



First Presbyterian Church 405 East Corsicana Street Athens, Texas 75751

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#### A publication of First Presbyterian Church

# PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

It seems as if I am having more conversations these days about the situation in this world of ours. Let us face it, our world is a changing, dangerous, and uncertain place. Many people are looking for security in wealth, relationships, and power. These things, however, are not guaranteed from one day to the next. Watching the news provides enough proof that any of them, even life itself, can be taken away at any moment. No wonder there is such confusion, despair, and fear.

For believers, thankfully, reality is not based on what we see or hear. Nor is our foundation found in this world. We build our hope and trust in the Lord, and we believe the truth in His Word.

Therefore, amid all the battles, and turmoil and trials, we have the assurance that our lives are in the ever-present and loving hands of Almighty God. We can rely not only on His love and presence but also on His faithfulness, and perfect care. As you prepare to gather around your Thanksgiving table, do so knowing that, amid the chaos and uncertainty of these days, you are secure in the love and presence of God.



Pastor Woody

# <u>CHURCH REPORTS</u>

# **SESSION REPORT-OCTOBER 2023**

#### October Stated Session:

- Christian Education will begin a middle school Sunday School class.
- The church directory is being updated.
- The phone system has been updated. A new message is on the phone giving pertinent church information.
- Stewardship has written a new letter to send to members regarding giving. A minute for mission will be given on October 29th.
- Hanging of the Greens will be done on November 26th, following the church service and a light lunch.
- FPC Athens will join the Episcopal Church for Lessons in Carols on December 17 at 6:00 p.m. at FPC Athens. Next year it will be hosted at the Episcopal Church.
- FPC will present its Cantata on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Ward, Clerk



#### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Those In Our Church Family

Kenneth Ferris, Sharon Chasey, Bob & Dolores Herrington, Karen Brack, Sofia Yarbrough, Carol Morton

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

<u>Arabella Assisted Living:</u> Don Geddie <u>Lakeland Assisted Living:</u> Fred Davies <u>Oak Wood Assisted Living:</u> Fran Jones (Hospice), Susan Underkofler, & Mark Carlson

#### **Those Who Are Grieving**

Family of Tina Wright

#### 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) Joe Ed, Becky & Del Young (neighbors of Martha McSweeney-Sandy Perkins sister) DeeDee Manton (friend of Sandy Perkins) Beau Justice, Rachel Wimberly (friends of Susan Sparkman) John Baggett (friend of Ann & Elliott Boyles) Connie Hanes (friend of Kenn & Shirley Hornbeck) Vicki Grady, Steven Helf, Randy Daniel, Jim McPherson, Sebastian (Sebe), Zoe Martir (friend of Chloe Wright) Laurie Woods Granlund (friend of Mamie Downing) Jessica Rodriguez (friend of Kara Davis) Nation of Israel

#### Those We Love in the Armed Forces Si Robson, U.S. Army Ranger, Missouri

#### Those Away at School

Chloe Wright Madison Rhodes Tate Elfarr Alex Elfarr Heidi Davis Elaine Hendrickson Hannah Davis Toby Rhodes Olivia Whatley

#### 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 Ed. Committee Rick Stroupe – Chair, Building & Grounds Committee Kara Davis – Co-Chair, Community Concerns/Missions Claire Grant – Co-Chair, Community Concerns/Missions Joan King – Congregational Life Committee Stephen Yarbrough – Chairman, Personnel Donna Ward – Clerk of Session

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them from all their troubles. ~ Psalm 34:17 ~

Please let the church office know of anyone that is sick and could benefit from receiving soup, courtesy of Sally's Soup Ministry.

# 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.

#### 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 donnafostermeredith@gmail.com.

Friendship Leader: Mike Babler Location: Main Church Building, Friendship Classroom Time: 9:45am Sunday morning

#### **Seekers Class**

The **Seekers Class** is currently studying, "The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity" by Lee Strobel. This bestselling book is for those who may be feeling attracted to Jesus but who are faced with difficult questions standing squarely in their path.

We would like to invite you to join us during our time of study and fellowship.

Seekers Contact Person: Steve Grant Location: Main Church Building, Upstairs east side. 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

Teachers: Kathryn Hendrickson & Susan Sparkman

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL

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

> Teachers: Steve & Claire Grant and Steven & Lolly Smith



Come make a joyful noise unto the LORD and we will have fun doing so!

Children of ALL ages are invited! Every 3rd Sunday in our Children's Building from 9:30-10:00am Children's Sunday School Immediately Follows



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751 OFFICE: 903-675-3530 : SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.



NEW opportunities for Children of ALL ages!

If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Hendrickson 903-681-2887



Middle School & HS Youth Sunday School Class

Held in the Youth House Sunday November 5th and 19th 9:30am-10:30am

Teachers: Steve & Claire Grant and Steven & Lolly Smith



# **CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL**

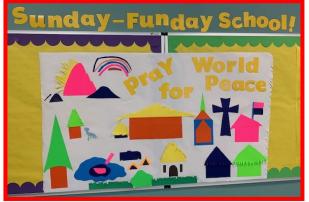




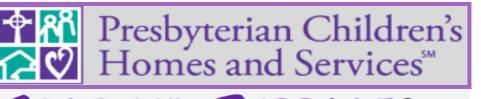








IN THE SPOTLIGHT.



**CARE AND SUPPORT** for children & families in need.

## PCHAS is Celebrating their 120th Anniversary!

You can read more about their history by visiting the following link:

<u>Presbyterian Children's Homes & Services | History of PCHAS Magazine</u> www.pchas.org/history-of-pchas-magazine

With faithful support from individuals, churches and foundations, PCHAS serves nearly 4,500 children and families across three states every year.

As stewards of this trust and support, PCHAS follows these tenets of excellence to ensure families achieve self-sufficiency and children are placed into loving, permanent homes.

First Presbyterian Church-Athens provides school supplies for middle and high school students, Christmas presents to families located in the East Texas area as well as family baskets. The family baskets contain games and activities to promote family togetherness.

Members also attend the PCHAS Annual Meeting located in Dallas during the month of November.

Would you like more information? Visit the PCHAS website at www.pchas.org or contact Claire Grant, the FPC Athens liaison at clairewgrant@aol.com

# <u>CHURCH MINISTRIES</u>

### Sally's Soup Ministry -

## We will not meeting during the months of November & December.

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!

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.

#### **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.

## 821M, The Rebecca Project

Each Saturday morning at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall volunteers 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 If you are interested in volunteering.



Showing the love of Jesus to the homeless and poor in Henderson County

FPC Athens provides a meal (overseen by Eric and Kara Davis) on the 4th Friday of each month.

Members of FPC Athens provide the needed items to make this meal possible and are notified through Sign Up Genius via the church office.

If you feel called to help supply the monthly items, please email Kelly with your email address to be added to the distribution list at secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com

Thank you! **Questions?** Email Eric Davis at ericbdavis35@gmail.com



## HC FOOD PANTRY

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.

Contact Mamie Downing at 903-477-3010. Email: mamie.d.downing@gmail.com or call the church office for more information.

# Soup Kitchen



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.

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



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

November 23rd-Dan & Kay Moore November 28th-John & Beth Miller





DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2023.

REMINDER: SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK BEFORE GOING TO BED ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2023.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751 OFFICE: 903-675-3530 WEBSITE: FPCATHENS.COM EMAIL: SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM

8:30 AM EARLY WORSHIP, 9:45 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND 11:00 AM LATE WORSHIP.

### **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Submit your items for the Communique by the 21st of each month!

Email news & photos to secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com or see Kelly in the church office.



# MEN FOR HIM

Men for Him Chorus meets weekly and practices 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 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 Ken Myers at 903-279-5065.

#### TO ALL VETERANS,

Thank you for your bravery, service, and sacrifice!

Honoring all who served

Veterans day NOVEMBER 11TH ★



## **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.



"CASA of Trinity Valley provides independent, highly trained volunteer advocates for children in the custody of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in Anderson, Cherokee and Henderson counties.

We empower volunteers to advocate for the children's best interests, to ensure that their needs are met, and to secure a permanent, safe, and nurturing home as soon as possible."

# FPC-Athens provides financial support and the use of its Fellowship Hall, as a meeting place for the CASA staff each month.

To find out more information on becoming a CASA advocate or volunteer visit their website www.casaoftv.org or contact FPC Athen's CASA Liason, Emily Heglund at emilyheglund@gmail.com

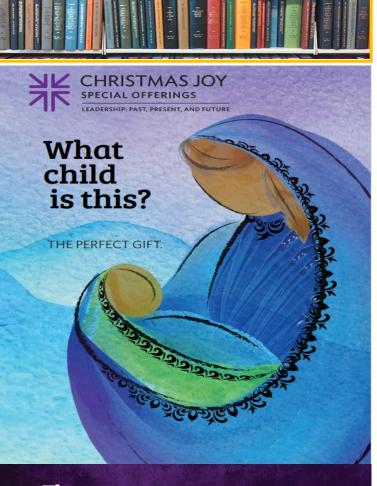
## CHURCH LIBRARY

Fall is here! 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 Kim Scott (kscott7938@aol.com).

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



The perfect gift. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we come together to support past, present and future leaders, embodying God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ.

# CHRISTMAS BENEVOLENCE PROJECT MINISTRY OF FPC-ATHENS

# PROVIDES LOW-INCOME FAMILIES FROM LOCAL SCHOOLS WITH CHRISTMAS GIFTS

#### • PROVIDES EACH FAMILY WITH STORY BIBLE

#### PROVIDES EACH FAMILY WITH A BROOKSHIRE'S GIFT CARD.

Here we are quickly approaching the Christmas Season and with that comes the Christmas Benevolence Project. Many of you are already aware of how this project affects our community, but for those who are not familiar, here is a brief summary.

Each year letters are sent to local elementary schools, requesting names of families that are in need of a "little extra help" at Christmas. Volunteers then contact the family they are assigned to and set up a time to go shopping with them. This is when the real blessings begin, because we have the opportunity to not only meet "Christmas Wishes" but also have the opportunity to engage with the parents of these children and pray with them and for them all year long.

If you have not volunteered in the past, please pray about it this year.

We would love for you to be included and to witness the many blessings that are received.

For questions or for additional information, please contact Penny Endsley at 903-288-1129.

# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Let's take time to appreciate the big and little blessings we have.

THE CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED NOVEMBER 23RD & 24TH.

> ATHENS, TX 75751 OFFICE: 903-675-3530 L: SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM







SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2023 IMMEDIATELY AFTER 11:00AM SERVICE

Soup and cornbread will be served for lunch and then we will decorate the church sanctuary and fellowship hall.





Get Connected and Informed about the Latest News & Happenings within the life of the church.

f	Facebook: @firstpresbyterianchurchathenstexa:
Ø	Instagram: @fpcathenstx
	YouTube: @fpcathenstexas532

Website: www.fpcathens.com



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3:30 AM EARLY WORSHIP, 9:45 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND 11:00 AM LATE WORSHIP.

**WEARE** 

Estate/Moving Sale

November 3rd and 4th -Starting at 8:00am

Too many items to list!

**EARL & JUDY LOCKE** 

1108 LONNIE DRIVE ATHENS, TX 75751

**Contact Info:** 

903-675-7280

MDO <u>NEWS</u> It is that time of year again!

Mother's Day Out will have SHARING BOXES located in the Children's Building & in the Church to collect canned food and/or non-perishable items to be given to the local Food Pantry.

We will deliver the boxes on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.



Please contact Brenda Tarter if you have any questions at 903-681-0769

Ladies Bible Study Thursday Mornings at 9:30AM



A NEW Bible Study will begin soon.

If you are interested in joining us on Thursday mornings or have questions, please email Kim Scott at kscott7938@aol.com

We meet in the upstairs classroom in the main church building.

## ANNUAL

Bring your favorite chili, toppings &/or desserts.

JOIN THE FUN! WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15, 2023 6:00PM IN THE

FELLOWSHIP HALL

COOK-OFF

RSVP BY NOVEMBER 14, 2023

> FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751 OFFICE: 903-675-3530 EMAIL: SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM



#### **Agape Quilts**

Winter is coming and sleeping bags are ready! Terry picked up 2 dozen on October 16th to take to the Soup Kitchen. "The Team" will be off the week of Thanksgiving. Happy Holiday!

> Needs/Wish List: Please continue to make donations. 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.







This collegiate ministry is located adjacent to Trinity Valley Community College, here in Athens, TX.

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.

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

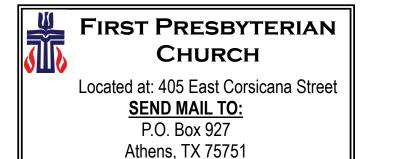


# **NOVEMBER 2023**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 *Communion Sunday* 23rd Sunday after Pentecost 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:30am MS/HS Sunday School Class (YH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service	6 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	7 ELECTON DAY 4:30pm Worship Committee Mtg. 5:30pm Community Concerns & Mis- sions Committee Mtg (FC) 6:30pm Men for Him	1       All Salmts' Day         12:00pm ETCADA (CR)         5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)         5:30pm Christian ED         Committee Mtg. (FC)         8         12:00pm ETCADA (CR)         5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)         6:15pm Session Mtg. (FHC)	2	3	4 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH) <b>PORTET</b> <b>FORGEL BACK</b> <b>II</b> 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH) <b>II</b> 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
12         24th Sunday after Pentecost         8:30am Worship Service (FH)         9:45am Sunday School         11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)         1:30pm Chancel Choir	13 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	(FH) 14 6:30pm Men for Him (FH) RSVP Due for Chili Cookoff	15 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)	16	17	18 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
1925th Sunday after Pentecost8:30amWorship Service (FH)9:30amChildren's Music Class (CB- 3rd Sunday)9:30amMS/HS Sunday School Class (YH)9:45amSunday School11:00amWorship Service (Sanctuary)1:30pmChancel Choir	9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	21 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	22 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)	23 Thanksgiving Day Church office closed!	24 Church office closed!	25 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
<ul> <li>26 Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday</li> <li>8:30am Worship Service (FH)</li> <li>9:45am Sunday School</li> <li>11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)</li> <li>12:00pm Hanging of the Greens (immediately after 11AM service)</li> <li>1:30pm Chancel Choir</li> </ul>	9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	28 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	29 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)	30		

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	d like to wish the f egation members a Happy Birthday.		1	2 Paula Lemmon	3	4
5	6	7	8 Paul Hartman Kay Moore Mary Lynn Smith	9 Russ Richardson	10	11 Judge Nancy Perryman
12 Kendra Gonzales Jeffrey Ward Olivia Whatley	13 Scott Heglund	14	15	16 Sharon Chasey	17 Lance Funkhouser	18 Temple Hendricksol
19 Ken Lemmon Traci Velvin	20 Kay Solomon	21 Shirley Ward Shannon Wilcher	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Lois Osorio	30 Dianne Neill		





## Get our Communique Newsletter delivered to your Inbox!

• Visit www.fpcathens.com and select Church Communique from the menu bar.

Simply fill out the form. Remember to check your email spam folder if you didn't receive an email.

#### Join Us On Sundays

Worship at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday School at 9:45am see newsletter for locations or visit the church website.

Worship at 11:00am in the Sanctuary

**Child Care-**Children's Building (For both services & Sunday School) Pastor Rev. Woody Meredith 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

Office Manager Kelly Sasenbery secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com (Facebook/Messenger/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster)

#### DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

#### Next Deadline: November 21st

Email announcements, articles, information, etc. to secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com

<u>We Are</u>

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