

COMMUNIQUE

FEBRUARY 2024



A publication of First Presbyterian Church

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

February may be short on days, but it's long on love! I remember exchanging paper valentines with classmates in elementary school. Do children still do that? I hope so! It's a lesser version of Christmas morning, receiving valentines from friends.

But the idea of exchanging gifts and cards of love isn't just for children. In fact, the older we get, and the more we understand about true love – God's kind of love – the more eager we ought to be to demonstrate our love for others. As far as love goes, we should celebrate love every day – not just on February 14.

There are many wonderful ways to demonstrate love. But none is more powerful than being a willing servant sharing God's love for others.

At First Presbyterian Church-Athens, we receive your expressions of love daily, and we are very grateful for each and every one. It's your love and support that enables us to minister to the needs of the congregation, the community, and the world. I don't think there's a better month than the "Love Month" to say how very grateful we are for your continued expressions of love.



Pastor Woody



First Presbyterian Church
405 East Corsicana Street
Athens, Texas 75751

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 927
Athens, Texas 75751

Office Phone: 903-675-3530

Website: www.fpcathens.com

Email: secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com

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& Happenings within the life of the church.



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[@fpcathenstx](https://www.instagram.com/fpcathenstx)



YouTube:
[@fpcathenstexas532](https://www.youtube.com/fpcathenstexas532)



Website:
www.fpcathens.com



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYER LIST: JANUARY 29, 2024

Sharon Chasey, Bob & Dolores Herrington, Burt Lively, Roberta Ferris, Sharron Clark

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

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, Jan Suhr, Brandon Monkerud (friends of Susan Sparkman)

John Baggett (friend of Ann & Elliott Boyles)

Connie Hanes (friend of Kenn & Shirley Hornbeck)

Sebastian (Sebe),

Jessica Rodriguez, Olan & Maryanne Timmons (friends of Eric & Kara Davis)

Nation of Israel

Renee Oliver (friend of Ken Schofield)

Hailey Durran (friend of Susie House)

Sue Dover (Melanie Whatley's Mother)

Tom Gardner (friend of The Meredith's)

Sue Nelson (friend of Donna Meredith)

Rosemary Brevard (friend of Carol McNatt)

Betty Mackie (friend of many)

Vicki Grady, Randy Daniel, Janis Marshall

Those We Love in the Armed Forces

Si Robson, U.S. Army Ranger, Missouri

Those Away at School

Chloe Wright	Elaine Hendrickson	Madison Rhodes
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Hannah Davis	Tate Elfarr	Toby Rhodes
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Alex Elfarr	Olivia Whatley	Heidi Davis
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Session Members and Where They Serve

Steven Smith – Stewardship

Melanie Whatley – Chairman of Congregational Life

Marcy Warren –

Scott Cruce – Chairman of Communications Committee

Kathryn Hendrickson – Chairman of Christian Ed. Committee

Rick Stroupe – Chairman of Building & Grounds Committee

Nancy Perryman – Chairman of Witness Committee

Kara Davis – Co-Chair of Community Concerns/Missions

Claire Grant – Co-Chair of Community Concerns/Missions

Joan King – Congregational Life Committee

Stephen Yarbrough – Chairman of Personnel

Donna Ward – Clerk of Session

Installation & Ordination of New Elders: 01/14/2024



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.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

**What
child
is this?**

THE PERFECT GIFT.



**Due to our generous congregation,
Christmas Joy was over the top this
year, making FPC-Athens once again
a "Four4Four" church.**

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 "The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to be Rapture Ready" by Dr. David Jeremiah. 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.

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

MUSIC CLASS FOR ALL AGES

Meets the 3rd Sunday of each month in the Children's Building.

MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL

Watch for monthly meeting date reminders!

All Youth ages **6th - 12th grades** meet on Sunday mornings in the Youth House located by the Main Parking lot.

Teachers:

Steve & Claire Grant and
Steven & Lolly Smith

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

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

The Tower of Babel Building and Sunday Funday!



IN THE SPOTLIGHT...

LOVE IN ACTION

First, we would like to thank Eric and Kara Davis for cooking meals for Love in Action once a month for the last several years. They have decided to step down and take a well deserved break. So, as not to overburden one or two people, we are creating teams to provide meals quarterly. With that being said, we are needing members in our congregation to prayerfully consider volunteering to prepare a meal quarterly with a team of your choosing.

As in the past, ingredients will be provided by church members through the Sign-up Genius. The first quarter of the year has been covered by Zan and Charlie Tidmore, Kay Moore and Pam Douglas, but we need others.

Please consider helping, as this is an important mission in our church & community. For more information, you may contact Kara Davis @ 903-203-2184.

Blessings,

Missions/Community Concerns Committee



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

We will be providing lunch for
Love in Action on the 4th Friday of
the month.

An email is typically sent out 2 weeks
before hand with the list of items needed
to prepare the meal.

Questions?

Email the church office at
secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com

If you would like to be added to
our SignUpGenius distribution
list, please contact the church
office or email Kelly at
secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com



SPECIAL OFFERING



—



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT
pcusa.org/oghs

2024- SPECIAL OFFERINGS

“ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING” (OGHS)

FEBRUARY 14 (ASH WEDNESDAY) – MARCH 31 (EASTER SUNDAY)

(WILL BE COLLECTED EACH SERVICE ON PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24

AND ON EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31)

“The opposite of faith, it has been said, is not doubt, but fear.”

Doing the work, sowing the seeds through our giving,
transforming prayer into action
goes a long way to transform fear into hope.

That action can look like many things,
life offering shelter in the face of natural disaster (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance/PDA),
providing economic support in the face of poverty (Presbyterian Self-Development of People/PSDOP),
and providing food in the face of hunger. (Presbyterian Hunger Program/PHP).

If we, as the Church united, answer the call
to be “repairers of the breach”,
we will by God’s grace,
be led into a new season of love
by helping to build bridges
to more justice, freedom, and peace in our world.

**Additional material will be
provided in Sunday bulletins on:
March 3rd & 17th.**

**Collection Dates for
One Great Hour of Sharing:
Sunday, March 24th & 31st.**



SPECIAL OFFERINGS MOTTO: “WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT”

One Great Hour of Sharing

OFFERING DISTRIBUTION:

36% Presbyterian Hunger Program

32% Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

32% Self-Development of People

RECEIVED:

During the season of Lent, especially
on Palm Sunday, March 24, and Easter,
March 31

CONGREGATION REMITTANCE:

100% sent to Presbyterian Mission Agency

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

STAND FIRM

How to defend your faith



FEBRUARY 07, 2024
6:00 PM

DR. PAUL GOULD

AUTHOR, PROFESSOR, AND SPEAKER

o o o o



ACPA and the First Presbyterian Church are proud to welcome Dr. Paul Gould. He is an Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion and the Director of the M.A. in Philosophy of Religion at Palm Beach Atlantic University. He is known for his books *Cultural Apologetics*, *Stand Firm*, and *Philosophy: A Christian Introduction*. He will be lecturing at 6pm on February 7th, 2024 at First Presbyterian Church in Athens, Texas. We hope you can join us for this FREE event!

Where: First Presbyterian Church
Athens, Texas

Contact ACPA @ 903-386-0400 for more information



Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY 14, 2024

SERVICE AT 6:00PM
IN THE CHURCH SANCTUARY



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH - ATHENS

405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751
903-675-3530 WWW.FPCATHENS.COM SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM



6:00pm
in the
Fellowship
Hall!

Join Us!

February
13th

**FAT
TUESDAY**

Family Night Supper

**Bring your favorite
Cajun Food.**

**RSVP WITH
THE CHURCH
OFFICE BY
02/12/2024**



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH - ATHENS

405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751
903-675-3530 WWW.FPCATHENS.COM
SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM



Easter Lilies

...In Honor & In Memory Of...

A sign-up sheet will be available in the
church office very soon!

More information to come, thank you!

CHURCH MINISTRIES



Sally's Soup Ministry

Sally's Soup Ministry was born as a result of the love that one woman had for the people God had placed around her, Sally Jean Hawn Sparkman. Sally loved to cook and frequently made soups to take to those who were not feeling well, who had new babies at home, to make someone feel better or as a Christmas gift. She had several specialty recipes that were well received by all those she visited. She had a big, contagious laugh that could fill up a room. When she found something funny, there was no doubt about it!

In the shadow of a car accident that took her life in 2004, those that she had loved on and cared for during their times of need, began to talk about her 'gifts'.

Thus the idea was born to begin "Sally's Soup Ministry", to continue in her footsteps, by caring for those that need it.

Today there are many volunteers who prepare soup and other meals to be delivered to those who need them. It is just a small tribute to our friend, Sally, who taught us through her example, the power of the gift of hospitality.

If you are interested in being a part of the Sally's Soup Ministry, we meet the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:00PM in the Fellowship Hall kitchen.

Be ready for a time of fellowship, as we prepare soup for those who will need it.

Are you new to FPC-Athens? 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 contact Claire Grant at clairewgrant@aol.com or Steve Sparkman at srsparkman@yahoo.com

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 the homeless.

Delivery drivers, and others, are needed weekly.



Questions:

Contact Jim & Jana Thompson at 903-880-2855 if you are interested in volunteering.

HC FOOD PANTRY



Henderson County Food Pantry

The HC Food Pantry is currently in need of pet food donations. Donations can be brought to the church office or dropped off at the pantry location listed below.

Open 9:00AM to 12:00PM
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
715 E. Corsicana St.
Athens, Texas 75751
hendersoncofp@gmail.com
903-677-1600



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.

Agape Quilts

We would like to thank Karen Brack for her fabric donation! It is so appreciated especially during this cold winter weather.

We were able to make several sleeping bags.

Can you help? We are still in need of donations, please see our wish list below.

Needs/Wish List:

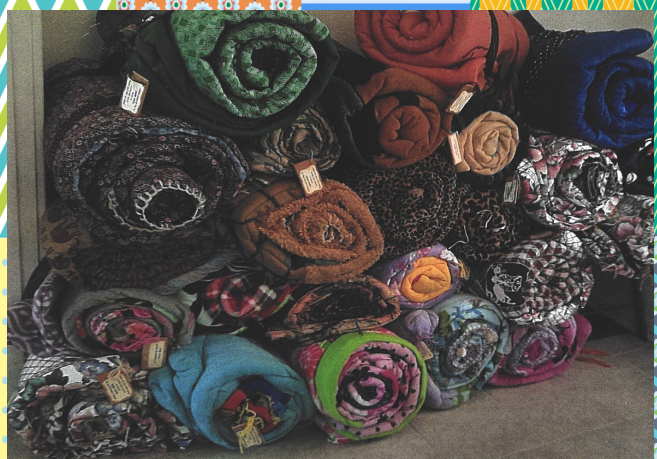
Please continue to make donations.

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.

♥ Sofia



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.

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



CASA Trinity Valley
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

"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.casaoftrv.org or contact director, Keith Loper at casakeith@casaoftrv.org or by calling 903-675-7070/903-802-1939.



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 at 713-816-6830 or bobjolene1@gmail.com



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and ServicesSM

CARE AND SUPPORT for
children & families in need.

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 about PCHAS?

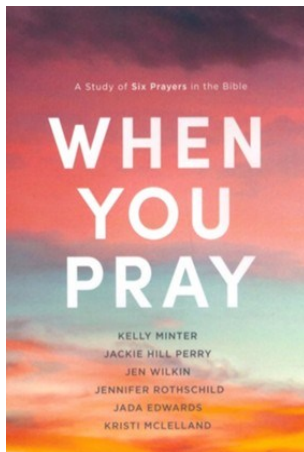
Visit the PCHAS online at www.pchas.org or contact Claire Grant, the FPC Athens liaison at clairewgrant@aol.com

Ladies Bible Study

Thursday Mornings at 9:30AM



We have started a NEW Bible Study:
When You Pray - A Study of Six Prayers in the Bible.



When You Pray 7-session study features six beloved Bible teachers who will help you study prayers in the Bible that can inspire your own. You'll learn that God welcomes your praise and lament, your thanksgiving and intercession. You'll see examples of how to pray when you're alone and when you're gathered with others. Above all, you'll notice there's no one right way to pray. As you draw near to God through prayer, you'll find your faith strengthened and your heart united to Christ.

Workbooks are available to purchase on Amazon.com

If you are interested in joining us, we meet on Thursday mornings in the upstairs classroom in the main church building at 9:30AM.

You may also call or email Kim Scott at kscott7938@aol.com / 903-368-0338 if you have any questions.

CHURCH LIBRARY

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.



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.

February 2024

Activities Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	2 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	3 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
4 5th Sunday after Epiphany Communion Sunday (Color: Green) 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	5 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB) 5:15pm Christian ED Committee Mtg. (FC)	6 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 5:00pm CC/Missions Mtg. (FC) 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	7 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice 6:00pm Dr. Paul Gould Presentation (Sanctuary)	8 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC) 6:15pm Session Mtg.	9 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	10 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
11 Transfiguration of the Lord (Color: White) 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	12 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	13 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:00pm Fat Tuesday FNS (FH)	14 Valentine's Day 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC) ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 6:00PM	15 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	16 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	17 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
18 1st Sunday in Lent (Color: Purple) 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:30am Children's Music Class (CB) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	19 President's Day 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	20 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	21 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)	22 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC) 10:00am CASA Staff Mtg (FH) LIA Meal Items Due by 2:00pm	23 9:00am-3:00pm MDO LIA Meal Served	24 9:00am Rebecca Project (FH)
25 2nd Sunday in Lent (Color: Purple) 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	26 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	27 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	28 12:00pm ETCADA (CR) 5:00pm Bell Practice (FHC)	29 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)		

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 UC - Upstairs Classroom

February Birthdays

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>We would like to wish the following congregation members a very Happy Birthday.</p>				1 Robbie Richardson	2	3 Felecia Cain Joan Meadows Cindy Wofford
4	5	6 Sara Carlson Donna Meredith	7 Andrea Meadows	8 Janet Skelton	9	10 Lou Sutton
11 Rosalie Babler	12 Joe Whatley	13	14 Carmen Hunt	15 Dolores Herrington	16 Si Robson	17
18	19 Sheri Robson	20 Donna Dunbar	21	22	23 Ann Boyles	24 Damon Douglas
25	26	27 John Kidwell	28 Madison Rhodes	29		





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

SEND MAIL TO:
P.O. Box 927
Athens, TX 75751

FEBRUARY 2024 COMMUNIQUE

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
Contemporary Worship at
8:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

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

Traditional 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)

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

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

Email news & photos to
secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com

We Are

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