

APRIL 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Matthew 28:6, "He (Jesus) is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

One of the most famous Buddhist temples in the world is the Shwe Dagon. Embedded in the solid masonry of the base is a gold box which contains some finger-bones, teeth, and other parts of Buddha, who lived centuries ago.

There is another burial place in Arabia, the green mosque of Medina, under which lies the body of Mohammed. Millions of people today are his followers. But, despite his greatness, he, too, is dead, and like Buddha, he lies buried here on earth.

There is another tomb that was cut into a rock. A tomb which had been closed with a great stone. Today, the stone is "rolled away", the Man whose body had been laid within by sorrowing friends is gone.

The world-shattering truth being that on the third day, "He (Jesus) ROSE from the dead!"

Yes, the tomb of Christ is an empty tomb. That's the vital difference between Jesus of Nazareth and any other great religious leaders who ever walked the earth.

And He didn't die as other men do – unwillingly. He died as a sacrifice "for the sins of the world." He died for your sins and mine. Jesus Christ, by His resurrection, has changed the lives of millions. Because He conquered death and lives, all who believe in Him will live as well.

My friends, during this Easter season, and beyond, believe by faith. Share the faith and keep the faith! Have a blessed Easter!


A Publication of
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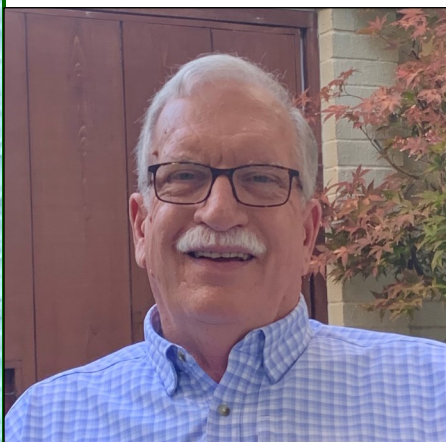
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Church Email:
Secretary@fpcathens.com

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



God Bless, *Woody*



SESSION REPORT

March Stated Session

- Members, if you have a name tag, we are requesting that you wear it on Sundays, so that visitors can get to know who we are.
- Building and Grounds will review information on purchasing AEDs for the sanctuary and fellowship hall.
- Easter Sunday there will be an egg hunt, brunch and egg decorating contest between services. More information to follow.
- Jolene Taylor will be the new liaison for the ARK. Thank you, Jolene.
- Community Holy Week service at FPC Athens will be held on Tuesday, April 4th. Service is at 12:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. A light lunch will be provided in the fellowship hall following the service.
- Caring Connections met, and they are ready to begin serving those in need of pastoral care in our church and the community. For more information, please contact Joan King or Woody.
- There will be a plant sale on March 18th and 25th in the church parking lot to benefit the choir.
- A big thank you to Rick Stroupe for his attention to all that needs fixed and replaced on our church campus.

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.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2

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.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Those In Our Church Family

Kelly Ketelboeter

Those Who Are in Need of Our Visits & Prayers

Lakeland Assisted Living:

Fred Davies

Oak Wood Assisted Living:

Fran Jones

Susan Underkofler

Mark Carlson

Those Who Are Grieving

Family of Alice Francis

Prayers For Those Serving In The Mission Field

Kurt Esslinger and Hyeyoung Lee - Missionaries in Korea

Prayers For Church & Country

Our church and its leaders

Our community and its leaders

Our nation and its leaders

Those We Love Needing Prayer

Evelyn Jackson (cousin of the Lively's)

Kay Johnson (mother-in-law 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)

Bari Hart

Trenn Parnell

Earl Estep

Megan Hartin Allen (granddaughter of Sharon Harding)

Colleen Randel (friend of Sharon Harding and Cathy

Scarborough)

Randy Daniel

Those We Love in the Armed Forces

Si Robson, U.S. Army Ranger, Missouri

Those Away at School

Chloe Wright

Elaine Hendrickson

Madison Rhodes

Hannah Davis

Tate Elfarr

Toby Rhodes

Alex Elfarr

Olivia Whatley

Will Perryman

Session Members

Mike Babler – Member of Christian Education Committee

Margaret Breedlove – Chairman, Witness Committee

Kim Scott – Chairman, Worship Committee

Lolly Smith – Chairman, Congregational Life Committee

Scott Cruce – Chairman, Communications Committee

Kathryn Hendrickson – Chairman, Christian Education Committee

Rick Stroupe – Chair, Building & Grounds Committee

Nancy Williamson – Member of Witness Committee

Kara Davis – Co-Chair, Missions/Community Concerns

Claire Grant – Co-Chair, Missions/Community Concerns & Chair, Stewardship

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 started a new study, "For the Hurt, the Blessed, and the Dammed" by Rev. Bradley Sullivan. This book explores Christianity as a religion of healing, connection, belonging and love, not as a religion of fear.

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: Steve Grant

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

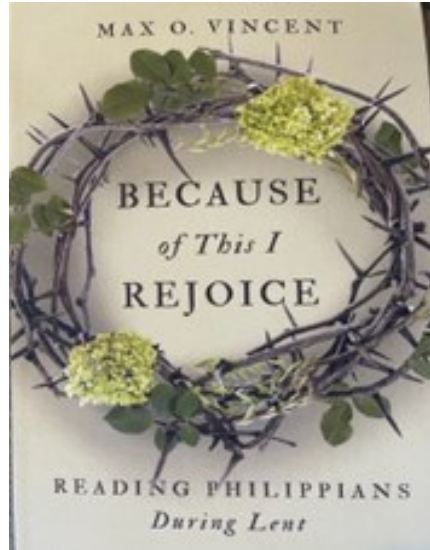
Bells! Bells! Bells!

The PC Ringers will play for the 11:00 Services ON April 16th.

Gary Barton will be the guest organist.



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



Women of the Word Bible Study began a new Lenten study 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.



Men for Him sang at the 11:00 a.m. services at First Presbyterian on March 12th. In April we will sing during Holy Week at the 12 noon service at First Presbyterian Church on April 4th, and at the 8:30 a.m. services at the First Baptist Church on April 23rd. Be sure and add the date May 7th to your calendar for the annual concert which will be held at Athens First Methodist Church at 3 p.m.

Men for Him practice weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 in the Fellowship Hall at First Presbyterian Church. The chorus signs 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 many 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 fee free to call me at 214-478-2386

Ted Schroeder, Director
Men for Him

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.



CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT



FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER

We had lots of good food and fellowship at our Family Game Night Supper in March. If you missed it, you missed a blessing.



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

APRIL 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 April Fools Day 9:00 Rebecca Project (FH)
2 Palm Sunday Communion 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	3 Holy Week 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB) Canceled for Holy Week	4 Holy Week 5:30 pm M/CC Mtg (FC) 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	5 Holy Week 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC) 6:00 pm Christian Ed Committee Mtg (FC)	6 Maundy Thurs 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH) 6:00 pm Munday Thursday Services (Sanc) 6:00 pm MOPS (FH)	7 Good Friday 6:00 pm Good Friday Service (Sanc)	8 Great Vigil of Easter 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
9 Resurrection Sun 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir Donuts and Most Beautiful Egg Contest	10 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	11 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	12 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC) 6:15 pm Session Meeting (FHC)	13 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH)	14	15 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
16 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	17 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	18 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	19 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC) 6:00 pm Hope Spring Potluck	20 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH) 6:00 pm MOPS (FH)	21	21 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
23 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	24 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	25 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	26 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC)	27 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 10:00 am CASA Staff Meeting (FH)* 4:30 pm YES (YH)	28 Love in Action	29 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
30 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir						

CALENDAR

APRIL 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Anna Fontana
2	3	4 Sofia Yarbrough	5	6	7	8 Roberta Ferris
9	10 Les Funkhouser	11 Jim Brack	12	13	14	15
16 Judy Willis	17 John Cain Kelly Ketelboeter	18 Jason Hurley	19	20	21 Harry Budow	21
23 Kevin Endsley	24	25	26 Shelli Morrison	27 Toby Rhodes	28	29 Elaine Hendrickson
30						

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, May 3rd 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, April 28, 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

The AGAPE volunteers have been busy getting more quilts made, with just this past week, delivering another 26 quilts to the Soup Kitchen for those in need. I want to thank RagTime again for what they do to help us with supplies. *Monday's meeting on April 3rd is canceled in observance of Holy Week.*

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.

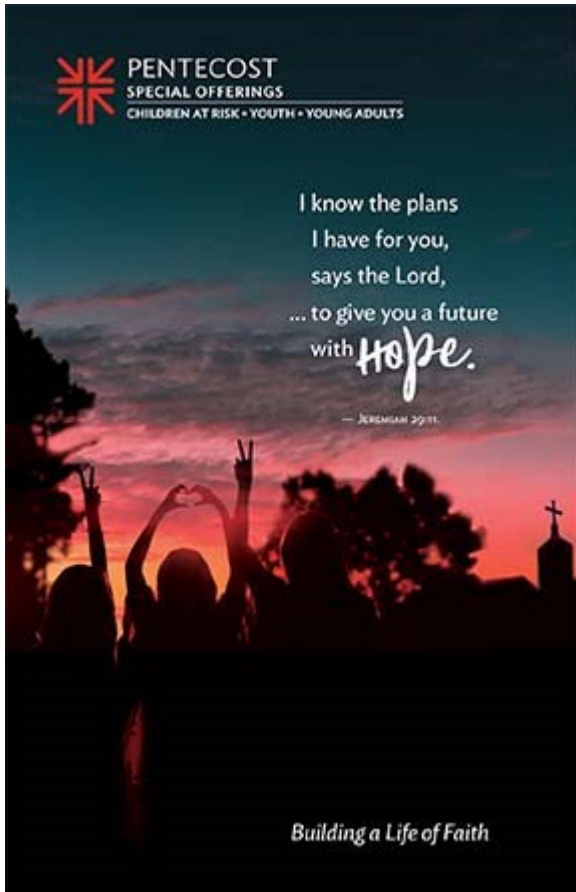


ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

02.22.23 - 04.9.23



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Four 4 Four Special Offering



PENTECOST
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

April 10th—May 28th, 2023

The second of FPC-Athens' yearly Special Offerings, PENTECOST, is collected throughout Presbyterian churches and follows "One Great Hour of Sharing" (OGHS).

"The Pentecost Offering is the single largest way that Presbyterians, church-wide, come together to work for a better world. " (PC-USA)

The office is now accepting the Pentecost Offering which is designated as follows: To provide critical needs for Children-at-Risk, and to fund programs benefiting Youth & Young Adults. **First Presbyterian-Athens will retain 40% of our church's TOTAL OFFERING, which will be designated for use in the areas described above.**

Between now and **PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 28**, please prayerfully consider participating in this worthy effort on behalf of our church. Feel free to **make a donation during the dates listed. Make all checks to FPC-Athens. It is important to place "Pentecost" on the MEMO line.**

More information will be forthcoming in your Sunday bulletins. A Pentecost Offering envelope will also be included for your convenience. Place it either in ANY Sunday's offering plate or leave your check in the office for Marshall Endsley during regular office hours. Thank you. Your giving spirits show you care.



Please allow me to introduce myself, my name is Vicki Grady. I started on February 23rd as your new Church Secretary. I'm here to assist in any way that I can. I am in the office from 9 to 2 Mon—Fri. Hope to meet you soon!

Vicki

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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

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

COMMUNITY LIFE SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

THE FUEL FUND

This month the Community Concerns and Missions Committee wants to spotlight the Fuel Fund. This fund grew out of discussions in a Sunday School class at FPC-Athens nearly 40 years ago. The "Fund" is not a budgeted item and has been funded by extra giving by FPC membership or by special gifts designated to support it.

Beneficiaries of the fund receive 25-75% of their fuel bill. Originally the fund was administered from our Church office. Recipients would come by the Church to produce their bills and get a check.

In an effort to have better screening and to serve a greater number of people in need, FPC has partnered with the Help Center for many years. The Help Center (a 501c-3 non-profit organization) has a much broader base and serves as a focal point in the Athens community to help those in need.

Winter utility bills have depleted the Fuel Fund, and summer is just around the corner. When you make your pledge to the Church, please consider an extra donation to the Fuel Fund. Thank you!



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

7th—Charlie & Andrea Meadows (33 years)
24th—John & Felecia Cain (31 years)

The Henderson County Food Pantry is asking for donations of dry dog and cat food. Many of the citizens that the Food Pantry serves are Seniors on a very limited income and will take food from their own tables to feed their companion animals. These pets may be their only real companions and provide a sense of purpose and feeling of being needed. Please bring your contributions to the church office. Thank you for your participation!



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!

EASTER EGG HUNT & PRETTIEST EGG CONTEST

Easter Sunday, April 9th

Easter Egg Hunt Between Services by Youth Center

Prettiest Egg Contest will be in the Fellowship Hall between services. Donuts and coffee will be provided. Bring your egg already decorated.

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.



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday: April 2, 2023 (regular services)

Maundy Thursday: April 6, 2023 at 6pm in Sanctuary

Good Friday Service: April 7, 2023 at 6pm in Sanctuary

Easter Sunday: April 9, 2023 at 8:30 am & 11 am both in Sanctuary

**Easter Egg Hunt/Prettiest Egg Contest between services.*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

SEND MAIL TO: P.O. Box 927

Athens, TX 75751

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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APRIL '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:
April 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*