

The background features a stylized illustration of three fish in grey and white, swimming in a clockwise direction. The fish are framed by thick red lines that form a partial border around the central text. A solid red circle is positioned in the upper left, and another is in the lower right.

ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026
9:30 & 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 IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In loving memory of Connie McMillan by Gary McMillan.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is” | arr. Rhett Barnwell

Jana Williams, harp

The Welcome and Opening Prayer | Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 159 "Lift High the Cross" | CRUCIFER

**The Affirmation of Faith* | from I Corinthians 15:1-6 and Colossians 1:15-20

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* | MEINEKE

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.

**The Passing of the Peace*

The Welcoming of New Members | 11:00 a.m.

The Prayers of the People and 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 Hymn

UMH 138 “The King of Love My Shepherd Is” | ST. COLUMBA

Verses 1-3 and 6

During the singing of the hymn 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 Offering and Offertory Anthem

“An Irish Blessing” | Anna Lapwood

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

This anthem has been placed in the choir library to the Glory of God and in commemoration of Anna Lapwood’s Organ Recital at Athens First United Methodist Church on April 19, 2026, and in honor of Dianne D. Wall, Carolyn and Henry Garrard, Blaine Bostelman and Wessley Barrett, David W. Key, Sr., and Evelyn and Bob Winstead by the Music Ministry.

May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, the rain fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand. May green be the grass you walk on, may blue be the skies above you. May pure be the joys that surround you, may true be the hearts that love you. Traditional Irish

**The Doxology* | LASST UNS ERFREUEN

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!

PROCLAMATION

The Scripture Reading | 1 Peter 1:17-23

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

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson
"Born Again"

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 89 "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" | HYMN TO JOY

**The Blessing*

**The Congregational Response*

"He Lives" | ACKLEY

I serve a risen Savior, he's in the world today; I know that he is living, whatever foes may say.
I see his hand of mercy, I hear his voice of cheer, and just the time I need him, he's always
near. He lives, he lives, Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along
life's narrow way. He lives, he lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know he lives? He
lives within my heart.

**The Postlude*

"Toccata in G Major" | Theodore Dubois



Mission Celebration Brunch | Today

Join us immediately following the service for our Mission Celebration Brunch! Seating is available at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. This special event is a time to celebrate all that God has accomplished through the Missions Ministry at Athens First UMC over the past year. The brunch includes a delicious meal and a silent auction with a variety of baskets available for bidding. Walk-ins are welcome!

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



Agape Muffin Sunday | April 26

Have a muffin on us! Our Agape Adult Ministry is offering muffins to those attending church and Sunday School on Sunday, August 26. You can find them from 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. in two locations: the connecting hallway and just outside the chapel doors. Our Agape participants are looking forward to greeting you and sharing their baking skills! There is no cost for the muffins, but donations to the Agape program are gladly accepted.

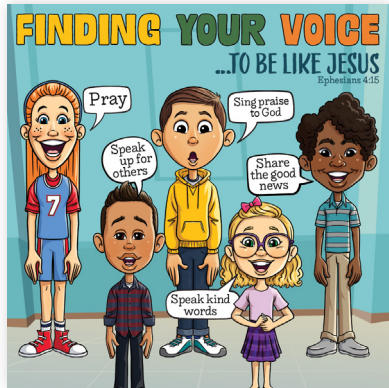
Rev. Dr. Nancy Johnson, Associate Minister | nancy@athensfirstumc.org



Color Wars | April 26

Attention Students: Join us for our final Sunday Night Encounter of the school year for Color Wars! Hosted by Athens First Student Ministry, middle and High School students are invited to come **Sunday, April 26** dressed in white to leave in color! Students will meet in Hancock Hall at 5:45 p.m. Color Wars is one of the most highly anticipated events of the year that you won't want to miss. Register using the QR code above to help us prepare for all the fun!

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



CMM 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 and Youth Music Ministry
janis@athensfirstumc.org



New Member Class | April 29

We invite you to take the next step in your faith journey by becoming a member of Athens First United Methodist Church. Membership is a holy opportunity to formally commit to our congregation and to grow together through your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Our New Member Class is designed to help you connect, ask questions, and discern your place in the life of the church. Our next New Member Class will be held on **April 29 at 6:15 p.m.**, in preparation for Membership Sunday on May 17. Please register online, or for more information about membership, contact Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby.

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org



Vacation Bible School | Volunteers Needed

Join us this summer at Rainforest Falls VBS where we will explore the life-giving truth that God loves us deeply. VBS is June 1-4, for rising K-6th graders. Our week wouldn't be possible without our dedicated volunteers! The number of children we can welcome depends on our volunteer team, so sign up early and join in the fun. Crew Guides are our greatest need! Please consider serving in this role so we can open the door to more children. Your dedication and talents help create a fun and safe experience for the kids in our church and community. Register to volunteer by using the QR code above.

Traci Lowry, Director of Kids at Athens First | traci@athensfirstumc.org

MEMBER NEWS

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to the family and friends of William Gatch who passed away on April 6. William was a UGA student who attended Athens First UMC during his college years.

Baptism

We celebrate that Collette Blair "Lettie" Whalen, daughter of Camille and Coleman Whalen, daughter of Camille and Coleman Whalen, received the sacrament of baptism on April 12.



APRIL 22: Shrimp & Grits served with a side salad.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT As of April 14, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | YTD Actual Giving: \$859,383 | YTD Actual Expenses: \$858,054

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

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

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

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