



The Communique: April 2026

Member of PC-USA

A publication of First Presbyterian Church-Athens, TX



We are a warm, caring, nurturing, and supportive Church family of deeply committed disciples who are excited about sharing the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world through numerous avenues of ministry.

We are rich in history, having been founded in 1855, but we continue to be actively seeking God's will in the 21st Century. We continue to rely on God's Spirit as we strive to serve God's people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. We would love to have you be a part of this loving and joy-filled family of God.

If you are searching for answers to life's pressing questions, you are welcome here. If you are looking to be a part of a spirit-filled worship experience that can fill you with God's love and power, you are welcome here. If you are seeking a Church home where your individual talents can be shared, you are welcome here.

Please accept my personal invitation to come and experience the love, joy and peace of God that's found at First Presbyterian Church of Athens.

Our doors and hearts are open to you. Welcome! Rev. Woody Meredith

"The Communique"

A monthly newsletter publication distributed electronically in pdf format to subscribers.

If you are interested in receiving a digital copy, please visit our "About" section of our website at www.fpcathens.com and select the heading "Communique Newsletter".

Simply fill out the form provided and submit.

***Items being submitted for the Communique are due by the 21st of every month to secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com**

Monthly Highlights

- PASTOR'S PONDERINGS
- CHURCH REPORTS: MARCH 2026
- MINISTRY ACTIVITIES & NEEDS
- APRIL 2026 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR
- COMMUNION FOR THE HOMEBOUND
- YOUTH CONFIRMATION SUNDAY



Pastor's Ponderings:

Jesus' disciples went from heartbroken sadness to triumphant joy within the span of three days. The cross appeared to be the end, but the resurrection announced a new beginning, which brought confidence and courage. The cloud of doubt and despair melted away and was replaced with unshakeable faith.

This month we remember the pain of Jesus' death on the cross, but the resurrection calls for applause, praise and song. All the blessings that Jesus spoke about are confirmed by His resurrection. We know that our sins are forgiven, and we're eternally secure.

Physical death couldn't hold Him, and it will not overpower us. Because He overcame the grave, you and I have the same kind of life He has – eternal and indestructible.

As I am writing this, we as a congregation and a nation seem to be confronted with more questions and confusion concerning the state of the world than ever before. Because of this, Easter 2026 should have a more powerful impact on our lives and strengthen our faith.

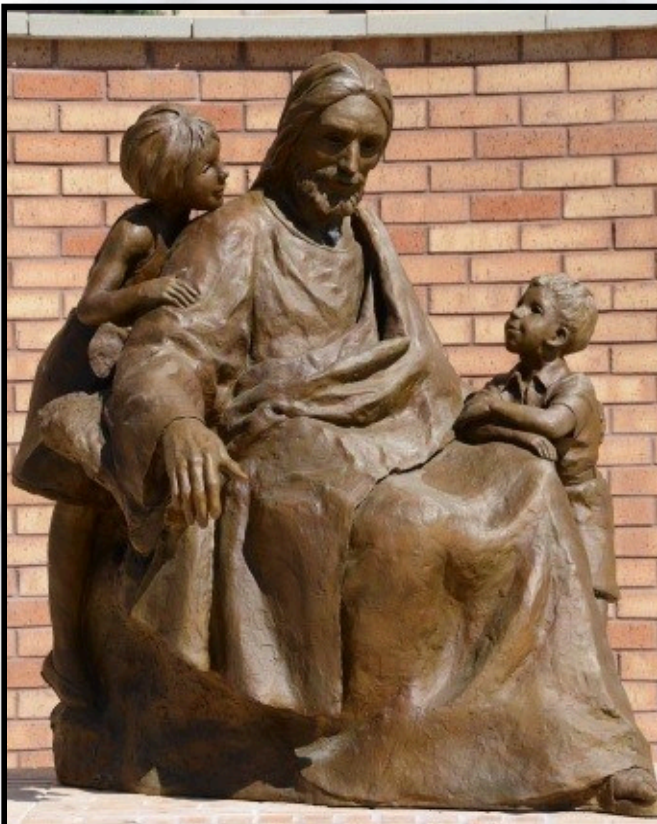
Easter makes the statement that we are a people of faith and hope, not fear and discouragement. Because of the resurrection we don't fear the unknown nor do we fear death. With unwavering faith, we trust the Word, the Bible, because Christ's power over the grave proves He can and will fulfill every promise.

During this time of questions and confusion I would direct you to the words of Jesus as they are found in John 16:33; "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." Through Christ, we are victorious!

CELEBRATE!



Pastor Woody



Mission Statement:

A family of disciples touched by God's grace, called to share Christ through worship, ministry, and outreach.

We strive to live out our Mission Statement by providing worship and Christian Education experiences that allow for personal spiritual growth. As equipped disciples we then go into the world to model Christ's love to others.



Would you like to have the opportunity to become a part of FPC-Athens worship experience?

Contact the church office about Liturgist and Greeter opportunities.

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 8:00am to 2:00pm and on Sunday from 8:30am 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.



Columbarium News:

For many centuries, cemeteries were commonly found in church yards, allowing churches to minister to the spiritual needs of the 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.

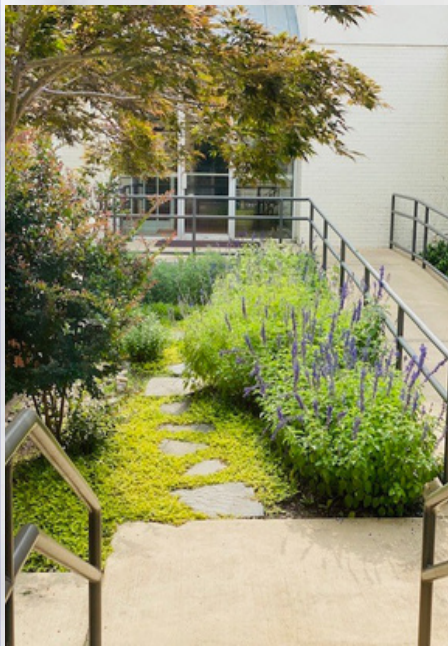
The Columbarium is part of First Presbyterian Church and functions under the authority of the Session.

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.



Sherry Smith Prayer Garden:



Our church prayer garden (shared in the same space as the columbarium) is a peaceful sanctuary surrounded by blooming flowers and shaded trees.

Whether seeking comfort, expressing gratitude, or simply enjoying the scenery, visitors & members alike feel embraced by the presence of God.

It is a cherished corner of the church, reminding all who enter of the beauty of faith and the power of prayer.

Contact the church office if you are interested in lending a hand in maintaining the prayer garden.



Prayer List-April 2026

Those In Our Church Family

Burt Lively, Jan Capelle, Sue Murray, Sharron Clark, John & Phyllis Kidwell, Elliott Boyles, Melanie Endsley, Steve & Sofia Yarbrough

Those Who Are in Need of Our Visits & Prayers

Oak Wood Place Assisted Living: Susan Underkofler, Mark Carlson

Arabella of Athens: Mary Lynn Smith

Those Who Are Grieving

Family of Ruth Lindsley (friend of Nancy Perryman)

Family of Rickey Parks

Prayers For Those Serving In The Mission Field

Kurt Esslinger and Hyeyoung Lee – Missionaries in Korea

Prayers For Church & the World

Our church and its leaders. Our community and its leaders. Our nation and its leaders and the nation of Israel.

Those We Love Needing Prayer

DeeDee Manton (friend of Sandy Perkins), Jennifer McSweeney (niece of Sandy Perkins)

Hazel Fields (family member of Sandy Perkins)

Paige Reeves (friend of many)

Grady Chancellor (friend of many)

Mike Pulley (friend of many)

Pam Tischler (friend of Kenn and Shirley Hornbeck)

Nancy Kissinger (mother of Nikki DuBose)

Greg & Janice Russell (friends of The Grant's)

Randy Daniel (friend of many)

Rob & Shereaia Fulton (friends of The Meredith's), Bill Johnson (friend of The Meredith's),

Lisa Gordon (cousin of Donna Meredith)

Brenda (Johnson) Smith (friend of many)

Bobby Hendley (friend of many)

Adalee Grey

George Rawles (friend of many)

Anna Wheatcraft

Virgil Feinsod (friend of many)

Devon Weatherford (friend of The Neill's)

Matthew Geddie (brother of Angela St. Valentine)

Larry Babb (friend of many)

Those We Love in the Armed Forces

Si Robson - U.S. Army Ranger, Fort Campbell, KY

Adam King (grandson of Joan King) - Army, Fort Bragg, NC

Those Away at School

Madison Rhodes, Heidi Davis, Tate Elfarr, Sophie Wright

Session Members and Where They Serve

Building and Grounds: Charlie Tidmore, Paul Hartman

Christian Education: Angela St. Valentine, Mike Babler

Community Concerns/Missions/Witness:

Kara Davis, Steve Grant, Nancy Perryman

Congregational Life: Melanie Whatley, Marcy Warren

Personnel: John Youngblood

Budget & Finance: Steven Smith

Worship: John Purser

Clerk of Session: Donna Ward

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

FPC-Athens Christian Education Committee offers educational activities that occur on Sunday mornings to encourage growth & leadership as disciples of Jesus Christ. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Angela St. Valentine at 817-271-2211.

BABY & TODDLER

The nursery is open in the main church building.

Note: 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.

Nursery workers are available during both worship services & during Sunday School.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Located in the Children's Building for ages 3 and up.
Staffed with at least two workers.**

Teachers: Kathryn Hendrickson, Susan Sparkman, and Phyllis Kidwell.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL

We meet in the Youth House located in the main church parking lot at 9:45am.

Our Teachers (Rotating Schedule):

Steve & Claire Grant
Angela St. Valentine & Alex Fernandez
Eric & Kara Davis
Pam Douglas & Tyler Hendrickson



These youth joined our church on Palm Sunday after confirming their baptisms. In preparing to join, they completed a six week course of study to learn about the history of Presbyterians, and the structure of our church from the local church to the General Assembly. We reviewed local missions and all the ways they can serve God through our church and community. They were examined by the Session and talked with their parents to decide membership. We welcome them to our congregation as members and thank God for their continued attendance. We pray for them in their faith journeys.

Congratulations to Harper Endsley, Matthew Warren, and Michael Warren.



Adult

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

All are welcome! Please join us; you'll be glad you did! Call the church office at 903-675-3530 with any questions.

Disciples Class: 9:45am

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 three different teachers.

Disciples Contact Person: Lacey Ward

Rotation of Teachers: Sheri Robson, Lacey Ward, Lou Sutton, & Christy Purser

Location: Main Building-Conference Room.

Friendship Class: 9:45am

The **Friendship Class** is currently discussing "The Rapture: Fact or Fantasy by Dr. Robert Jeffress.

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.

Seekers Class: 9:45am

The **Seekers Class** is currently studying *What Was I Thinking?: Things I've Learned Since I Knew It All*. By Rev. Steve Brown.

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.

Local Mission Partners & FPCA Ministries

Join us in ministering not only to our own community, but to the world. The members of FPCA desire to carry out the mission of our LORD, Jesus Christ and to engage the members of our congregation in service to our community, so that they may grow in Christ. In addition to our volunteer work, we also provide financial support to the following ministries and missions.

For more information about the list below, visit our website or call the church office.



Local Mission Partners

- The Ark—Prepare meals for TVCC students.
- Athens Soup Kitchen
- Camp Gilmont
- CASA of Trinity Valley
- The Disciples Clinic
- Family Peace Project
- The Farm (Family Shelter)
- Fuel Fund via HC Help Center
- Henderson County Food Pantry
- Henderson County Young Life
- Labor of Love
- Lila Lane Outreach
- Love in Action (Monthly Meals-4th Friday)
- Meals on Wheels (North Texas)
- Presbyterian Children's Home & Services
- Rainbow Room
- Rebecca Project
- Skiin' with the Galilean Ministry

Other Opportunities within the Church

- Agape Quilt & Bedroll Ministry
- Chancel Choir
- Christmas Benevolence Program
- Hand Bell Choir
- Ladies Bible Study
- Men's Chorus "Men for Him"
- Monthly Family Night Supper
- Mother's Day Out
- PC USA Special Offerings
- Presbyterian Women's Fellowship
- Sally's Soup Ministry
- Vacation Bible School



**HENDERSON COUNTY
HOMELESS MINISTRY**

April's Love In Action meal items will be due at 12 noon on the 22nd to the main church kitchen. The meal will be served on the 24th.

A Sign-Up Genius will be sent out the 2nd week of the month.

If you would like to be added to our distribution list, kindly contact the church office.



AGAPE Quilts:

If you have or know someone who might have heavier types of fabric & material to donate (quilts, bedspreads, blankets, & fleece throws),

Please contact Sharon Harding at 903-681-4649 or shar7@suddenlink.net



Please contact the church office if you would like to be included in the Homebound Communion list as a recipient or would be interested in volunteering to serve those that may not be able to attend church on Communion Sunday.

Note: Communion is administered by two people; one of which must be an ordained Elder.

Those requesting to receive homebound communion do not have to be a congregation member of FPC Athens.



A BIG Thank You to all who participated in the Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing. This year's donation amount exceeded last year's amount, WOW!!!

**Total Giving Amount for
2026 One Great Hour of Sharing SO:
\$1036.90**



**Total Giving Amount for
2025 One Great Hour of Sharing SO:
\$975.00**

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) – disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees—serves individuals and communities in need.

This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations.

The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need.



April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Holy Week: March 29-April 5th						
5 Easter Sunrise & Communion <i>Color: White & Gold</i> 8:30am Worship Service (Sanc) 9:45am Brunch during SS. 11:00am Worship Service (Sanc) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	6 9:00am AGAPE Quills (CFB) 5:15pm C/Messiah/Wedness Cmte Mtg (FC)	7 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 4:30pm Worship Cmte. Mtg 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	8 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH) 5:30pm Christian ED Cmte Mtg (FC)	9 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC) 6:00pm Maundy Thursday Service (Sanc.)	10 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:00pm Good Friday Service (Sanc.)	11
12 2nd Sunday of Easter <i>Color: White & Gold</i> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School (Sancuary) 11:00am Worship Service (Sancuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	13 9:00am AGAPE Quills (CFB) 12:00pm Book Club Joan King-Corl. (Rm)	14 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	15 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH)	16 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	17 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	18 9:00am Athens Amateur Radio Club (FH)
19 3rd Sunday of Easter <i>Color: White & Gold</i> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sancuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	20 9:00am AGAPE Quills (CFB)	21 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	22 12:00pm LIA Meal Items Due (MCK) 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH)	23 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC) 12:00pm C.A.S.A Staff Meeting	24 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 11:00am Meal served @ LIA Homeless Ministry	25
26 4th Sunday of Easter <i>Color: White & Gold</i> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sancuary) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	27 9:00am AGAPE Quills (CFB)	28 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	29 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH)	30 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)		



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Collection: Sunday, April 5th

PWF - Presbyterian Women Fellowship CFB - Cain Family Building FH - Fellowship Hall FHC - Fellowship Hall Classroom
 FHK - Fellowship Hall Kitchen CB - Children's Building YH - Youth House CR - Conference Room FC - Friendship Classroom
 UC - Upstairs Classroom MCK-Main Church Kitchen



April

Happy Birthday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ana Fontana	2	3	4 Sofia Yatrogh
5	6	7	8 Roberta Ferris	9	10 Les Finkhouser	11 Jim Brack
12	13	14	15	16	17 John Cain Kelly Kereboeter	18
19	20	21 Henry Budow	22	23 Finley Endley Kevin Endley	24	25
26 Shell Morrison	27 Toby Rhodes	28	29 Elna Handrickson	30		



April

Happy Anniversary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 John & Faletcia Cain	25
26	27	28	29	30		



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

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

April 2026 COMMUNIQUE

We invite you & your family to join us for worship on Sunday mornings:

Contemporary Worship

8:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday School at 9:45am

Traditional Worship

11:00am in the Sanctuary

5th Sunday Worship

10:00am in the Sanctuary followed by lunch in the FH.

Child Care: Children's Building
(For both services & Sunday School)

Communion is served the 1st Sunday of each month.

(see inside this newsletter for more information)

Pastor

Rev. Woody Meredith
woody@fpcathens.com

Director of Music

Janis Capelle

Organist

Mamie Downing

Handbell Choir Leader

Beth VanOrden

8:30am Music Leader

Kara Davis

Treasurer

Steven Smith

Office Manager

Kelly Sassenbery

(Facebook/Messenger/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster)

Connect With Us

Office Phone: 903-675-3530
Website: www.fpcathens.com

Email: secretary@fpcathens.com

First Presbyterian Church-Athens, TX

FOLLOW US ON *social media*

Find us on Facebook, YouTube, & Instagram.
Use your cell phone camera to scan the QR Codes.



FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.