

ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 26, 2023

9:30 & 11:00 A.M.

The Worship of God

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

The flowers on the altar are dedicated to the glory of God in loving memory of Jeanne and Ralph Beaird by their children and grandchildren.

GATHERING

The Prelude

Antiphon V: "How Fair and How Pleasant Art Thou" | Marcel Dupré

Raina Wood, Organist

The Welcome and Opening Prayer | Nancy Johnson

The Choral Invocation

"Prayer for a New Day" | Jonathan Reid

Sung by the Chamber Ensemble; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music

Dear God, this day, let some word that is heard be Yours. Purge me of vain defense till only grace in acts of love remains.

Christian Robert Shockley—with thanks to Mr. Fred Rogers.

PRAISE & THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 479 "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" | ABERSWYTH

**The Prayer of Confession*

Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

We confess to you, all-knowing God, what we are. We are not the people we like others to think we are. We are afraid to admit, even to ourselves, what lies in the depths of our souls. But we cannot hide our true selves from you. You know us as we are, and yet you love us. We stand in your presence filled with regret for our many sins and failings. Come into the brokenness of our lives with your healing love. Help us to be willing to bow before you in true repentance, and to bow to one another in real forgiveness.

By the fire of your Holy Spirit, melt our hardened hearts and consume the pride and prejudice which separate us. Fill us, O Lord, with your perfect love, which casts out our fear, and bind us together in that unity which you share with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

All pray in silence.

If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us remission of all our sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

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

**The Kyrie* | TFWS 2275 | Anton 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*

The Sacrament of Baptism | 11:00 a.m.

Charles Clarke Ruffin, son of Mary Claire and Chase Ruffin

Clarke, Clarke, 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. Clarke, Clarke, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too.

The Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

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 361 "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" | TOPLADY

During the singing of the hymn at 11:00 a.m., children up to grade 2 are dismissed through the front, lectern side doors to attend Children's Church. They can be picked up at the conclusion of worship in the John Wesley Parlor.

The Offering

The Offertory Anthem

“Eternal Life: A Prayer” | Olive Dungan

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

The Prayer of Saint Francis can be found on page 481 of The United Methodist Hymnal.

**The Doxology* | UMH 95 | 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 | Matthew 5:21-24

The Message | Jeremy Lawson

“The Hardest Words to Say”

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 297 “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” | ST. CHRISTOPHER

**The Blessing and Congregational Response*

“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”

Sung: **Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me; help me walk from day to day with its shadow o’er me. In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever, till my raptured soul shall find rest beyond the river.**

**The Postlude*

“Toccata in D minor ‘Dorian’ BWV 538 | Johann Sebastian Bach

HOLY WEEK

AT ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



As Christians, Holy Week is a sacred journey we take each year as we retell the stories of Jesus' final days. Throughout the week, we remember that, because of the resurrection, the worst thing is never the last thing. You're invited to our Holy Week services as we take this sacred journey with Jesus and hear the good news of Easter anew: **"He is not here; He is risen!"**

PALM SUNDAY April 2 | 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship
The Procession of Palms and Vienne's Solemn Mass

MAUNDY THURSDAY April 6 | 6:30 p.m. Sanctuary Worship

GOOD FRIDAY April 7 | 12:00 p.m. Sanctuary Worship

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 9 | 7:00 a.m. Sunrise at the Steeple Worship*
9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship

**Easter Casual (Outdoors) – Chairs Provided*

THE STEEPLE



Easter Extravaganza | Registration Closes March 28 at noon

Last call! Registration for the Easter Extravaganza will close on Tuesday, March 28, at noon! Join us on Wednesday, March 29, at Oconee Veterans Park from 5:00-6:30 p.m. for a fun evening with our church family! All Children, Route 56, Youth, and Wednesday Night Small Groups are invited to eat, play, and fellowship. This is an AGAPE-friendly event, and we invite children of all ability levels! The schedule for the evening is as follows:

5:00 p.m. | Chick-fil-A Dinner, Fellowship, and Yard Games

6:00 p.m. | Egg Hunt for children up to Grade 4

(Children will be divided by age group. Please bring 1-2 dozen eggs per child participating in the egg hunt.)

Jennifer Golden, Assistant Director of Children's Ministry
jennifer@athensfirstumc.org



The Heartthrobs | Support Group

We invite you to join the Heartthrobs for a luncheon at Hilltop Grille on Wednesday, April 5, at noon. The Heartthrobs is a men's support group for those who have experienced heart-related health issues such as heart surgery, pacemakers, heart disease, and other cardiovascular problems. We are pleased to have Rev. Bill McKoy as our guest speaker to share his heart story. If you plan to attend, kindly call the church office at 706-543-1442 by Tuesday, April 4, to reserve your place at Hilltop Grille. For more information about this group, contact Jud Guest at jguest@ladtrucklines.com or Joe Block at joetblock@gmail.com.

Cindy McKoy, Director of Small Groups | cindy@athensfirstumc.org



Athens Area Diaper Bank Drive

Join the Missions Team throughout April to share the love with our mission partner, the Athens Area Diaper Bank. Through our partnership with the Diaper Bank, the church serves as a host site where community guests can receive needed diapers. We can also support Bethel Midtown Village through monthly diaper donations to those in the neighborhood. Throughout April, we are collecting diapers of all sizes (even partially opened packages) to support the Athens Area Diaper Bank's mission of eradicating diaper needs in our community. Diapers can be dropped off all April long in the designated bin at the Hancock Ave. entrance of the church.

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

March 26, 2023



Senior Recognition Sunday | RSVP Due Friday!

The Senior Class of 2023 will be recognized during the 11:00 worship service on Sunday, May 7. **Seniors, please RSVP by THIS Friday, March 31**, so we can make all the proper arrangements to ensure you are recognized and honored as a part of the worship service. Prior to the worship service, there will be a time of fellowship and recognition at our Senior Reception in Hancock Hall at 9:30 a.m. that morning. Scan the QR code in the bulletin or contact Devin or Hannah for more information.

For RSVP and photo submission questions, contact:

Devin Burns, Assistant Director of Student Ministry
devin@athensfirstumc.org

For reception and worship service questions, contact:

Hannah Stubblefield, Director of Student Ministry
hannah@athensfirstumc.org



Music and Arts Week is coming back! June 20-22

AFUMC Music Ministries is bringing Music and Arts Week BACK with guitars, drumming, art, and more! Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, June 20-22, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Open to kindergarten through 6th grade (2022-23 school year). Registration is opening soon!

SERMON NOTES:

MEMBER NEWS

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Don Crews and his family in the loss of his sister, Lelia Duda, on March 6.

Baptisms

We celebrate that Darcy Christine Wiesner Hawkins, daughter of Michele Wiesner and Josh Hawkins, received the sacrament of baptism on March 19.

We celebrate that Vera Frances Lee, daughter of Lauren and Zack Lee, received the sacrament of baptism on March 19.

New Members

On March 19, we welcomed Nechelle Thornton-Stamm and Peter Stoddard to the Athens First United Methodist Church family.



Quick Links

The QR code is a direct link to view and learn more about our top 5 featured announcements in this bulletin or visit athensfirstumc.org for more information.

FOLLOW UP WITH A MINISTER

Betsy Butler | Associate Minister
betsy@athensfirstumc.org | 706-714-1559

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

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget for 2023 | \$3,635,506
Amount Given YTD | \$691,454
Goal for March | \$253,633
Received for March | \$125,369

CCS #12591 • CCLI #1097880

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