

The background features a stylized graphic design. It consists of several fish-like shapes, each with a simple eye and a curved line for a mouth, rendered in a dark grey or black color. These fish are arranged in a circular pattern, with some overlapping. The design is framed by thick red lines that form a partial border around the central text. There are also two solid red circles, one in the upper left and one in the lower right, adding to the graphic elements.

ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

APRIL 26, 2015
8:30, 9:45 & 11:00 a.m.

Welcome

We're glad you're here! Thank you for joining us today. Members of this congregation have been gathering here to worship since 1804, when our church was formed to minister to the Native American and European settlers in Athens. Over the past two centuries our congregation has changed, but our mission remains the same: to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We are inspired by the words of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, who encouraged believers to "do all the good you can, in all the ways you can." At Athens First United Methodist, there are many ways to get involved, grow in your faith, and do good in our community.

If you are unable to attend worship in person, each Sunday our 11:00 a.m. service is broadcast on WRFC 960 AM, and our 9:45 and 11:00 a.m. services are live-streamed on our website at athensfirstumc.org/webcast.

Nursery

Our nursery is available for infants through four-year-olds on Sundays from 8:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. The nursery area is located on the first floor of the building, off the Washington Street entrance.

Children

Worship activity bags (age appropriate for all preschool and elementary children) are available every Sunday in the narthex and by the south entrance of the sanctuary. Children's Church is held for children in kindergarten through second grade and follows the Children's Message during 11:00 a.m. worship all Sundays except for Communion Sundays.

Sunday School

We offer Sunday School for all ages, kindergarten through adult, each Sunday from 9:45-10:45 a.m. For a list of adult Sunday School classes and locations, visit athensfirstumc.org/adultsundayschool.

Connect

We are blessed to have a large congregation. Because of this, we offer many programs and ministries. It can be overwhelming trying to decide where to get involved. If you would like a buddy to guide you along this process, please notify a Helper. Helpers serve as part of our Welcome Ministry team. Look for them in the narthex or near the altar. You can also contact a Helper through our website athensfirstumc.org/helper.

Another great way to learn about the life of our church is through attending a Newcomer Orientation held every second Sunday of the month at 9:45 and 11 a.m. We also encourage you to visit our website, athensfirstumc.org, for information about our ministries, to register for events, and to listen to sermons from our sermon archive. Visit athensfirstumc.org/thesteeples to sign up for our weekly newsletter, the eSteeple. You can also connect with us via social media. Find us @athens_firstumc on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest.

Our church office is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. If you need assistance, please call 706-543-1442.

The Worship of God

*Please stand as you are able.

The congregation speaks or sings the text in **bold type**.

Gathering

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Sarah and Spurgeon McAdams and Thomas David McAdams by the McAdams family.

THE PRELUDE

“All Creatures of Our God and King” | Hustad

THE WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Martha Aenchbacher

THE CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP | 9:45 & 11:00

“Easter People, Raise Your Voices” | Smart

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

Praise and Thanksgiving

* THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 577

“God of Grace and God of Glory” | CWM RHONDDA

* THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

This is the good news
which we have received,
in which we stand,
and by which we are saved:

**Christ died for our sins,
was buried,
was raised on the third day,
and appeared first to the women,
then to Peter and the Twelve,
and then to many faithful witnesses.**

**We believe Jesus is the Christ,
the Anointed One of God,
the firstborn of all creation,
the firstborn from the dead,
in whom all things hold together,**

**in whom the fullness of God
was pleased to dwell
by the power of the Spirit.
Christ is the head of the body, the church,
and by the blood of the cross
reconciles all things to God. Amen.**

*** THE GLORIA PATRI**

**Glory be to the Father
and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

*** THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

8:30 a.m. | Marianna Catherine Mangan

*Daughter of
Jean &
Trevor Mangan*

Marianna Catherine, Marianna Catherine, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be. Marianna Catherine, Marianna Catherine, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

11:00 a.m. | William Stone McElreath

*Son of
Cameron &
Sam McElreath*

William, William, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be. William, William, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Betsy Butler

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Proclamation of the Word

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE | 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

At the 11:00 a.m. service, children in kindergarten through second grade will go to the Children's Church in the children's area on the third floor. Parents are to pick up children at the end of the service.

THE OFFERING

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

8:30 a.m. Special Music | Julie Powell Caldwell

9:45 and 11:00 a.m. "Peace Like a River with Amazing Grace"

arr. Joel Raney

Sung by Octane; Mimi Ackleh, accompanist

*** THE DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE SCRIPTURE READING

Esther 4:6-14

⁶ So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square that was in front of the king's gate. ⁷ And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. ⁸ He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. ⁹ So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days." ¹² So they told Mordecai Esther's words.

¹³ And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the

other Jews. ¹⁴ For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

THE ANTHEM | 9:45 and 11:00 a.m.

"My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" | Wilberg

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Beth Baile, flute; Holly Behre, oboe

My Shepherd will supply my need: Jehovah is His Name; in pastures fresh He makes me feed, beside the living stream. He brings my wandering spirit back when I forsake His ways, and leads me, for His mercy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.

When I walk through the shades of death, Thy presence is my stay; one word of Thy supporting breath, drives all my fears away. Thy hand, in sight of all my foes, doth still my table spread; my cup with blessings overflows, thine oil anoints my head.

The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days; O may Thy house be my abode, and all my work be praise! There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come; no more a stranger, nor a guest, but like a child at home.

THE SERMON

"When Opportunity Knocks" | Chuck Hodges

Response to the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION | 8:30 a.m.

Please turn to page 9 in our hymnal. At Athens First United Methodist Church, all are invited to commune at Christ's table. If you need to be served in your pew, please call this to the attention of an usher. Gluten-free communion elements are available at the center station with the acolytes

*** THE HYMN 396**

"O Jesus, I Have Promised" | ANGEL'S STORY

Sending Forth

*** THE BLESSING**

*** THE CHORAL RESPONSE**

"We Receive Your Blessing"

We receive your blessing, we receive your grace as we walk in the light shining from your face. May the peace that you give change the way that we live. We receive your blessing as we leave this place.

*** THE POSTLUDE**

"Praise to the Lord the Almighty" | Bish

APRIL USHERS

8:30 a.m. Jim Belger, Ann and Paul Brown, Larry Deal, Hugh Larkey, Mack Lowrey, Jim Lyons, Candler Meadors, Olan Moore, Bob Noble, Grace Rabek, Ken Reece, Keith Wilson, Michael and Sharon Broun

9:45 a.m. Chris Bostdorff, Tom Cooper, David and Jane Disney, Mark Ellison, Mark Firth, Tom Hedges, Dan Lasseter, Jim Lyons, Sharon Milton, Tom Milton, Al Rogers, Bill Trigleth, Michelle and Reeves McNeill

11:00 a.m. Al Hawley, Charles Grimes, Henry Folsom, Tom Henson, Henry Garrard, Jim Lyons, Jake Riley, Frank Thornburg, Mike Scott, Tom Dean

OFFERING STEWARDS

Bob Booth, Charlie Grimes, Jim Lyons, Nat Carmack, Henry Garrard, Nathan King, Al Hawley, Sean Rogers, Charlie Upchurch III

GREETERS

Lewis Clarke, Anna Alyssa McKoy, Lucy Frierson, Larsen Block,

FIRST LIGHT ACOLYTES

8:30 a.m. Hayley Whitmore, James and Glynn Chesser,
9:45 a.m Dylan Wyrick, Joseph Mahoney, Jaden Drudge
11:00 a.m. Jack and Barrett McClanahan , Charles Clarke, Tommy Chambers,

ATTENDANCE ON APRIL 12

Total Worship | 1,304

Sunday School | 486

8:30 a.m. | 188
9:45 a.m. | 399
11:00 a.m. | 563
Online | 154

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget for 2015 | \$2,641,842
Amount Given YTD | \$923,851
Goal for April | \$204,201
Amount after 2 Sundays | \$110,696

OUR MINISTERS AND PROGRAM DIRECTORS

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It's not too late!

GREAT DAY OF SERVICE

Saturday, May 2 | 7:30 a.m. - Noon

Teams are being built to serve on the different project sites for the 2015 Great Day of Service. Our mission partners are depending on us to provide the volunteers to finish the projects that are in need of completion.

We gather as a body at 7:30 a.m. in Hancock Hall before going out to work together to be the hands and feet of Christ. Our focus this year is “LOVE Builds Homes.” Projects include construction at The Bigger Vision and The Sparrow’s Nest, landscaping work at Interfaith Hospitality Network, preparing Health Kits for Project Safe, getting ready for this summer’s Smart Lunch, Smart Kid program, and more.

More information and registration | athensfirstumc.org/gdos



Sunday, May 3

Hancock Hall

Two Seatings: 10:45 a.m. & Noon

Auction closes at 12:30 p.m.

While the brunch is going on, guests are invited to bid on lovingly constructed baskets in the Silent Basket Auction. With all of the proceeds from ticket sales and the basket auction, we will do all of the good we can in all of the ways we can in local missions.

Be involved with the brunch by

Making a basket | If you have an item to donate or would like to work with a group to prepare a basket for the auction, we would appreciate your donation.

Volunteering with the brunch | Many hands are needed to make this morning fun and a success!

Attending the brunch | Purchase tickets by Thursday, April 30. (Adults \$10, Children \$5, 2 years and under is free)

Tickets and registration | athensfirstumc.org/brunchandbasket

Baptisms

Claiborne Joslyn Mills received the Sacrament of Baptism on April 19 in our sanctuary. Claiborne is the daughter of Julia and Jon Mills and is the granddaughter of Therese and Keith Wilson.

Riley Grace Caudle received the Sacrament of Baptism on April 19 in our sanctuary. Riley is the daughter of Alison and Brian Caudle and she is the granddaughter of Linda and Michael Timko.

New Members

On April 19 we welcomed Ellen and Will Beasley, Lauren and Wesley Belcher, Maria Breen, David Hornbeck, Jay Horton, Mary Beth Kellett, and Clark Williams to the Athens First United Methodist Church family.

Wednesday Night Meal | April 29

The meal on Wednesday, April 29; will be pizza and salad provided by Fox's Pizza. Meals are \$5 each. Advance dinner orders are required. Order your meal online or by calling the church office by Tuesday at noon. Volunteers are needed to help serve the meal, and volunteers eat free!

Order your meal | athensfirstumc.org/registration

Volunteer | athensfirstumc.org/serve



Spring Dance Recital | May 6

Come see the dancers from our Children's Music Ministry shine their light during Wednesday night dinner on May 6. They have been working all spring with their teachers to put together a wonderful program to share with you beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Hancock Hall. You definitely don't want to miss it!

SENIOR SUNDAY

Senior Recognition Sunday | May 10

We look forward to recognizing the Senior Class of 2015 during the 11:00 worship service on Sunday, May 10. If you have not already received information about the service and reception and you have a senior who would like to be recognized, please contact Josh Miles for more information.

Josh Miles | josh@athensfirstumc.org

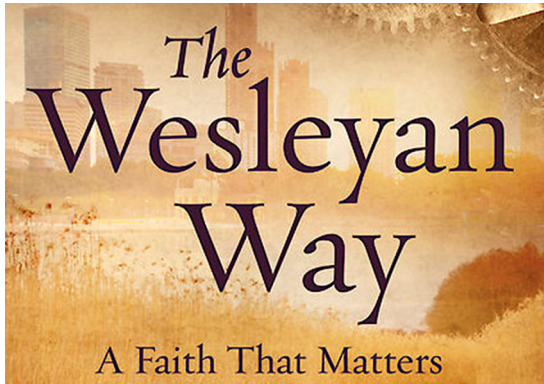


Freeway | May 20

Freeway: A Way to be Free is an eight-week coed experience that is built upon God's amazing grace, conversations with friends, and a personal exploration of our life story. Past participants have raved about this fun study that takes them on a grace-filled journey toward the life God dreams for them. Freeway will also be a great place to connect with others if you have not found a place to connect at Athens First United Methodist Church. This study will meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. beginning May 20. The cost of this study is \$20. Please register online to facilitate planning and ordering materials.

Register | athensfirstumc.org/register

Beth Dickinson | beth@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442



The Wesleyan Way | May 21

This study is a great fit for anyone interested in learning more about the Methodist church and to see faith working through love. It leads participants into a deeper, more thoughtful, and more active commitment to Christ, and highlights how we are part of God's work in transforming the world. All are invited to join this encouraging and up-lifting study led by Bob Dean, Mark Graham, and Rev. Beth Dickinson and which meets on Thursday nights beginning May 21 at 6:00 p.m. The cost of the book is \$12. Please pre-register to facilitate ordering materials.

Beth Dickinson | beth@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Weekday Preschool Summer Camps

AFUMC's Weekday Preschool is offering three weeks of Summer Camp: Color My World, May 18-22; Mighty Machines, June 1-5; and All Creatures of Our God and King, June 8-12. Camps run Monday through Friday from 8:45 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$115 per child and camp is open to children ages two on or before December 31, 2014, through children who have just completed pre-K. Sibling discounts available. Registration forms are on our webpage or may be emailed by request.

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/weekdaypreschool

Susan Brodrick | preschool@athensfirstumc.org

706-340-5097



Nothing but Nets | May 30

The Athens-Elberton District of the North Georgia United Methodist Church is proud to offer Nothing but Nets, a district-wide three-on-three basketball tournament benefiting Imagine No Malaria. The tournament will have male and female divisions for ages 10 through adult. Nothing but Nets will take place on Saturday, May 30, at Athens First United Methodist Church. Team registration is ongoing and will continue through the morning of the tournament.

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/nothingbutnets

Rusty Wood | rusty@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Senior Fun Trips

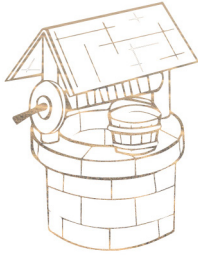
The Senior Fun Group has two exciting and fun trips planned for this summer. Any interested individual is invited to attend either or both of these trips. Enjoy great fellowship and comfortable transportation via charter bus. Contact Dan Maxey to sign up for these trips, 706-613-1562.

A Roman Holiday | June 2

They will tour the Martha Berry Museum, Oak Hill, and enjoy the beautiful Berry College campus. Lunch will be at the Coosa Country Club. The cost is \$60.

Flat Rock Playhouse Trip | August 6

The group will travel north to the Flat Rock Playhouse to see the acclaimed musical *Gypsy*, followed by lunch at the delicious Bay Breeze Seafood restaurant for lunch. The cost is \$65, plus money for lunch.



EPWORTH 2015
JOHN 4:13-14

Epworth 2015 | June 11-14

Epworth is a regional mission trip open to students in grades 7-12. The trip is designed to provide students an introduction to missions and a continuation of their faith development. The Epworth mission trip is a time to serve, learn, and grow in the community of faith. This year, we will focus on meeting Jesus at the well and accepting his offer of Living Water, a spring that bubbles up into eternal life (John 4:13-14).

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/epworth

Josh Miles | josh@athensfirstumc.org

Vacation Bible School | June 22-26

Everest VBS brings kids and adults together and helps them to become anchored in rock-solid Bible truths. In five days of mountain adventure, they will discover God's mighty power! Kids will leave as more confident, faith-filled people ready to pursue a lifelong friendship with Jesus—no matter what! Adult and youth volunteers are needed. Paper registration is also available at the Kids' Hub in the preschool gallery. Register | athensfirstumc.org/vbs

Bible School by the Pool | June 22-25

Calling all current 5th graders (rising 6th graders)! We have a Bible school experience designed just for you!!! Join us for food, fun, and fellowship as we grow our relationship with God and with each other. On Thursday, will participate in a group service project and show God's love to others in the community. Bible School by the Pool will meet at Edie Lowe's house from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Leslie Rogers | leslie@athensfirstumc.org

Learn more | athensfirstumc.org/vbs

Volunteer Opportunities at Mercy Health Center

Mercy Health Center, a mission partner of Athens First United Methodist Church, is in need of volunteers! Through a community of volunteers, Mercy Health Center provides whole-person, quality health care in a Christ-centered environment to our under-served neighbors. Specific needs are for MDs to work with medical students (Wednesday evenings), medical providers, pharmacists, and dentists. They are in need of a one shift/month commitment (3.5 hours) from at least: 4 additional medical provider volunteers for Tuesday evenings 5 additional MDs to work with the medical students on Wednesday evenings 1 pharmacist for Thursday evenings 2 dentists for Fridays If you are interested and can offer 3.5 hours of your time/month, please contact Virginia McKenna.

Virginia McKenna | vmckenna@msn.com | 706-338-3688



Young Professionals Adult Sunday School Class

All young professionals are invited to be a part of an adult Sunday School Class that meets at 11:00 a.m. in room 224. This group is open to any adult in their late 20s-40ish. This class gathers for study, encouragement, prayer, and social activities.

KaDee Holt | kadeeholt@gmail.com

This Week

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 | ACTS 4:5-12

- 8:30 a.m. **Worship Service** SANCTUARY
Preschool Nursery & Sunday School FIRST FLOOR
- 9:45 a.m. **Adult Sunday School** SECOND FLOOR AND SAYE BUILDING
Elementary Sunday School THIRD FLOOR
Grade 5 & 6 Sunday School: Fuel YOUTH AREA
Ten Ultimate Truths Girls Should Know ROOM 103
Worship Service SANCTUARY
Youth Sunday School: First Word YOUTH AREA
- 10:00 a.m. **Sack Lunch Ministry** HULL STREET ENTRANCE
- 11:00 a.m. **Worship Service** SANCTUARY
Young Professional Adult Sunday School Class ROOM 224
- 11:30 a.m. **Children's Church** ROOM 324
- 12:00 p.m. **Mission Advisory Board Meeting** ROOM 103
- 12:00 p.m. **Student-Adult Leadership Team Meeting** ROOM 124
- 12:00 p.m. **Route 56 Destination Unknown** YOUTH AREA
- 3:00 p.m. **Cub Scout Pack 1** SCOUT HUT
- 3:45 p.m. **Agape Choir** ROOM 148
- 3:45 p.m. **Carillons Ringers** ROOMS 150
- 4:30 p.m. **Wesleyan Youth Choir Rehearsal** ROOM 148
- 5:30 p.m. **Alleluia Ringers** ROOM 150
- 5:45 p.m. **Creating the Covenant (C1) | Spring Session** ROOM 103
- 5:45 p.m. **Encounter** YOUTH AREA

MONDAY, APRIL 27 | PSALM 23

- 11:00 a.m. **Benevolence Meetings**
- 11:30 a.m. **United Methodist Women Circle 5 Meeting** HULL DINING ROOM
- 1:15 p.m. **Monday Bible Study** ROOM 200
- 5:30 p.m. **Finance Committee** HULL DINING ROOM
- 7:00 p.m. **Community Bible Study, Athens Evening Class**

TUESDAY, APRIL 28 | 1PETER 1:17-23

- 8:00 a.m. Community Bible Study Leaders Council** YOUTH AREA
- 12:00 p.m. Children's Council Meeting** HULL DINING ROOM
- 1:00 p.m. REACH International Leadership Meeting** ROOM 226
- 5:30 p.m. United Methodist Women Circle 4 Meeting** HULL DINING ROOM
- 6:00 p.m. Girls' Volleyball League** GYM
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts | Troop 1** SCOUT HUT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29 | LUKE 24:13-35

- 9:30 a.m. Letters of Paul | Wednesday Morning Bible Study** HULL DINING ROOM
- Breathe* | Women's Bible Study** ROOM 229
- 3:30 p.m. Fun Gym** GYM
- 4:30 p.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry** ROOM 200
- 4:45 p.m. Early Book Group** ROOM 100
- 5:00 p.m. Wednesday Night Meal | Fox's Pizza** HANCOCK HALL
- 5:15 p.m. Power Yoga** ROOM 114
- 5:15 p.m. Jesus Calling Small Group** ROOM 235
- 5:30 p.m. Men's Prayer Group** ROOM 307
- Sams Connect Group** ROOM 301
- Trusting the Covenant | C3** ROOM 229
- 6:00 p.m. Engage Bible Study** YOUTH AREA
- Immanuel Project** ROOM 125
- 6:30 p.m. Allen/Anderson Connect Group** ROOM 307
- Men's Study: The Truth Project** ROOM 240
- Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal** ROOM 148
- Trusting the Covenant | C3** ROOM 224
- Trusting the Covenant | C3** ROOM 226
- 8:00 p.m. Chamber Ensemble Rehearsal** ROOM 148

THURSDAY, APRIL 30 | EZEKIEL 11:1-25

9:30 a.m. Community Bible Study

5:00 p.m. Souper Supper HANCOCK HALL

FRIDAY, MAY 1 | EZEKIEL 20:39-44

5:30 a.m. Fashion Fitness GYM

6:30 p.m. REACH International Bible Study & Dinner

SATURDAY, MAY 2 | LUKE 12:29-32

7:30 a.m. Great Day Of Service HANCOCK HALL

9:00 a.m. Children's Soccer CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

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