

MAY 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

June has finally arrived and with it comes summer plans and schedules.

The Lord has plans for each of us and specific work that He has called us to do. This might be hopeful news to you, or it might be overwhelming if you're already struggling to manage all that's on your plate. Thankfully, balancing five areas of our schedule can help us live according to God's purposes.

1. Our top priority should be spending time with the Lord each day. We can read and meditate on His Word, pray, listen for His directions, or simply be with Him.
2. Relationships are essential to God's plans for us. We should allot time to family and friends.
3. The area most likely to become imbalanced is our work. The Lord disapproves of laziness, but He doesn't want us to be overly consumed with our careers, either.



A Publication of
First Presbyterian Church
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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

April Stated Session

April Stated Session Meeting:

- Repairs on the church parking lot will begin on 4/13.
- Floor drains in the fellowship hall restrooms will be evaluated the week of 4/17, to see why they don't drain properly.
- There are termites by the entry on the south side of the church around the stained glass window. The area will be treated, and a decision made about whether to repair and put the glass window back or to sheet rock the window opening.
- Multiple pews are separating in the sanctuary. Rick Stroupe is in the process of getting estimates from Southern Church Furniture, in Waco, to repair the pews.
- Session discussed the process for new members wanting to join. Prospective members need to let Woody or a Session member know they are interested. Session would then approve their request for membership, and Woody and the prospective members would set a date to join and be recognized at the worship service. Prospective members would meet informally, prior to the service, in the church parlor with Session members.

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.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
1 Corinthians 13: 1-3

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 Burt Lively Roberta Ferris

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 Family of Bari Hart
Family of Don Howard Family of Steve DeMay
Family of Trenn Pranell

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)
Wayne Webb (friend of many)
Megan Hartin Allen (granddaughter of Sharon Harding)
Colleen Randel (friend of Sharon Harding and Cathy Scarborough)
Bill Caldwell (brother to Mary Hortman)
Randy Daniel
Nikos (son of Sofia Yarbrough)
Sara Taylor (at the passing of her sister, Lily)

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
Joan King – Congregational Life Committee
Steve Yarbrough – Chair, Personnel Committee



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 donnafostermeredith@gmail.com.

Friendship Leader: Mike Babler

Location: Main Church Building, Friendship Classroom

Time: 9:45 am Sunday morning

Seekers Class

We have started a new study, "For the Hurt, the Blessed, and the Damned" 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.

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE

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

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

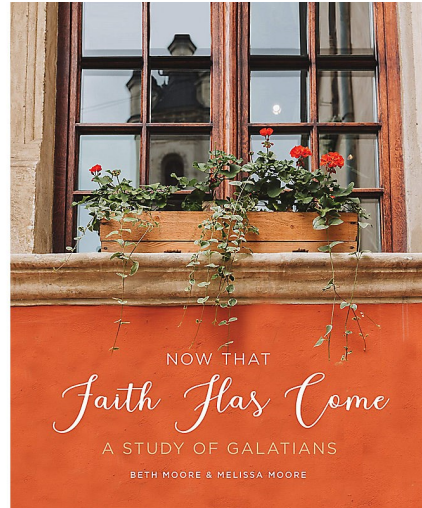
NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bells! Bells! Bells!

The PC Bells have no performances scheduled for May.



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



Women of the Word Bible Study started a new study using the book "Now That Faith Has Come", by Beth & Melissa Moore starting on 4/13/23. This is a six-week study of Galatians including video

and 30 daily lessons (5 per week). Come to know the letter's original recipients. Study its original context and embrace its timeless relevance. Discover—or perhaps rediscover—what makes the gospel of Jesus Christ revolutionary to those who choose to believe. Find out how everything has changed, now that faith has come.

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.



Men for Him will end their twelfth season with our annual concert at 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 7, at Athens First Methodist Church in Athens. The concert follows a busy April as we sang on April 4 at the Holy Week service at First Presbyterian Church and on April 23 at the 8:30 traditional service at First Baptist Church.

We would like to thank the members of First Presbyterian Church for the use of your facilities for our regular practices on Tuesday nights and hope that each of you will be able to come to the concert!

If you would like more information, please feel free to call me at 214-478-2386

Ted Schroeder, Director
Men for Him

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT



EASTER DAY!!!



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

MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 5:00 pm.—M/CC Meeting (FH) 6:30 pm.—Men for Him (FH)	3 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 5:00 pm.—Bell Practice (FHC) 6:00 pm—Christian Ed. Committee Meeting (FC) 6:00 pm Sally's Soup Meeting (FHK)	4 9:30 am-WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH) 6:00 pm MOPS (FH)	5	6 9:00 Rebecca Project (FH)
7 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	8 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	9 5:30 pm M/CC Mtg (FC) 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	10 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC) 6:00 pm Christian Ed Committee Mtg (FC) 6:15 pm—Sessions Meeting (FHC)	11 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH)	12	13 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
14 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	15 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	16 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	17 12:00 pm ETCADA (FH) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC)	18 Ascension of the Lord 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH) 6:00 pm MOPS (FH)	19 MDO—Pre-School Graduation (FH)	20 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
21 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	22 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB)	23 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	24 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC)	25 9:30 am WOW Bible Study (UC) 4:30 pm YES (YH) 6:00 pm MOPS (FH)	26 Love in Action	27 9:00 am Rebecca Project (FH)
28 Day of Pentecost 8:30 a.m. Worship (FH) 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship (Sanc) 1:30 a.m. Chancel Choir	29 Memorial Day OFFICE CLOSED 9:00 am AGAPE (CFB) CANCELED	30 6:30 pm Mem for Mem (FH)	31 12:00 pm ETCADA (FR) 12:00 pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00 Bell Practice (FHC)			

CALENDAR

MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Dale Ward	4	5 Rebecca McCarty	6
7 Janie Poncik Willy Robson	8	9 Sally Ayres Don Foster	10 Eddie Lassiter	11	12	3
14	15 Cindy Babcock Sherry Baldwin	16	17	18	19	20 Emily Heglund
21	22	23	24 Sara Smith	25	26	27 Katrina Johnson
28 Fran Jones	29	30	31			\

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 you 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. At this time, we are wanting to expand and serve any and all who can benefit from this ministry; whether, they be recovering from a new addition to the family, to someone who is home from a hospital stay, or even sick with the flu or covid, we are here to help in providing a hot meal. This can also be an outreach for someone who is new to the neighborhood or to visit with someone who hasn't been to church in awhile.

Please let us know so that we can provide them with some soup that is prepared by this ministry.



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, May 26, 2023**. Please be watching for the email listing the needed items for this months meal.

Questions? Contact Eric Davis at ericbdavis35@gmail.com



AGAPE QUILTS

The AGAPE volunteers continue to work with “The Soup Kitchen” in providing bed rolls for the needy, and now that we are back from Easter break, our goal is to get with our 1st responders. As always, we want to thank Ragtime for what they do to help us with supplies.

With “Sew” Much Love,

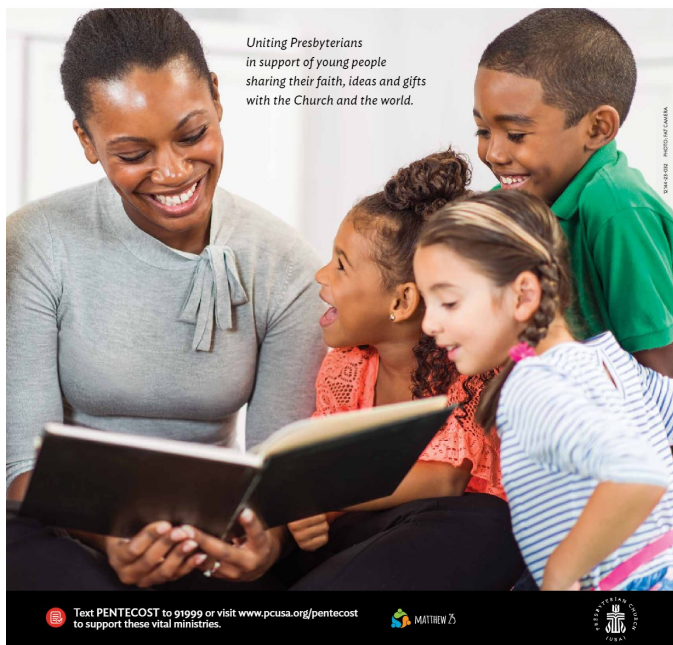
Sofia

& the Quilters



BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST.

— EPH. 4:12, CEB



Uniting Presbyterians
in support of young people
sharing their faith, ideas and gifts
with the Church and the world.



PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

Special Offering
April 10-May 28, 2023

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

OUR CHURCH WILL HONOR TRADITION BY COLLECTING THIS OFFERING ON PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 28, 2023. During the month of May, one Sunday service bulletin will contain an information flyer, plus a handy envelope for your offering which can be made either in the office or placed into the collection plate any Sunday leading up to Pentecost Sunday. REMINDER: **Always make checks to FPC-Athens. It is important to place "Pentecost" on the MEMO line.**

The Pentecost Offering is the single largest way that Presbyterians, church-wide, come together to work for a better world by providing for the critical needs of children-at-risk and children with disabilities (10%). The Church also funds programs benefiting youth (25%-Presbyterian Triennium) & assists young adults by funding programs that support promising urban-area young adults interested in ministry service, as well as funding the Young Adult Volunteer Program (YAV-25%), a faith based year of service abroad for ages 19-30.

IMPORTANT: First Presbyterian-Athens will retain 40% of our own church's TOTAL offering. The Education Committee will use our portion to support existing and/or newly created programs for our children and youth. In the past, summer church camp scholarships have been provided from this collection.

Thank you!

COMMUNITY LIFE SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

“BEAT THE HEAT” BOXED FANS

Last summer, for the first time, our church collected and donated 17 boxed fans to meet a perceived community need. Little did we know how great the need. Our Henderson County Food Pantry contact, Terry Mayhall, gladly received the fans and distributed them, one by one, to his list of those who he knew who needed a fan. Terry informed us that these folks were indeed without adequate cooling options and were especially appreciative of FPC’s effort to help our Athens community “beat” last summer’s gruesome heat-wave.

Missions & Community Concerns Committee is now accepting boxed fan donations in the office. Fans can be found now at Dollar Stores, Walmart, and most pharmacies like Walgreens and CVS, but they tend to disappear quickly and are often not reordered. The cost per fan is usually between \$15 & \$20.00 We are starting earlier this year because last year’s heat arrived full-force in early June and we were mid-way into the summer getting them distributed.

Our goal? To beat last year’s total by collecting 25-30 fans, if possible. That would be awesome! If you do not want to go it alone, get a friend-group to go in with you on the purchase of one or more fans. Members who so desire can also donate to The Fuel Fund through the office. Funds in that account are running low. All funds collected are given to a local non-profit for distribution to those who apply for utilities help through that agency. Please have your fans into the office before Memorial Day so they can be given to Mr. Mayhall for distribution before the hottest times arrive. Your help would be most appreciated.

And oh, by the way, thank you in advance! Our members are widely known for our generosity and when a “call is issued,” we step up! We really, really do!

Lou Sutton—“Beat the Heat” contact for M&CC



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

9th—Marshall & Penny Endsley
(53 years)

27th— Kenn & Shirley Hornbeck

31st—Tyler & Kathryn Hendrickson
(26 years)

MOPS Group (Mothers of Preschoolers)



MOPS meets the 1st 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!

OUR THANKS GOES OUT TO....

Thank you Susie House for the greatly successful plant sale gift to our church, congregation and community during the month of March. Your gift of support from the proceeds will benefit our Music Ministry efforts here at First Presbyterian. The blessings of spring are especially poignant this year as a result of your benevolence and brings us renewed energy and growth. We thank you for blessing us so beautifully!



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.

KIBBLE PET FOOD NEEDED for Our Food Pantry ASAP!



Please bring your donations to the small kitchen by the church office with Pet Food project noted.

**WE NEED
YOUR
HELP!**



With so many seniors these days having only their pets for companionship, it is necessary at this time to help our senior community in providing pet food for these precious loved companions. We are asking for kibble donations only at this time for both Cats and Dogs.

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



Thank you all for making me feel so welcome and a part of the FPC-Athens family! It has truly been an honor and blessing to be here working with folks who love the Lord and their church home/ community as you all do here.

I am here working for you, Monday—Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please feel free to stop by and say Hi anytime!

Vicki

MAY '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.

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:
June 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*

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)