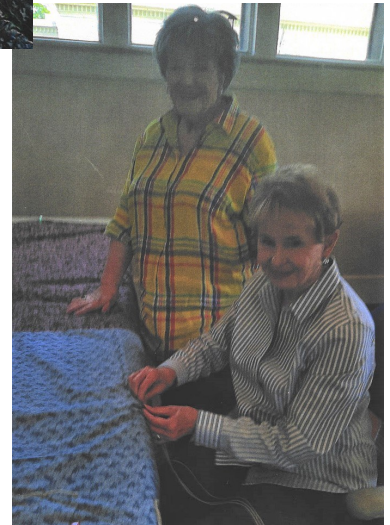
WOW! It is already March! Since the last Communique, we have given out 24 more quilts to Terry Mayhall over at the Soup Kitchen to hand out to the local homeless. The AGAPE volunteers have been so busy getting more quilts made.

I want to thank RagTime again for what they do to help us with supplies. Thank you all so much for your prayers and support.

With "Sew" Much Love,

Sofia

& the Quilters



We are there

... with Presbyterians worldwide who are answering God's call.
This Lenten season, please give what you can.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

02.22.23 - 04.9.23



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ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

FEBRUARY 22 TO APRIL 9, 2023



“One Great Hour of Sharing” is received church-wide during the season of Lent. Each gift helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations at home and world-wide. The Offering provides us a way to share God’s love with neighbors in dire need, many of whom lack even the basic necessities to sustain life for themselves or for their children.

Our church made great strides toward expanding FPC-Athens’ Missions & Community Concerns goals by actively supporting local, regional, and global initiatives in 2022, the most recent being a partnering with “Hope Springs Water”, providing the funding necessary to dig/maintain a clean water well in a remote area of Ethiopia.

“OGHS IS THE SINGLE, LARGEST WAY THAT PRESBYTERIANS COME TOGETHER YEARLY TO WORK FOR A BETTER WORLD” (PC-USA)

ISAIAH 58:

“You shall be called ‘repairers of the breach’”

In addition to our regular offering, we will be collected the “One Great Hour of Sharing” Special Offering, on Easter Sunday in the envelopes found within the bulletins on Palm Sunday.

Funds collected on Easter Sunday will be distributed as follows:

- 32% Presbyterian Disaster Relief (PDR)***
- 36% Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP)***
- 32% Self-Development of People (SDP)***

Thank you for prayerfully considering how you can make a difference with your offering to OGHS Special Offering

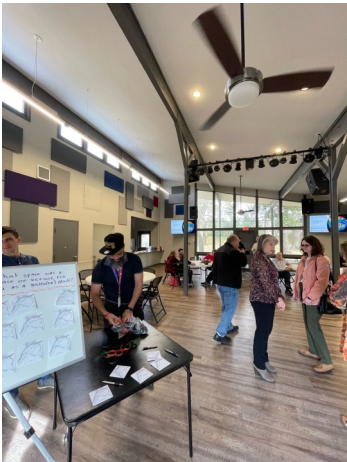
(During 2023, check for Missions & Community Concerns that are posted on the long bulletin board in the main hallway leading from office to sanctuary. Thank you for your prayers & special offerings support.)

COMMUNITY LIFE SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

THE ARK

The ARK Campus Ministry is getting ready to start back up at Trinity Valley Community College. The Ark Campus Ministry helps TVCC students discover their God-given purpose. This ministry provides the students with a safe place to go and experience God, as well as receiving a free hot meal, all while hearing and seeing the love of Jesus through the volunteers that help provide the meal. Prayerfully consider how you can serve in this ministry.

These photos are from the “Restart” meeting in February.



We would like to wish the following couple a very Happy Anniversary. We pray you are blessed with many more years together.

4th—Adron & Dianne Neill (40 years)
12th—Les & Julie Funkhouser (46 years)
16th—Bob & Dolores Herrington (22 years)
26th—Harry & Terri Budow

March 12, 2023
Daylight
Savings
Begins

Remember to:



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!

DON'T MESS WITH A WOMAN WHO
CAN TURN DEVASTATION INTO A
PURPOSE AND POWER.

Women gathering together with the purpose to live less out of habit and more out of intent. We will discuss what recovery and wellness means to us using the eight dimensions of wellness: Spiritual, Occupational, Social, Financial, Emotional, Environmental, Intellectual, and Physical.

WEDNESDAY Recovery GROUP

First Presbyterian Church of Athens

Join us in the conference room at 405 East Corsicana Street, Athens, Texas from 12:00pm to 1:00pm.

For more information go to: www.etcada.com



Support group for
women

Led by certified peer
recovery coach

Free of Charge!

Every Wednesday
at noon

Confidential Meetings

ETCADA
708 Glencrest Ln
Longview TX 75601

Phone: 903.753.7633
Crisis: 988 (text/dial)
www.etcada.com

ETCADA is new to FPC-Athens. They have begun using two rooms on Wednesday's at noon, to meet with their respective groups. This is open to both men and women who are recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. If you know of someone who could benefit from this recovery group, please pass on the information. Want to know more about ETCADA? go to their website, www.etcada.com.

For those who would like to keep in touch with Traci, here is her new contact info:

Traci Dechaume
705 SW Polk St., Apt #38
Topeka, KS 66603

Cell: 214-315-9814
Email:
traciwhiddon@gmail.com

Thanks for keeping us in
your prayers!

Join us for

GAME NIGHT

MARCH 15, 2023

@ 6:00 PM

Bring your
Family &
Friends

Church providing
Chicken

Bring
Sides &
Dessert

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
405 E. CORSICANA ST.
ATHENS, TX

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

MARCH '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)

Vicki Grady
secretary@fpcathens.com

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Next Deadline:
March 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*