

The background features a stylized design with three fish in grey outlines. Two fish are in the upper left, and one is in the lower right. They are connected by thick red lines that form a large, abstract shape resembling a cross or a stylized 'A'. Small red circles are placed at the top left and bottom right corners of the design.

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Covenant Renewal Service

JANUARY 1, 2017
11:00 a.m.

Welcome

We are glad you are here! Thank you for joining us for worship this Sunday. Members of this congregation have been gathering here to worship since 1804. 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.”

Attendance

Please let us know of your attendance this morning by completing the pew pad.

Newcomer Orientation

We invite you to learn about the life of our church, ways you can get involved, and how to become a member by attending Newcomer Orientation, which is held the second Sunday of the month at 9:45 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School

We offer Sunday school for children age 2 through adult each Sunday from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Children

At Athens First United Methodist Church, we invite families to worship together. Children’s Church is held for children in kindergarten through grade 2 most Sundays during the 11:00 a.m. service.

Financial Report

Budget for 2016 | \$2,789,339

Amount Given YTD | \$3,092,470

Goal for December | \$505,216

Amount after 2 Sundays | \$142,959

Attendance on December 18

Total Worship | 1282

8:30 a.m. | 175

9:45 a.m. | 412

11:00 a.m. | 573

Online | 122

Sunday School | 407

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Ministers and Directors

Chuck Hodges Senior Minister

chuck@athensfirstumc.org | 706-206-5529

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josh@athensfirstumc.org

Contact Us

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Facebook: @Athens First United Methodist Church
athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

The Worship of God

11:00 a.m.

Gathering

Flowers

The flowers on the altar
are given to the glory
of God and in loving
memory of Dr. and Mrs.
R.P. Stephens, Mr. and
Mrs. Howell Erwin, Jr.,
and Mr. Howell Erwin III
by Chad Erwin, Lucy and
Buddy Allen and their
children, and Steve and
Debbie Erwin and their
children.

THE PRELUDE

“Carols of Wonder and Joy” | Scott

THE OPENING PRAYER

Beth Dickinson

O God, Searcher of all our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own. As we come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant with you, reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us. Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being, and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Praise & Thanksgiving

*THE HYMN

220 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” | REGENT SQUARE

*THE LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Let us give thanks for all of God's mercies.

O God, our Covenant Friend,
you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives.
We thank you for your loving care,
which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You have given us life and reason,
and set us in a world filled with your glory.
You have comforted us with family and friends,
and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you,
and have given us your peace.
You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.
You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit

and the witness of your Church.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You have been our light in darkness
and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation.

You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys
and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You remembered us when we forgot you.

You followed us even when we tried to flee from you.

You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.

For all your patience and overflowing grace.

We praise your holy name, O God.

Anthem Lyrics

Ring out, wild bells, to the
wild sky. The flying cloud,
the frosty light: the year
is dying in the night. Ring
out, wild bells, and let him
die. Ring out the old, ring
in the new. Ring, happy
bells, across the snow.

The year is going, let him
go; ring out the false, ring
in the true. Ring out the
grief that saps the mind.

For those that here we
see no more; ring out the
feud of rich and poor. Ring
in redress to all mankind.

Ring out the want, the
care, the sin, the faithless
coldness of the times; ring
out, ring out my mournful
rhymes, but ring the fuller
minstrel in. Ring out old
shapes of foul disease;
ring out the narrowing
lust of gold; ring out the
thousand wars of old, ring
in the thousand years of
peace. Ring in the valiant
man and free, the larger
heart, the kindlier hand.
Ring out the darkness of
the land, ring in the Christ
that is to be.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Martha Aenchenbacher

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.

THE OFFERING AND THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Ring Out, Wild Bells” | words by Lord Alfred Tennyson, music by Callie Crofts

Sung by Amy McCollum, Erin McCollum, Sarah Lawing

THE PROCLAMATION

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God. Through baptism, we have entered this life and have been admitted into the new covenant of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator. He sealed it with his own blood, that it might last for ever. On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ, the Source and Perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we are pledged to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us. From time to time we renew our covenant with God, especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord's table. Today, however, we meet, as the generations before us have met, to renew the covenant that binds us to God. Let us make this covenant of God our own.

Wesley's Covenant Service

THE INVITATION

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants. Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. Some are more easy and honorable, others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ. Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

Let me be your servant, under your command. I will no longer be my own. I will give up myself to your will in all things.

Be satisfied that Christ shall give you your place and work.

Lord, make me what you will. I put myself fully into your hands: put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and with a willing heart give it all to your pleasure and disposal.

Christ will be the Savior of none but his servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. Christ will have no servants except by consent; Christ will not accept anything except full consent to all that he requires. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing. Confirm this by a holy covenant. To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions: First, set apart some time, more than once, to be spent alone before the Lord; in seeking earnestly God's special assistance and gracious acceptance of you; in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant; in searching your hearts whether you have already freely given your life to Christ. Consider what your sins are. Consider the laws of Christ, how holy, strict, and spiritual they are, and whether you, after having carefully considered them, are willing to choose them all. Be sure you are clear in these matters, see that you do not lie to God. Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence. Third, claim God's covenant, rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength, so you can keep your promise. Trust not your own strength and power. Fourth, resolve to be faithful. You have given to the Lord your hearts, you have opened your mouths to the Lord, and you have dedicated yourself to God. With God's power, never go back. And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord. Fall down on your knees, lift your hands toward heaven, open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

THE COVENANT PRAYER

O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, see me as I fall down before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will, for you have promised mercy to me if I turn to you with my whole heart.

God requires that you shall put away all your idols.

I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life. Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world. In your power I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you. For my own righteousness is riddled with sin, unable to stand before you.

Through Christ, God has offered to be your God again if you would let him.

Before all heaven and earth, I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God. I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion, and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant, to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

God has given the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way and means of coming to God.

Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ as the only new and living Way, and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him. O blessed Jesus, I come to you, hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants. I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own worthiness, and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom, and take you for my only guide. I renounce my own will, and take your will as my law.

Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

I do here covenant with you, O Christ, to take my lot with you as it may fall. Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death shall part me from you.

God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

I do here willingly put my neck under your yoke, to carry your burden. All your laws are holy, just, and good. I therefore take them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising that I will strive to order my whole life according to your direction, and not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

The almighty God searches and knows your heart.

O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today without guile or reservation. If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright. And now, glory be to you, O God the Father, whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father. Glory be to you, O God the Son, who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood, and now is my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit, who by your almighty power have turned my heart from sin to

God. O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant. So be it. And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

***THE HYMN**

413 "A Charge to Keep I Have" | BOYLSTON

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You made all things and called them good. You gave a season for everything and a time for renewal of the old. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might a - dored, heaven and earth
shine this night with the glo - ry of your light. Loud ho-san-nas now we sing!
In the high-est may they ring! Blest is your An-oint-ed One, Christ, E - man - nu -
el, your Son. Sing Ho-san-na at his birth! Glo - ry on high, and peace on earth!

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, who lived and taught a life of compassion. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance

Song Lyrics

Christ be with me, Christ
within me, Christ behind
me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ
to win me, Christ to
comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ
above me, Christ in quiet,
Christ in danger, Christ in
hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend
and stranger.

This is the sound of one
voice, one spirit, one
voice. The sound of one
who makes a choice,
this is the sound of one
voice. This is the sound
of voices two, the sound
of me singing with you,
helping each other to
make it through. This is
the sound of voices two.
This is the sound of voices
three, singing together in
harmony, surrendering
to the mystery. This is
the sound of voices three.
This is the sound of all of
us singing with love and
the will to trust. Leave
the rest behind it will turn
to dust This is the sound
of all of us. This is the
sound of one voice, one
people, one voice, a song
for every one of us. This
is the sound of one voice.
This is the sound of
one voice.

of me." On the day you raised him from the dead he was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread, and in the power of your Holy Spirit your Church has continued in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup. And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Receiving of the Elements of Communion

At Athens First United Methodist, 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. All elements are gluten-free.

The Music During Communion

"The Prayer of St. Patrick" | arr. by William M. Schoenfeld

"One Voice" | Ruth Moody

Sung by Amy McCollum, Erin McCollum, Sarah Lawing

Sending Forth

***THE HYMN**

606 "Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine" | CAROL

***THE BLESSING AND CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

*** THE POSTLUDE**

"Good King Wenceslas" | Otis



SOUPER SUPPERS

We invite you to come serve those who are hungry in our community this winter! We host Souper Suppers every Thursday evening beginning January 12 in Hancock Hall. At this weekly event, we invite our neighbors into our church home for a warm meal and fellowship. Individuals, Sunday school classes, families, or any small group are welcome to serve in several different ways:

- Prepare a meal
- Work with children in the gym, set up the Souper Suppers Store, or greet guests at 3:30 p.m.
- Greet, help in the Souper Suppers Store, or serve as a dining room host at 4:30 p.m.
- Clean up from 5:30-6:15 p.m.

Please contact Mary Claire or Betsy to get involved!

Betsy Butler | betsy@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Mary Claire Wills | maryclaire@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

athensfirstumc.org/soupersuppers

New Arrival

Congratulations to Julie and Jeffrey Martin on the birth of their daughter, Millie Ann, on December 21.

New Members

On December 18, we welcomed Riner, Weatherly, Thomas, & Ellison Gay; Barry & Dale Staples; Jon, Catherine, Mary Reid, & Bennett Marti; and Caroline, Raymond, Lee, & Jack Swetenburg to the Athens First United Methodist Church family.

Wedding Bells

Congratulations to Trey Henson and Alex Szatkowski, who were married in our sanctuary on December 17.

Wednesday Night Meals

The meal on Wednesday, January 4, is Taziki's Mediterranean Cafe. Join us for chicken roll ups, chips, fruit, and a cookie. All orders must be placed by Tuesday at noon.

Our vendors this year include Barberitos, Weaver D's, Dawg Gone Good BBQ, Taziki's Mediterranean Cafe, and Fox's Pizza Den. Dinner is served from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in Hancock Hall each Wednesday. Each meal is \$6. We have several options to purchase meals including the whole semester, by the month, or by the week. Registration is now open. For more information, contact Beth.

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



Epiphany Party | January 4

All children and their families are invited to join the party to celebrate Jesus, the Light of the World on Wednesday, January 4! Dress up like nativity characters, meet the wise

men, follow the light through a forest maze, and play games in the gym. We will present our Christmas offering to the baby Jesus to benefit Athens foster care. All children must attend with a parent or designated guardian. Childcare is available for infants and toddlers. This event kicks off the spring semester of Kids Music and Arts, our Wednesday night program for children.

Sarah Lawing | sarah@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442



Youth Choir Winter Workshop

The Wesleyan Youth Choir Winter Workshop will be held Saturday, January 7, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. The Route 56 Octane Choir for grades 5-6 and Wesleyan Youth Choir for grades 7-12 will resume weekly rehearsals on Sunday, January 8, starting at 4:30 p.m. Come join us! For more information, contact Janis Maxwell.

Janis Maxwell | janis@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Habitat for Humanity

Volunteer sign-ups are officially open to work on our Habitat for Humanity renovation project! There are many opportunities for individuals and groups to serve Tuesday through Saturday of each week until the project is complete. We are working with the Habitat volunteer coordinator to identify weekly needs; please contact Betsy or Mary Claire for information.

Betsy Butler | betsy@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Mary Claire Wills | maryclaire@athensfirstumc.org

706-543-1442

Communion Guild Orientation

Members of our church are invited to join us next Sunday, January 8, for the annual Communion Guild orientation.

Martha Aenchbacher will explain the significance of Holy Communion and what it means to provide this holy sacrament to our congregation. This is also an opportunity for the Communion Guild leaders to introduce themselves and show how to prepare and serve the elements at our church. At the conclusion of the training, we invite you to sign up to serve and/or prepare communion at any of the three worship services throughout the year. We will meet at the front of the sanctuary immediately following the 11:00 a.m. service on January 8 for 30 minutes. If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Hodges.

Katherine Hodges | katherine@athensfirstumc.org
706-543-1442



Weekday Preschool Registration

Preschool registration opens for the 2017-2018 school year online on January 9. Our preschool program serves families of children age nine months through Pre-K from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Please note the following registration deadlines:

- Currently enrolled deadline: January 20
- Church member deadline: January 25
- Community deadline: January 27

Register | athensfirstumc.org/weekdaypreschool
Linsey Jarrett | linsey@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

GriefShare

GriefShare groups will meet again in the winter and spring of 2017! This thirteen-week faith-based curriculum features nationally recognized experts on grief and recovery topics. GriefShare groups are for people grieving the death of a family member or friend. We welcome Erica Cooper, bereavement coordinator of Gentiva Hospice, who will

facilitate both groups beginning the week of January 23 in Room 100. Groups will meet through the week of April 17. The Monday group will meet at 6:30 p.m. beginning January 23, and the Wednesday group will meet at 10:00 a.m. beginning January 25. New participants are welcome to join at any time; each lesson is "self-contained," so you do not need to attend in sequence. There is no cost to join a GriefShare group, but we ask that you register so that we can have enough materials prepared. Please contact Martha Aenchbacher for more information.

Register | athensfirstumc.org/griefshare
Martha Aenchbacher | martha@athensfirstumc.org
678-230-9708

Pickleball

Join us every Tuesday afternoon in our gym from 1:30-3:00 p.m. to play pickleball, a great sport consisting of ping pong, tennis, and badminton all in one! We enjoy fellowship while getting exercise; this is a great game for active adults. Contact Rusty for more information or just come try it out! Rusty Wood | rusty@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Stop Hunger Now

Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 11, for Stop Hunger Now! This is a meal packaging churchwide mission opportunity that impacts our neighbors across the globe without leaving Athens. We will package 40,000 meals in a single shift beginning at 10:00 a.m. Register online to let us know you will be coming; shifts are available Friday for set-up and Saturday for meal packaging and clean-up. Contact Betsy or Mary Claire with any questions.

Betsy Butler | betsy@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442
Mary Claire Wills | maryclaire@athensfirstumc.org
706-543-1442

Flag Retirement Ceremony

Cub Scouts Pack 1 will be conducting a flag retirement ceremony in early January. If you have worn or tattered flags in need of retirement, please bring them to the church's front desk. The Cub Scouts will collect them and retire them during the ceremony.

Nat Carmack | carmacknat@gmail.com



Faithful Growth

Growing Deep Roots in Christ

Find your community. Grow deep roots together.

Small groups are opportunities to gather with others and grow deeper in your relationship with the Lord. You'll be encouraged to live out the truths you discover in the Bible as you encourage others to do the same. Unless otherwise noted, please contact Beth for more information. To join any of the following, please register online.

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

athensfirstumc.org/smallgroupsbiblestudies

Connect & Grow Groups

Connect & Grow Groups are small groups of people who meet weekly at church or in homes to share what God is doing in their lives. These groups are open to all and are restarting now. Registration is now open, so find the day and time that works for you and sign up today!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

This group gathers together to knit prayer shawls. Completed shawls are prayed over by the group and given to those who are in need of comfort and prayer. This group meets on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:45 p.m. in room 200 and on Tuesdays from 10:30-12:00 p.m. at Panera Bread on Atlanta Highway. All are welcome to join either or both days. The Wednesday group will resume January 4 and the Thursday group will resume January 5. Please contact Dianne Morrison for more information.
Dianne Morrison | dianne.morrison@gmail.com | 706-207-5538

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Led by Beth Dickinson, Wednesday Morning Bible study examines the Bible through various study books. This study meets Wednesdays from 9:30-10:45 a.m. in room 222. This group resumes Wednesday, January 4, with a study of the book of Psalms.

Disciplines Devotional Bible Study

Disciplines: A Book of Daily Devotions is an outstanding way to stay connected to God. Join with a small group to read scripture, share thoughts on the daily devotion, and pray together. Join this group at any time throughout the school year. The cost of the devotional is \$10, the large print option is \$12, and the optional *Alive Now* magazine is \$12. The group will resume Monday, January 9, at 1:15 p.m. in room 200.

Entrusted | Women's Study

Join Susie Thrasher in Beth Moore's *Entrusted: A Study of 2 Timothy*. This study encourages you to guard what God has entrusted to you, further His kingdom by sharing Christ with others, and pour into future generations just as Paul once mentored Timothy. In this journey of joy and hardship, we need each other to stay the course and live a life of faithfulness. All women are invited to join. This study will meet on Wednesday mornings, January 11 through February 22, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. in room 229. The cost is \$13.

What We Need Is Here

Are you seeking a deeper, more authentic experience of God? Maybe you've attended retreats, read dozens of books on spirituality, or even consulted a spiritual director and found yourself still wanting more. If so, then this is the study for you. *What We Need is Here: Practicing the Heart of Christian Spirituality* by L. Roger Owens calls you to return to seven basics of Christian spirituality. Learn those basics by joining Dianne Morrison from January 11 through February 22 on Wednesday evenings from 6:45-8:00 p.m. in room 235. Materials cost \$10.

Restoring an Attitude of Worship | Men's Study

Join Keith Wilson in this men's study. The books of Hosea, Joel, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi are viewed by Biblical scholars as the Minor Prophets, yet the insights and messages contained within these books are anything but minor. These prophets offer a unique, firsthand view of an all-powerful God who longs to intimately connect with His people. This study examines their personal stories to discover how He interacts with our world in truly amazing ways. All men are invited to join this study from January 11-March 15 on Wednesdays from 6:15-7:45 p.m. in room 240. Materials cost \$8.

Disciple IV: Under the Tree of Life

Join Don Griner and Mary Lynn Lane from January 11 through May 3 on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. for *Disciple IV: Under the Tree of Life* (part 1). This study concentrates on Old Testament writings, the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, James, Jude, and finally, the book of Revelation. The second half will be offered Fall 2017. This study will be held in room 222 and materials cost \$40.

Early Book Group

The Early Book Group meets on Wednesdays from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. in room 247. All are welcome. This group resumes Wednesday, January 11, with Wayne Dyer's *There's a Spiritual Solution for Every Problem*. Interested persons may contact Cindy or George Kuhlman for more information.
Cindy and George Kuhlman | gckuhlman@charter.net

Later Book Group

The Later Book Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. in room 247 to discuss a book related to the Christian faith. All are invited to these wide-ranging and interesting discussions. The

next book the group will be reading is *The Parables of Jesus* by William Barclay. This group will resume on Wednesday, January 11. For more information, contact April Webb. April Webb | apriloglio@gmail.com | 706-546-6274

Connect Group | Young Married

This group meets every other week on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. in room 229. They meet for Bible and book studies, prayer, and fellowship. This group will begin meeting again on Wednesday, January 11. For additional information, contact Kayla Smith.

Kayla Smith | kscsmith@gmail.com

Israel's Mission | Women's Study

Join Therese Wilson and renowned teacher and historian Ray Vander Laan as he travels through the land of the Bible. In each lesson, Vander Laan illuminates the historical, geographical, and cultural context of the sacred scriptures. Filmed on location in Israel, the *That the World May Know* DVD series transforms participants' understanding of God and challenges them to be true followers of Jesus. All women are invited to join this study from January 11 through March 15 on Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in Hull Conference Room. Materials cost \$8.

Connect Group | Young Adults

This group meets year-round on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. in room 222. They meet for Bible and book studies, prayer, and fellowship. This group will begin meeting again on Thursday, January 12. For additional information, contact Laney Jones.

Laney Jones | laney@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Parenting with Purpose

Parenting with Purpose small groups will begin again on Friday morning, January 13, at 9:30 a.m. in the youth area. Our discussion topics and study will focus on parenting and all the opportunities that accompany it. We will meet every other Friday through the month of April. Please register online. If you have any questions, please contact April Allen. Register | athensfirstumc.org/registration April Allen | april@athensfirstumc.org | 706-543-1442

Financial Peace University

Join Tom and Jennifer Foster for Financial Peace University, which presents biblical, practical steps to get you from where you are to where you've dreamed you could be. In

only nine lessons, you will learn how to get rid of debt, take control of your money, spend and save wisely, give generously, and much more! On average, families save \$2,300 and pay off \$5,700 in debt in the first 90 days! Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University will be offered on Tuesday nights, January 24 through March 21, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in room 222. The materials for this course cost \$100; couples share one kit. Childcare is available with registration.

Disciple Fast Track | Old Testament

Disciple Fast Track Old Testament will devote 12 weeks to focus on the Old Testament. *Disciple Fast Track* is for busy people seeking a comprehensive Bible study in a timely manner. All are invited to join. The New Testament will be offered Fall 2017. This study will meet on Sunday evenings, January 22 through April 30, from 4:45-6:15 p.m. in room 224. The cost is \$12. Childcare is available with registration.

Revival

Join us for an exciting new seven-week study from popular author Adam Hamilton entitled *Revival: Faith as Wesley Lived It*. Just back from his trip to historic Wesleyan sites in England, co-leader John Campbell will share his travel experiences with the class. Co-leader and certified lay speaker Bob Dean will discuss the study guide lessons and companion video on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., from January 25 through March 15 in room 226. This new study explores John Wesley's Eighteenth Century English Revival. Hamilton said that he wrote the book because he believes "...that by reclaiming the faith, heart, and practices of John Wesley and the early Methodists, we can rediscover the best parts of our own hearts and churches, and in so doing we might help spark a revival of Christianity in our time." Come join the revival! Materials cost \$10.

Making Sense of the Bible

If you have a hard time reading and understanding the Bible and are always formulating questions, then this is a perfect study for you. In *Making Sense of the Bible*, Adam Hamilton looks at questions we ask about the Bible, its origins, and meaning. All are invited to join this study on Thursday evenings, February 2 through March 16, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in room 229. The cost is \$15. Childcare is available with registration.

This Week

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 | ECCLESIASTES 3:1-13

New Year's Day

Tijuana Mission Trip

10:00 a.m. **Sack Lunch Ministry** HULL STREET ENTRANCE

11:00 a.m. **Worship Service** SANCTUARY

Preschool Nursery FIRST FLOOR

MONDAY, JANUARY 2 | ISAIAH 42:1-9

Office closed—no programming

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3 | PSALM 29:1-6

5:30 a.m. **Fashion Fitness** ROOM 120

8:00 a.m. **Administrative Committees Leader Meeting** YOUTH AREA

10:30 a.m. **Prayer Shawl** PANERA BREAD

1:30 p.m. **Pickleball** GYM

4:00 p.m. **Children's Basketball** GYM

5:30 p.m. **Fashion Fitness** ROOM 120

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4 | ACTS 10:34-43

9:30 a.m. **Wednesday Morning Bible Study** ROOM 222

4:30 p.m. **Epiphany Party** GYM

Prayer Shawl ROOM 200

4:45 p.m. **Early Book Group** ROOM 247

5:00 p.m. **Route 56: GPS** ROOM 120

Wednesday Night Meal HANCOCK HALL

5:30 p.m. **66 Love Letters** HULL CONFERENCE ROOM

Un-Decorate Hancock Hall HANCOCK HALL

6:00 p.m. **Engage Bible Study** YOUTH AREA

6:30 p.m. **Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal** SANCTUARY

Awaiting the Already ROOM 229

8:00 p.m. **Chamber Ensemble Rehearsal** ROOM 148

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5 | EPHESIANS 3:1-12

5:30 a.m. **Fashion Fitness** ROOM 120

9:30 a.m. **Community Bible Study** HANCOCK HALL

5:30 p.m. **Children's Basketball** GYM

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6 | ISAIAH 60:1-6

4:00 p.m. **Children's Basketball** GYM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7 | PSALM 29:7-11

8:00 a.m. **Children's Basketball** GYM

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