



PALM

Sunday

MARCH 29, 2026

9:30 AND 11:00 A.M.

The Worship of God

*Please stand as you are able. The congregation speaks the text in **bold** type.

Large print hymnals are available in the Narthex. Please ask a member of our Welcome Team for assistance.



THE FLOWERS AND PALMS IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In loving memory of her mother, Myrtice Dickerson, by Dianne Wall.

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. Today, we journey with Jesus as he is welcomed in triumph upon entering Jerusalem. We enter Holy Week with prayers, music, and ceremonies that would be recognized by ancient pilgrims to Jerusalem. Hosanna means “save us,” and the crowd shouts Hosanna not knowing what it will bring.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“Processional” | William Mathias

Raina Wood, Organist

The Pastoral Greeting | Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby

The Call to Worship

Today we enter Holy Week, with its cycle of life, death, and new life.

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Jesus, the holy one, enters Jerusalem as he rides on the back of a donkey colt.

Crowds wave palm branches and cry out,

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Jesus, holy one, enter the gates of our hearts today as we join you in this time of your passion.

With you, let us remember and celebrate your birth, your calling, and your ministry.

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Jesus, guide us through the streets of our journey. Open our eyes and our ears to the guiding of God's spirit who calls us to costly faithfulness and to joyous wholeness. Let us sing with all our selves:

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Procession of the Palm Branches*

UMH 278 "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" | ELLACOMBE

The Music of the Children

"Loud Hosanna" | Elizabeth Charles

Sung by the Children's Choirs and Sunday School Kids

Cathy Felton, piano; Rosemary Belger, Amy McCollum, Gail Walton, and Beth Rector, handbells; Erin Towe, Music Assistant

Janis Maxwell, Director of Student and Children's Music

9:30 a.m. | *Children will be taken to Sunday School after singing.*

11:00 a.m. | *Children will sit with a parent in reserved pews after singing.*

**The Hymn*

UMH 280 "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" | ST. THEODULPH

Verses 1, 3 and 4

**The Prayer of Confession*

As we watch the gates open for Jesus' triumphant entry, let us open the gates of our own hearts that we may confess, with all honesty, the sin that resides within.

God of palms and passion, source of hope and promise, we would rather sing hosannas with a cheering crowd than stand up for our convictions in the face of an angry mob; we would rather dine at your table with those we call friends than admit we are no different from those we consider enemies; we would rather imagine our faithfulness in the face of opposition and temptation than admit that we too might betray you with a kiss. Forgive us for the ways we deny you—by our words, our actions, and our silence. Have mercy on us, O God, and lead us in the way of the cross.

All pray in silence.

God has opened the gates of righteousness and Christ has beckoned us to walk through. Sing with the children; throw your garments upon the road, for the one who comes in the name of the Lord offers us salvation in his name. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God. Amen.

**The Kyrie* | Antonin Dvorak

Translation: *Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.*

Kyrie, Kyrie eleison. Kyrie, Kyrie eleison. Christe, Christe eleison. Christe, Christe eleison. Kyrie, Kyrie eleison. Kyrie, Kyrie eleison, eleison.

**The Passing of the Peace*

During the Passing of the Peace at 11:00 a.m., children Kindergarten up to grade 4 are dismissed through the front, lectern side doors to attend Children's Church. They can be picked up at the conclusion of worship in Room 320.

The Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer | Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson

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 Offertory Anthem

"Ride On, King Jesus" | Moses Hogan

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Erin Towe, soprano;

Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

Ride on, King Jesus, ride on, the conquering king. Oh, ride on, King Jesus, ride on. No man can hinder thee. I was but young when I begun, now my race is almost done. No man can hinder thee. King Jesus rides a milk white horse. The river of Jordan he did cross. He's the King and the Lord of all. Jesus is the first and he's the last. Jesus is the lord, Lord of Lords. Jesus is the Prince, Prince of peace. No man can hinder thee. Ride on, King Jesus! Traditional Spiritual

**The Doxology* | OLD 100TH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PROCLAMATION

The Scripture Reading | Psalm 118:1-2; 19-29 and Psalm 22:1-2

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

“Two Songs, One Road”

RESPONSE

The Anthem

“My Eternal King” | Jane M. Marshall

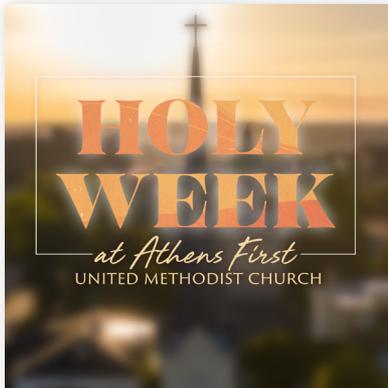
Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

My God, I love Thee; not because I hope for heav'n thereby, nor yet because who love Thee not must die eternally. Thou, my Jesus, Thou didst me upon the cross embrace; for me didst bear the nails and spear and manifold disgrace. Why, then why, O blessed Jesus Christ, should I not love Thee well? Not for the hope of winning heav'n or of escaping hell; not with the hope of gaining aught, not seeking a reward; but as Thyself hast loved me, O everloving Lord! E'en so I love Thee, and will love, and in Thy praise will sing; solely because Thou art my God, and my Eternal King. 17th Century Latin poem, Anon.

**The Blessing*

**The Postlude* | “Psalm XIX: The Heavens Declare” | Benedetto Marcello

Holy Week worship continues on Maundy Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Good Friday at 12:00 noon.



Holy Week Services | April 2-April 5

As Christians, Holy Week is a sacred journey we take each year as we retell the stories of Jesus' final days. You're invited to our Holy Week services as we walk with Jesus to the cross and hear the Good News of Easter anew: "He Is Risen!"

Maundy Thursday | Thursday, April 2 | 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday | Friday, April 3 | 12:00 p.m.

Easter | Sunday, April 5

Sunrise at the Steeple | 7:00 a.m.

Easter Sanctuary Worship | 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

On Easter Sunday, all are invited to bring flowers to place on the outdoor cross, creating together a symbol of new life and Resurrection.



College Grad Sunday | April 26

Join us for Graduation Sunday as we celebrate our college graduates during worship at **11:00am on April 26!** Whether you're graduating from undergraduate or graduate programs, we want to recognize all you have done! We'll have a special moment of celebration in worship for you, and we will have your names and graduation information included in our bulletin. Your parents and family are also invited to attend this special service and are welcome to stay for our final Sunday Lunch of the semester where the celebration will continue. To help us plan accordingly, please **RSVP by April 19** with the number of family members attending the lunch. Even if you're not in town, we still want to celebrate you. Scan the QR code and send us your graduation info. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you!



Senior Recognition Sunday | May 3

The Senior Class of 2026 will be recognized during the 11:00 a.m. worship service on **Sunday, May 3**. Prior to the worship service, there will be a time of fellowship and recognition at our Senior Breakfast in Hancock Hall at 9:00 a.m. Family, friends, and other youth are invited to come and greet you and share in your excitement for the future. Please **RSVP no later than Sunday, April 5**, so that we can make all the proper arrangements to ensure you are recognized and honored as a part of the worship service.

Rev. Montana Hamby, Associate Minister | montana@athensfirstumc.org

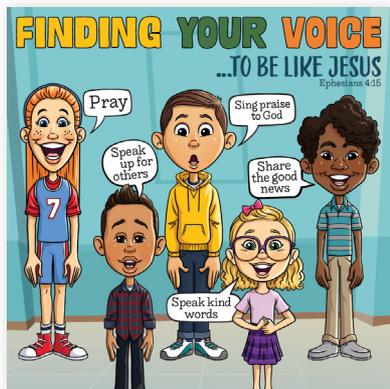


Mission Celebration Brunch | April 19

We invite you to join us on **Sunday, April 19**, to celebrate what God has done through our Missions Ministry in the past year! The Missions Celebration Brunch is a morning full of fun and fellowship around a delicious meal, accompanied by a silent basket auction. All are welcome! Ways to get involved:

- **Attend the Brunch!** Sign up for a seating time on the Missions webpage
- **Donate a basket!** Gather your group, class, family, or friends and donate a basket to be bid on!
- **Help us prepare!** Help us decorate and get ready for the Brunch on Saturday, April 18. Please email Sarah Beth Barger to help.

Sarah Beth Barger, Director of Missions | sarahbeth@athensfirstumc.org



Children's Music Ministry Spring Program April 26

Our Children's Music Ministry choirs are working hard to bring you an uplifting Spring Program on **Sunday, April 26, at 3:00 p.m.** in Hancock Hall. We have been "Finding Our Voices to Be Like Jesus" all year, and we have learned some important lessons about how our voices can be helpful and kind as we move through this world. Solos, scripture, and combined choir anthems will have you feeling impressed with these youngest worship leaders and music makers. We hope to see you at our Spring Program!

Janis Maxwell, Director of Children & Youth Music Ministry
janis@athensfirstumc.org



Wesleyan Youth Choir Drop Party | May 3

The Wesleyan Youth Choir invites you to join us for the first time listening to our first album! In early March, we spent an afternoon at Maxwell Sound Recording Studio and recorded several of our favorite songs from the last few years! **Join us from 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. on May 3** in Hancock Hall as we play the album, show some videos of the making of it, salute our Choir Seniors, and enjoy some snacks. It will be a fun party, and we want you to be there!

Janis Maxwell, Director of Children & Youth Music Ministry
janis@athensfirstumc.org

Wesley Heritage Tour | July 2026

There's still time to register! Registration to join Rev. Jeremy Lawson and Dr. Tom Jackson on the Wesley Heritage Tour **closes April 23, 2026**. The group will depart from Atlanta on July 8, 2026, traveling through historic sites including Coventry Cathedral, Epworth, Memorial Church, St. Andrews Church, the Cotswolds, Stratford, Oxford, Bristol, Bath, City Road Chapel, Aldersgate Street, Buckingham Palace, and more. Scan the QR code to learn more.

MEMBER NEWS

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Betty Ruff and her family in the loss of her mother, Marguerite Pound, on March 22.

Wedding Bells

Congratulations to Zoe Taylor and Jack Chambers on their marriage on March 21 in our sanctuary.



APRIL 1: Beef Tips over Rice served with green beans and a roll.

Register by noon on Tuesday | Scan the Steeple QR Code to register online or Call the Church Office.

FINANCIAL REPORT As of March 24, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Actual Giving:** \$710,149 | **YTD Actual Expenses:** \$649,164

SPECIAL OFFERINGS: **United Methodist Committee on Relief:** \$6,227 | **Housing and Homeless Offering:** \$6,387

WAYS TO GIVE



OFFERING PLATE:

Fill out the envelope located in your pew.



ONLINE:

Scan to be taken to Realm, our online giving platform.



TEXT-TO-GIVE:

Text "AFUMCTTG" to 73256.

FOLLOW UP WITH A MINISTER

Rev. Jeremy Lawson | Senior Minister
jeremy@athensfirstumc.org | 404-304-3574

Rev. Montana Hamby | Associate Minister
montana@athensfirstumc.org | 770-633-3140

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby | Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org | 404-414-1701

Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson | Associate Minister
nancy@athensfirstumc.org | 762-233-4761

REQUEST PRAYER | Have a prayer request? Scan the QR code located in your bulletin and select "**Needing Prayer**" to fill out a form to submit your prayer request. If you desire for the request to be shared with our Prayer Ministry team, please indicate that in your submission. Prayer requests can also be made directly via email prayer@athensfirstumc.org.

CCS #12591 • CCLI #1097880

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
327 N LUMPKIN ST. ATHENS, GA 30601 • 706-543-1442 | athensfirstumc.org