



First Presbyterian Church  
405 East Corsicana Street  
Athens, Texas 75751

**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 927  
Athens, Texas 75751

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**Website:**



[www.fpcathens.com](http://www.fpcathens.com)

[www.facebook.com/  
firstpresbyterianchurch  
athenstexas/](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchathenstexas/)

# SEPTEMBER 2023

A publication of First Presbyterian Church

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

During the summer months I've been studying Paul's writings and reflecting on his words to the churches he founded. In many of his letters to those churches he speaks about contentment, and it started me thinking. What kind of life do you think brings contentment?

You might assume it's one with few problems, good health, financial security, and a loving family. But that was not Paul's experience. His life was filled with dangers, rejection, personal attacks, beatings, and imprisonment, yet he claimed to have learned the secret of being content in every circumstance. The source of his contentedness was obviously not his situation, and that can be true for you as well.

Contentment is hard to find and even harder to keep. There's always something newer and better to acquire or a more appealing relationship to pursue. This month, when you feel unsatisfied, remember all you have in Christ and respond according to these truths rather than your feelings.


See you on Sunday,

Pastor Woody.



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

# SEPTEMBER 2023

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue  | Wed   | Thu   | Fri  | Sat                               |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
|   |   |  |   |   | 1  | 2<br>9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)  |
| 3 <b>**Communion**</b><br>8:30am Worship Service (FH)<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)<br>1:30pm Chancel Choir      | 4<br><b>Labor Day</b><br><b>Office Closed</b> | 5<br>5:30pm Community Concerns & Missions Committee Mtg (FC) | 6<br>12:00pm ETCADA (CR)<br>6:00pm Christian Ed. Committee Mtg (FC)<br>6:00pm Sally Soup (FH)                   | 7   | 8  | 9<br>9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)  |
| 10 <b>Grandparent's Day</b><br>8:30am Worship Service (FH)<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)<br>1:30pm Chancel Choir | 11<br>9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)               | 12<br>6:30pm Men for Him (FH)                                | 13<br>12:00pm ETCADA (CR)   | 14<br>9:30am WOW Bible Study (CR)<br><i>"Take Courage" - 7 weeks</i>                                    | 15   | 16<br>9:00am Rebecca Project (FH) |
| 17<br>8:30am Worship Service (FH)<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)<br>1:30pm Chancel Choir                          | 18<br>9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)               | 19<br>6:30pm Men for Him (FH)                                | 20<br>12:00pm ETCADA (CR)<br>5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)<br>6:00pm Family Night Potluck Supper & Game Night (FH) | 21<br>9:30am WOW Bible Study (CR)<br><i>"Take Courage" - 7 weeks</i>                                    | 22<br><br><b>1st Day of Autumn</b><br><br><b>LOVE IN ACTION</b><br><b>Meal Served</b> | 23<br>9:00am Rebecca Project (FH) |
| 24<br>8:30am Worship Service (FH)<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)<br>1:30pm Chancel Choir                          | 25<br>9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)               | 26<br>6:30pm Men for Him (FH)                                | 27<br>12:00pm ETCADA (CR)<br>5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)   | 28<br>9:30am WOW Bible Study (CR)<br><i>"Take Courage" - 7 weeks</i><br>10:00am CASA Staff Meeting (FH) | 29   | 30<br>9:00am Rebecca Project (FH) |

# SESSION REPORT

## August Stated Session:

- The church received a grant from the Cain Foundation of \$20,000, for the Christmas Benevolence Program.
- The church received a special gift of \$20,000 designated for repairs to the stained glass window on the south side of the building. This window was heavily damaged by termites.
- A congregational meeting will be held on September 20th, at Family Night Supper. The purpose of the meeting is to elect 5 members from the congregation to serve on the Elder Nominating Committee.
- The Listener's Club will use the Fellowship Hall on October 20, 2023, for the purpose of their 70th Anniversary Luncheon. The time used will be from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- Session approved \$5,000 to be donated to the Food Pantry maintenance account for repairs to the pantry. Funds will come from Community Concerns and Missions.
- September Family Night Supper will be held on September 20th. It will be a game night.
- November 15, 2023 we will have the Chili Cook Off for Family Night Supper.
- Many thanks to Donna Meredith for filling in as our church secretary. Donna will train Kelly Sasenbery to become our new church secretary/office administrator.
- There will be a new members reception on Sunday, August 27, 2023. It will be held in the Foyer/Atrium at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Ward, Clerk

**\*Please note that there will be no Stated Session meeting for the month of September.**

# PRAYER LIST

Kelly Ketelboeter, Kenneth Ferris, Sharon Chasey, Bob & Dolores Herrington, Burt Lively

## Those Who Are in Need of Our Visits & Prayers

Arabella Assisted Living: Don Geddie

Lakeland Assisted Living: Fred Davies

Oak Wood Assisted Living: Fran Jones (Hospice), Susan Underkofler, Mark Carlson

## Those Who Are Grieving

Family of Roger Weeks (brother of Paula Lemmon)

## 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, Kamryn McSweeney (family of Sandy Perkins)

Beau Justice (friend of Susan Sparkman)

Colleen Randel, Melva Taylor, Beth Pittman (friends of Sharon Harding & Cathy Scarborough)

Sebastian (Sebe)

John Baggett and family (friend of Ann & Elliott Boyles)

Connie Hanes (friend of Kenn & Shirely Hornbeck)

Wendy Horton (mother of Kelly Sasenbery-FPC secretary)

Vicki Grady, Anthony Chiles, Stephen Helf,

Randy Daniel, Mike & Linda Deen, Jim McPherson, Harold Rash

The Island of Maui

## 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

Heidi Davis

## Session Members and where they serve

Mike Babler – Christian Education

Margaret Breedlove – Witness

Kim Scott – Worship

Lolly Smith – Congregational Life

Scott Cruce – Communications

Kathryn Hendrickson – Christian Ed

Rick Stroupe – Building & Grounds

Donna Ward – Clerk of Session

Nancy Williamson – Witness Margaret

Kara Davis – Missions/Community Concerns

Claire Grant – Missions/Community Concerns

Joan King – Congregational Life

Stephen Yarbrough – Personnel

# Family Night Potluck Supper & Game Night!

Join us, Wednesday, September 20th @ 6:00PM  
in Fellowship Hall.



Presbyterian Children's  
Homes and Services<sup>SM</sup>

Rev. Diane Pennington will be giving a presentation of  
the Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services.

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## Congregational Meeting



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

405 E. Corsicana Street

Athens, TX 75751



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT...

## THE ARK

The Ark is a campus ministry at TVCC.

Our church, along with several churches in the community, provide volunteer and financial support. The activities of the Ark were somewhat curtailed during COVID, but, thanks to the leadership of Ramon Smith of Athens First Methodist Church, the Ark has once again become a haven for students attending TVCC.

Volunteers are on campus weekly to connect with students by having lunch with them and offering a designated space where they can come with questions or just conversation. Bible study is offered twice a month on Fridays, and final Fridays have a structured event which includes a meal.

Jolene Taylor is our liaison to the Ark. In July, Jolene provided a home-cooked meal to 18 members of the volleyball and basketball teams.

A good time was had by all!

If you would like to know more about this wonderful ministry or would like to volunteer to help, please contact Jolene Taylor.



The ARK Campus Ministry  
thearktvcc@gmail.com

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 1802, Athens, TX 75751

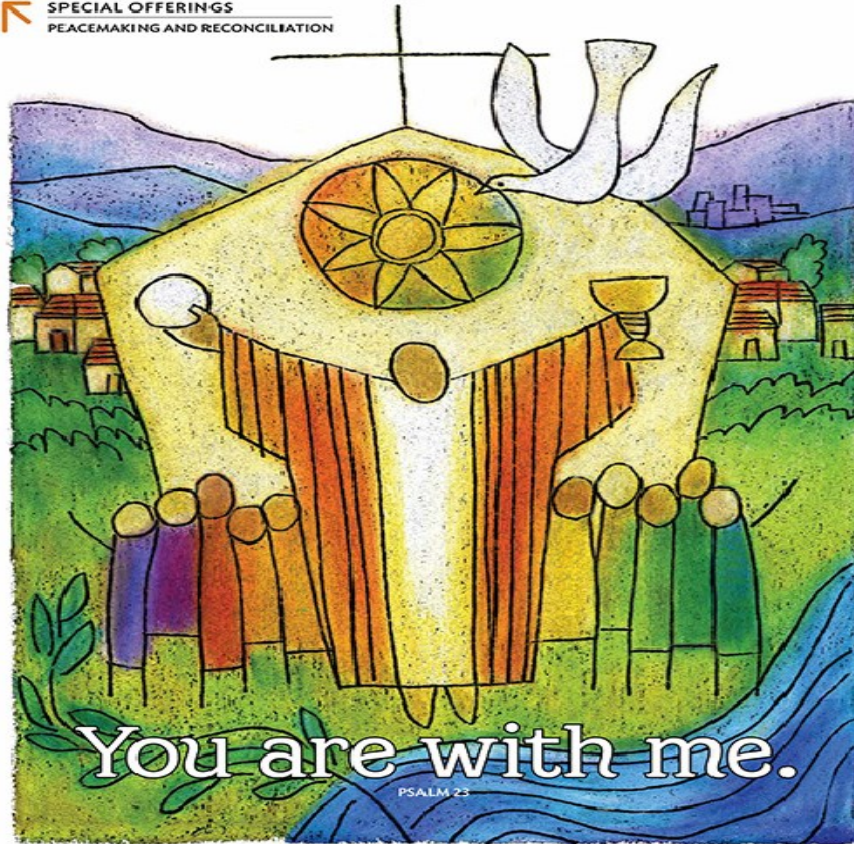
Physical Address:  
603 S. Prairieville, Athens, TX 75751

Phone: 903-677-1710  
Website: thearktvcc.org



# Peace and Global Witness Offering

 PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION



Text **PCUSAPEACE** to 41444 to give to Peace & Global Witness  
or visit [pcusa.org/peace-global](http://pcusa.org/peace-global) for more information.



The third special offering opportunity this year for our church is the  
Peace and Global Witness Offering.

Our gifts to this offering help our neighbors in need—those who live next door, down the street and across the globe. 25% of this Offering stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation in our own community, 25% goes to our mid-council to join with other congregations to support peacemaking work in our region, and 50% supports the work being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

Our opportunity to give begins on September 3, and the final collection will be taken on World Communion Sunday, October 1.

Our neighbors need us.  
Please give what you can to the Peace and Global  
Witness Offering.

Thank you!



# LOCAL COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Our Church membership participates with many local organizations to assist those in need.  
Contact information for each group is given so you can see how you can help.

This summer our Church collected around 30 box fans to help keep many cool.



## 821M, The Rebecca Project

Each Saturday morning, the Fellowship Hall is used to prepare and deliver home-cooked meals to the elderly, shut-ins and homeless.

Delivery drivers, and others,  
are needed weekly.

### Questions?

Contact Jana at 903-880-2855



We will be providing lunch for  
Love in Action on the  
Fourth Friday of each month.

An email will be sent out the week  
before with the list of items we will need  
to prepare this meal.

### Questions?

Email Eric Davis at [ericbdavis35@gmail.com](mailto:ericbdavis35@gmail.com)



## HC FOOD PANTRY

### CURRENT NEED: PET FOOD

The Henderson County Food Pantry is always  
in need of donations and volunteers!

They are open from 9:00AM to 12:00PM on  
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Food may be dropped off at the church office,  
or placed in the boxes located at the entrances to  
the Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary.

### Questions?

Contact Mamie Downing at 903-477-3010.

Email: [mamie.d.downing@gmail.com](mailto:mamie.d.downing@gmail.com)  
or call the church office for more information.



## Soup Kitchen

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED!**

Contact Sharon Chasey if you are interested  
in helping or would like more information.

903-292-1639 or 903-477-7498

Email: [skchasey@aol.com](mailto:skchasey@aol.com).

We are currently only serving 50-100 people on  
Tuesdays or Thursdays and providing "take-out"  
service of soup, sandwich & dessert.

[Serving time is from 11AM-1PM](#)



# ~FPC MINISTRIES~

## Sally Soup Ministry

Are you new to our church? Have you heard about Sally Soup Ministry and want to know what it is all about?

We would love to have you join us as soon as we get back to our normal meeting time.

If you are not a new member, but 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.

Please be watching for an email with the schedule to come soon.

### Questions?

Please contact Claire Grant at [clairewgrant@aol.com](mailto:clairewgrant@aol.com) or Steve Sparkman at [srsparkman@yahoo.com](mailto:srsparkman@yahoo.com) if you would like more information about this ministry or how you can volunteer.



## Agape Quilts

Hooray! We received a very large donation of fabric the end of August and are so grateful! Please continue to make donations as Fall and Winter months will be approaching.

### Needs/Wish List:

Quilts, bedspreads, blankets,  
fleece throws, sheets, etc.

Donations should all be washed and in good condition to piece together for sleeping bags..

Thank you so much,  
Sofia and her partners.

For more information contact,  
Sofia Yarbrough at 720-936-5225.



# 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.

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.

**Disciples Contact Person:** Lacey Ward

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

**Location:** Conference Room in the Main Building

**Time:** 9:45am Sunday morning

### Friendship Class

The **Friendship Class** is currently discussing the book "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 [donnafoftermeredith@gmail.com](mailto:donnafoftermeredith@gmail.com).

**Friendship Leader:** Mike Babler

**Location:** Main Church Building, Friendship Classroom

**Time:** 9:45am Sunday morning

### Seekers Class

The **Seekers Class** 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:** 9:45am Sunday morning

### **Toddler and Baby Nursery Open in the Main Building**

*Sunday Nursery remains the same for Older Children in the Children's Building.*

In order to accommodate our younger families and visitors with infants and toddlers, the crib and toddler rooms in the main church building are open and staffed with two workers.

In addition, we will continue to staff the Children's Building with two workers for children ages 3 and up.

Nursery workers are available during both worship services as well as during the Sunday School hour.

## CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Ages 3 and up**

**Teacher:** Phyllis Kidwell

## 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



# Welcoming New Members!



Angela St. Valentine



Rev. Diana & Paul Hartman



John & Beth Youngblood



## NEW MEMBER RECEPTION

**On Sunday, August 27th,  
a New Member Reception  
was held to welcome our  
newest members.**

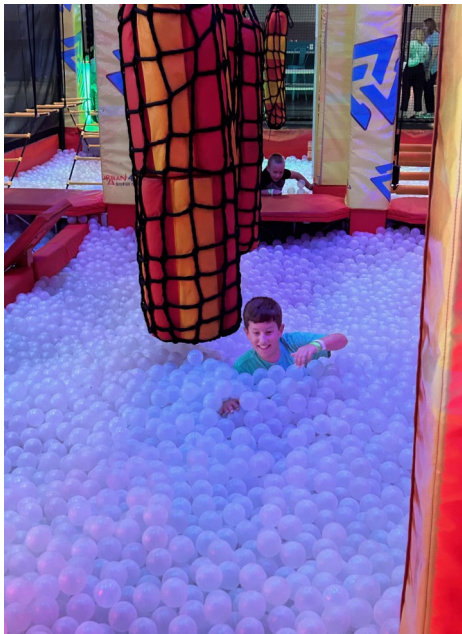


Tim & Elizabeth Van Orden

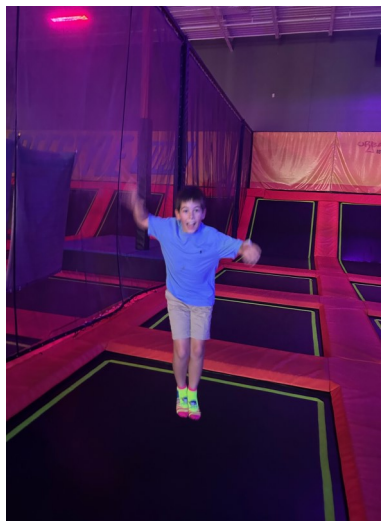
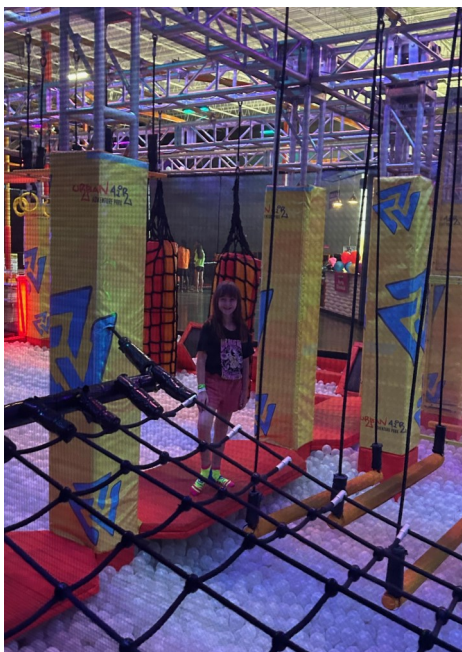
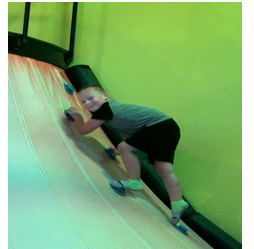
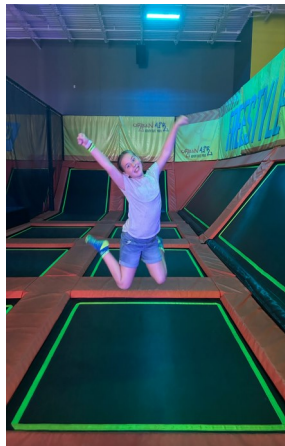


Howard & Sharron Clark





## Back to School Event at





# ~FPC Staff Introduction~

## About Me

Hello there!

My name is Kelly Sasenbery and if we haven't met yet, may I say, "it's nice to meet you!"

I recently joined the excellent staff at FPC mid-August as the Office Administrator and wanted to introduce myself.

I am 44 years old and reside in Kemp, Texas with my mom, stepdad, and cat furbabies. I am originally from upstate New York and moved to Texas in 2010.

I have been in ministry for over 9 years previously serving as the Communications Director at FUMC Mabank and DV Shelter Program Manager at Celebrate Forever Families. I also have a strong passion in helping those in need.



### FACTS ABOUT ME:

I love coffee.

I enjoy watching movies and reading.

I collect Angel and Scriptural decor.

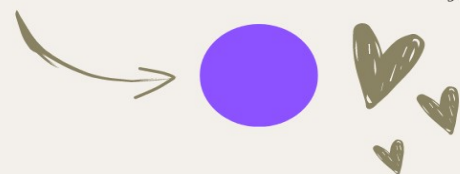
I am a childhood cancer survivor.

You can find me on  
Facebook and Instagram.

I create  
Crochet Wearable Art Items  
and Christian Themed Jewelry.

I also enjoy embroidery, paper  
crafting & Bible Journaling.

*Favorite Color & Shape*



**Prayer Shawl**



**Etsy.com  
SasyLadyCrochet**



**Essie Mae**



**Before**

# A NEW Look!



**After**

**Thank you to our special friends Marie & David Hickman who restored our Designated Texas Historical Sign at the front of our Church campus.**

**Marie and David are each members of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution respectively.**



## 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.



## CHURCH LIBRARY

Visit the church library today!  
You will not be disappointed in the wonderful selection that is available.

We welcome suggestions for new books, videos or CD's to order, and book donations in honor or in memory of someone special.

Easy book check-out instructions are posted.

For questions or help email Kim Scott at [kscott7938@aol.com](mailto:kscott7938@aol.com)



## September Wedding Anniversaries

Ken & Kim Scott  
Bob & Carol Morton  
Steve & Claire Grant  
Blake & Debbie Bumbard  
Calvin & Shannon Wilcher  
Ken & Roberta Ferris

September 3rd  
September 6th  
September 6th  
September 22nd  
September 25th  
September 28th



# September

| Sun  | Mon   | Tue  | Wed   | Thu                  | Fri  | Sat   |
|--|---|--|---|----------------------|--|---|
|  |   |  |   |                      | 1<br>Carol<br>Bates                        | 2   |
| 3<br>Benjamin<br>Lassiter<br><br>Calvin<br>Wilcher | 4<br>Charles<br>Cole<br><br>Emily<br>Geddie | 5<br><br>Don<br>Copeland                     | 6<br><br>Zan<br>Tidmore                         | 7                    | 8  | 9<br><br>Martin<br>Bennett                  |
| 10   | 11  | 12<br><br>Dianne<br>Cruce                    | 13<br><br>Steve Smith<br><br>Beth<br>Youngblood | 14                   | 15<br><br>Marian Key                       | 16  |
| 17   | 18  | 19<br><br>Hannah<br>Davis                    | 20<br><br>Jan<br>Richardson                     | 21<br><br>Hali Davis | 22   | 23<br><br>Mo<br>Morrison                    |
| 24   | 25  | 26<br><br>Howard<br>Clark<br><br>B.J. Davies | 27<br><br>Sue Copeland                          | 28                   | 29<br><br>Bill Hunt<br><br>John<br>Baldwin | 30<br><br>Claire<br>Grant<br><br>Kara Davis |

# Birthdays



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

**SEND MAIL TO:**

P.O. Box 927  
Athens, TX 75751

# SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMUNIQUE

### NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE ONLINE OR VIA EMAIL!

\* Go to [www.fpcathens.com](http://www.fpcathens.com) and click  
on the picture of the **Newsletter**.

\* To receive an email copy, scroll to the  
bottom of the page and fill out the form.

### Join Us On Sundays

**Worship at 8:30am**

in the Fellowship Hall

**Sunday School at 9:45am**

see newsletter for locations

**Worship at 11:00am**

in the Sanctuary

**Child Care**

Children's Building

(For both services &  
Sunday School)

### Pastor

Rev. Woody Meredith  
[woody@fpcathens.com](mailto:woody@fpcathens.com)

### Director of Music

Janis Capelle

### Organist & Bell Choir Leader

Mamie Downing

### Music Leader

Kara Davis

### Business Manager

Marshall Endsley  
[marshall@fpcathens.com](mailto:marshall@fpcathens.com)

### Office Administrator

Kelly Sassenbery  
[secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com)  
(Facebook/Messenger/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster)

### DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

**Next Deadline: September 18th**

Email announcements, articles,  
information, etc. to  
[secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com)

## We Are

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