



# *The Communique:* *March 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.

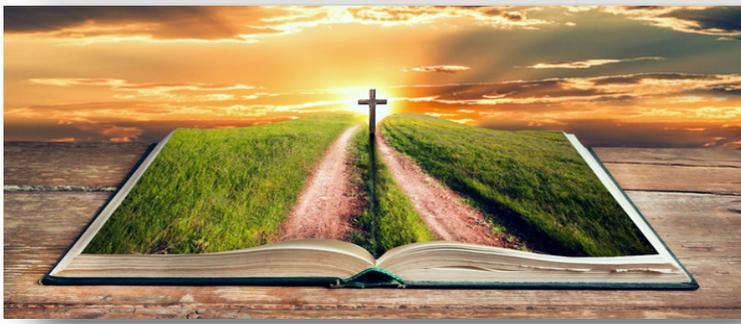
If you are interested in receiving a digital copy, please visit our "About" section of our website at [www.fpcathens.com](http://www.fpcathens.com) and select the heading "Communique Newsletter".

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](mailto:secretaryfpcathens@gmail.com)**

## Monthly Highlights

- PASTOR'S PONDERINGS
- CHURCH REPORTS: FEBRUARY 2026
- MINISTRY ACTIVITIES & NEEDS
- MARCH 2026 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR
- HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES CALENDAR
- MARCH SPOTLIGHT
- COMMUNION FOR THE HOMEBOUND



## Pastor's Ponderings:

Bryan Chappell received a call from a family asking him to pray about a house they wanted. It was perfect for them, and Chapell prayed with them over the phone. But the realtor called with bad news. Someone else offered a higher price. The couple lost heart and wondered why God hadn't answered their prayers. But later the building inspector found the house full of dangerous mold and faulty wiring. Another house became available that provided the family exactly what they wanted, and a lesson was learned. As Chapell put it: "Persistent prayer in the face of initial disappointment can become the instrument of divine nurture."

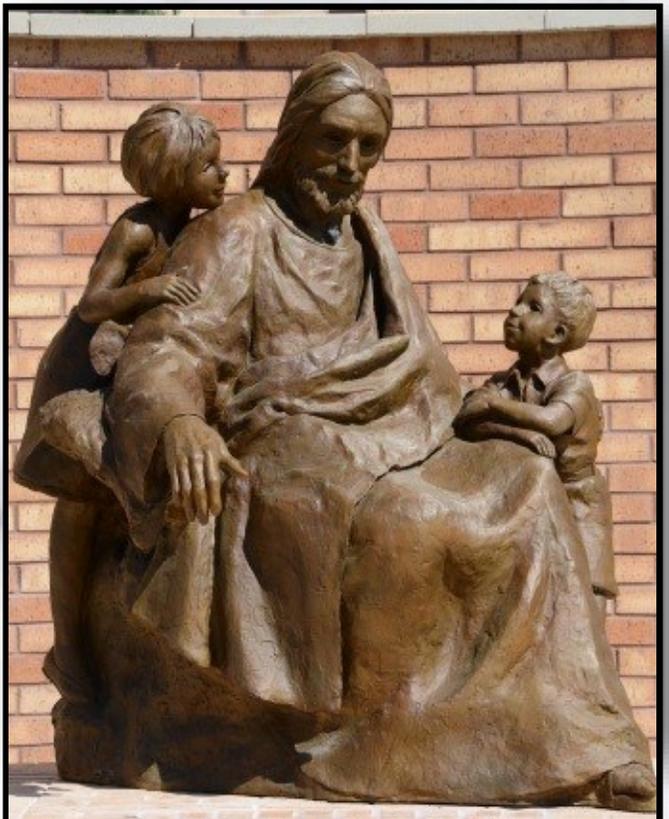
Problems present opportunities that demand decisions. Where do we turn for counsel to make good decisions? Turn to God! When we pray about the situations that concern us, we're opening them to His providence, and He will guide those who pray and don't lose heart.

Bryan goes on to say; "We grow to trust God more by seeing that often he prepares something better than our initial prayers did (or could) request. In fact, God's greatest gifts may come through prayers that seem to be unanswered."

As we journey through the season of Lent, open your heart and mind to the leading of God. Pray that, as we journey toward the cross, we will be prepared, through prayer, to find the love and joy God offers to all who seek Him.



*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



Congregation Members  
Who Need Our Prayers

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 Janis Marshall  
(SIL of Eddie Lassiter)  
Family of Wade Hopson  
(son of Dolores Herrington)  
Family of Johnny Morrison  
Family of Fred Davies  
Family of Dolores Herrington  
Family of Kathy Moser



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



Prayers For Our Church & Country

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



Prayers For Those Serving  
In The Mission Field

Kurt Esslinger and Hyeyoung Lee  
Missionaries in Korea



Those Away at School

Madison Rhodes, Heidi Davis, Tate Elfarr, Sophie Wright



Those We Love Needing Prayer

DeeDee Manton (friend of Sandy Perkins)  
Jennifer McSweeney (niece of Sandy Perkins)  
Paige Reeves (friend of many)  
Grady Chancellor (friend of many)  
Eugene Buford  
(family member of the Morrison's & the  
Cole's, and friend of many)  
Mike Pulley (friend of many)  
Pam Tischler  
(friend of Kenn & Shirley Hornbeck)  
Nancy Kissinger (mother of Nikki DuBose)  
Greg & Janice Russell (friends of The Grant's)

Randy Daniel (friend of many)  
Rob & Shereia Fulton  
(friends 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  
Ann Russell  
(friend of Kelly Sassenbery and Wendy Horton)

## Session Members and Where They Serve

**Building and Grounds:** Charlie Tidmore, Paul Hartman

**Christian Education:** Angela St. Valentine

**Community Concerns/Missions/Witness:**

Kara Davis, Steve Grant, Nancy Perryman

**Congregational Life:** Melanie Whatley, Marcy Warren

**Personnel:** John Youngblood

**Stewardship:** 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

# 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 [donnafoftermeredith@gmail.com](mailto:donnafoftermeredith@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.

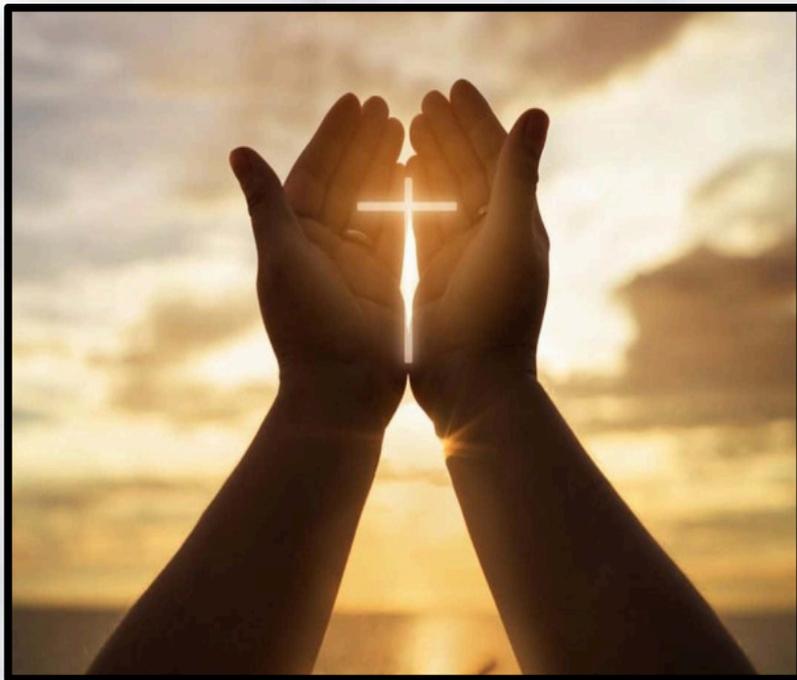
**Seekers Contact Person:** Steve Grant.

**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**

March's Love In Action meal items will be due at 12 noon on the 25th to the main church kitchen. The meal will be served on the 27th.

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](mailto:shar7@suddenlink.net)



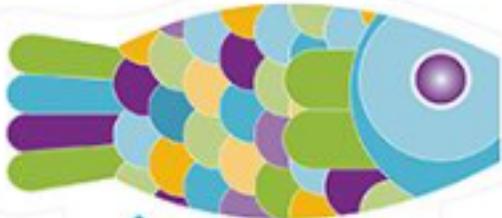
**ONE GREAT  
HOUR OF SHARING**

*What does the Lord require of you?*

*...to do justice*

*and to love kindness and to walk  
humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

*Responding to Christ's call to ministries of  
compassion for the world's most vulnerable.*



**ONE GREAT  
HOUR OF SHARING**



**SPECIAL  
OFFERINGS**

February 18 - April 5, 2026

Serve the most vulnerable around the world,  
offering aid to people lacking access to life's  
basic necessities.

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.

Received during the season of Lent (Feb. 18–April 5), 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.

In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.

**Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing (02/18-04/05/2026)**

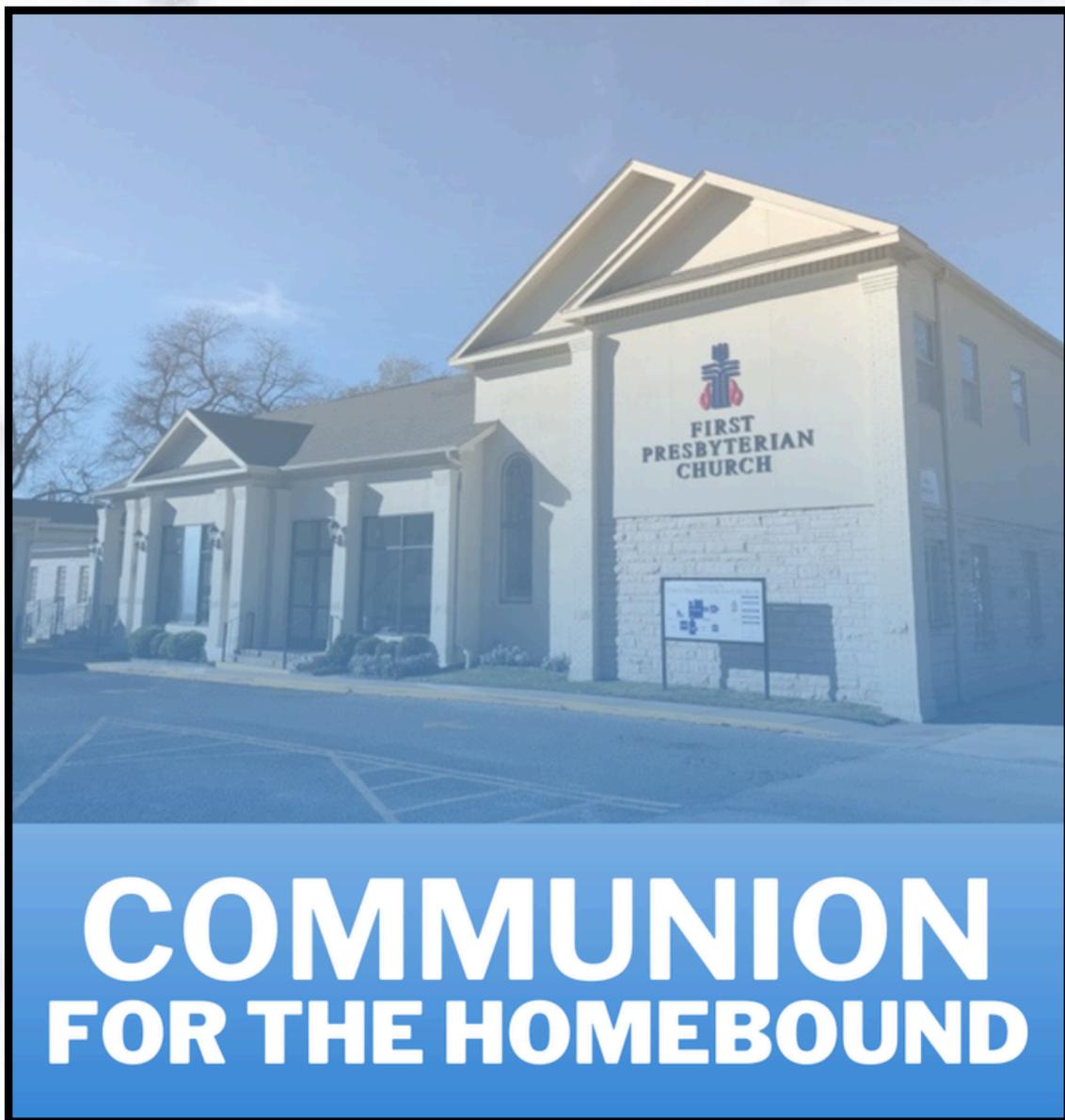
Additional resources will be available in the March 29th bulletin.

**Final offering collection is scheduled for Easter Sunday, April 5th.**

Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church with memo of Special Offering: OGHS.

**You may also participate by filling the Fish Coin Boxes with your spare change.**

Please see Nancy Perryman with questions, thank you!



## Communion for the Homebound: We need your input!

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.

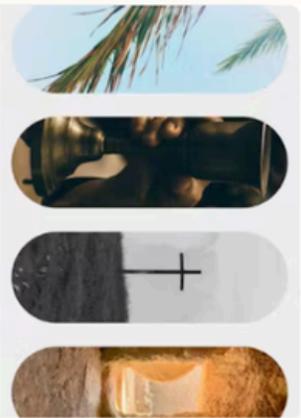


# FPC-Athens Activities Calendar

# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent &amp; Communion</b> <b>Color: Purple</b> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:00pm-1:15pm Youth Confirmation Class (Conf. Rm) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>2</b> 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB) 5:15pm CC/Missions/ Witness Cmte Mtg (FC)	<b>3</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 4:00pm Worship Cmte. Mtg. 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	<b>4</b> 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) 6:00pm Sally's Soup Committee Mtg. (FHK)	<b>5</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	<b>6</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>Daylight Saving Time Begins</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> <b>Color: Purple</b> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:00pm-1:15pm Youth Confirmation Class (Conf. Rm) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>9</b> 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB) 12:00pm Book Club (Joan King-CR)	<b>10</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	<b>11</b> 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH) 6:15pm Session Mtg (FHC)	<b>12</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	<b>13</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> <b>Color: Purple</b> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:00pm-1:15pm Youth Confirmation Class (Conf. Rm) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>16</b> 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	<b>17</b> <b>St. Patrick's Day</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	<b>18</b> 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH)	<b>19</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC)	<b>20</b> <b>Spring Begins</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO	<b>21</b> 9:00am Athens Amateur Radio Club (FH)
<b>22</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</b> <b>Color: Purple</b> 8:30am Worship Service (FH) 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 12:00pm-1:15pm Youth Confirmation Class (Conf. Rm) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>23</b> 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)	<b>24</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	<b>25</b> <b>12:00pm LIA Meal Items DUE (MCK)</b> 3:00pm-4:00pm Music Reading Class (FH-Beth VanOrden) 5:00pm-6:00pm Bell Choir Practice (FH)	<b>26</b> 9:30am Ladies Bible Study (UC) 12:00pm CASA Staff Meeting	<b>27</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>  <b>Palm/Passion Sunday</b> <b>Color: Red &amp; or Purple</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Combined Service</b> 10:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary) 11:00am Lunch to follow (FH) 1:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>30</b> 9:00am AGAPE Quilts (CFB)  <b>12:00pm Holy Week Community Worship Service (Sanc.)</b> <b>Light Lunch to follow (FH)</b>	<b>31</b> 9:00am-3:00pm MDO 6:30pm Men for Him (FH)	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;"> <b>Holy Week: March 29-April 5th</b> </div>			

**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



# FPCA HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE

*You are invited you to join us for Holy Week services at FPC-Athens. Let us take this time for reflection, prayer, and gratitude for the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. May we honor His love by spreading kindness, forgiveness, and compassion to those around us.*

**Palm Sunday, March 29**  
**(5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Combined Service)**

10:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)  
Immediately followed by a Congregational Mtg.  
11:00am Lunch in the Fellowship Hall.

**Monday, March 30**

FPC-Athens Holy Week Community Church  
Worship Service: 12 Noon in the Sanctuary.  
Immediately followed by a light lunch in the FH.

**Thursday, April 2**

6:00pm Maundy Thursday Service (Sanctuary)

**Friday, April 3 - Church Office Closed**

6:00pm Good Friday Service (Sanctuary)

**Easter Sunday, April 5**

8:30am Contemporary Service (Sanctuary)

9:45am (During Sunday School)

- Brunch and Easter Egg Hunt.

11:00am Traditional Service (Sanctuary)



**FPCA-ATHENS**

405 E. Corsicana Street  
Athens, TX 75751

903-675-3530

Email: [secretary@fpcathens.com](mailto:secretary@fpcathens.com)

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



# Palm Sunday

## Sunday, March 29, 2026

10:00AM Combined Worship Service in the Sanctuary. No Sunday School.  
**Note:** A Congregational Meeting will be held immediately after service to elect members of the congregation to the Elder nominating committee.

Lunch will then follow in the Fellowship Hall.

Main Entrée: Fried Chicken.

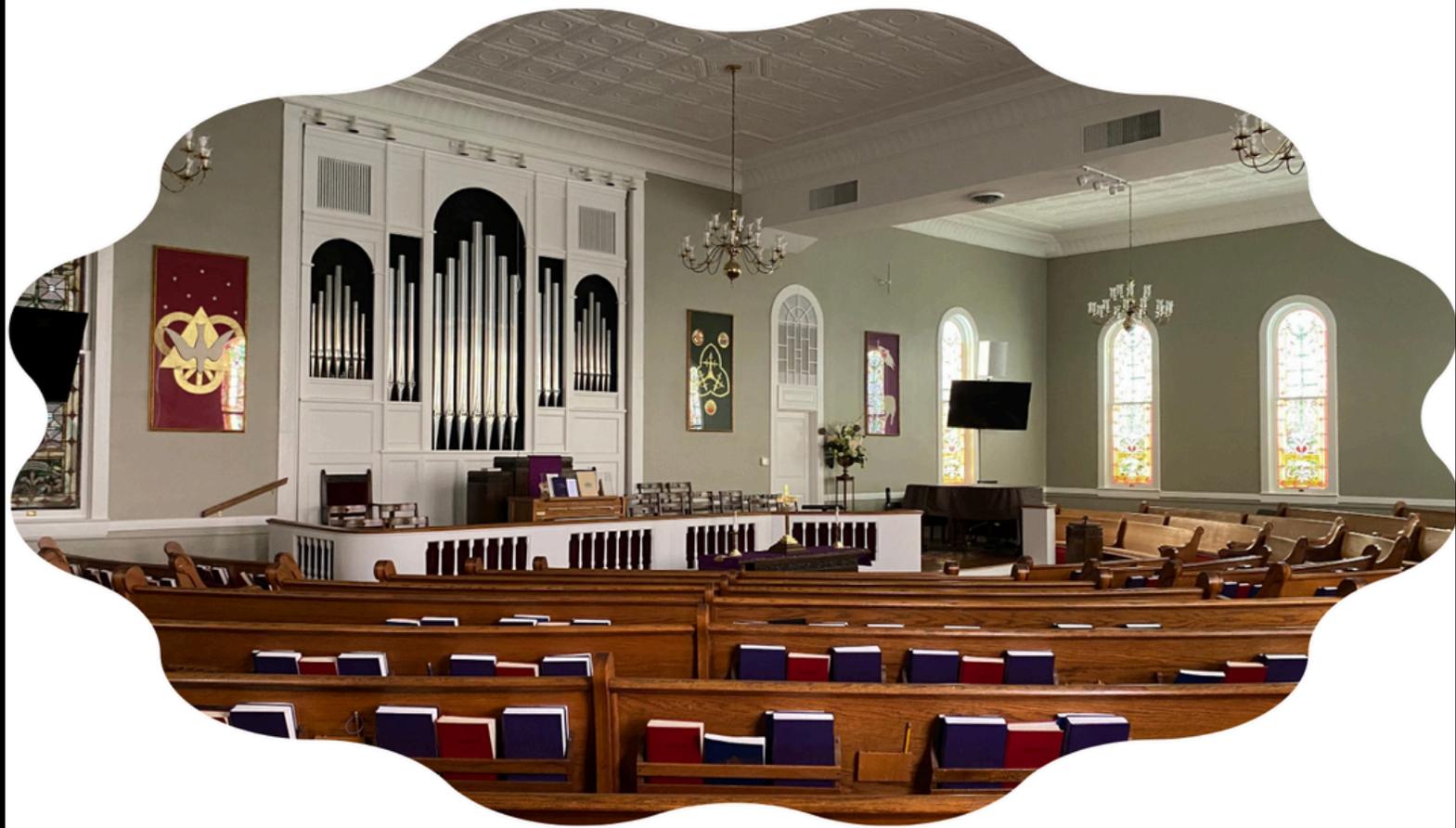
We are asking members to bring a side dish or dessert.

No need to R.S.V.P,

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH-ATHENS

405 E. CORSICANA STREET  
ATHENS, TX 75751

903-675-3530 [WWW.FPCATHENS.COM](http://WWW.FPCATHENS.COM)  
[SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM)



# Athens Holy Week Community Church Worship Service

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MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2026

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12:00PM Service in the Church Sanctuary  
12:30PM Light Lunch in the Fellowship Hall



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH-ATHENS

405 E. CORSICANA STREET ATHENS, TX 75751  
903-675-3530 [WWW.FPCATHENS.COM](http://WWW.FPCATHENS.COM) [SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SECRETARYFPCATHENS@GMAIL.COM)

# March Birthday & Anniversaries



## FPC-Athens Birthday Calendar

# March

*Happy Birthday*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Joan King Angela Lassiter	2	3	4	5	6 Amy Smith	7 Ed Gatlin III Miles Gonzales Martha McSweeney
8	9	10 Ronnie Babcock	11	12 Rick Stroupe Sophie Wright	13	14 Ken Scott Melanie Whatley
15	16 Janis Capelle	17	18	19 Margaret Breedlove	20 Patrick Moore	21 Adam Lemmon Sue Murray
22	23	24	25	26	27 Eric Davis Rachel Scotchmer	28 Carolyn Brinkman Lennon Endsley Bill Poncik
29 Sharon Harding	30	31 Lolly Smith				



## FPC-Athens Anniversary Calendar

# March

*Happy Anniversary*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 Adron & Dianne Neill	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Les & Julie Funkhouser	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Harry & Terri Budow	27	28
29	30	31				



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Located at: 405 East Corsicana Street

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

# March 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

**Business Manager**

**Office Manager**

Kelly Sasenbery  
(Facebook/Messenger/NewsletterEditor/Webmaster)

**Connect With Us**

Office Phone: 903-675-3530  
Website: [www.fpcathens.com](http://www.fpcathens.com)

Email: [secretary@fpcathens.com](mailto: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.**