

The background features a stylized illustration of three fish in grey outlines, swimming in various directions. They are framed by thick red lines that form a partial border on the left and bottom. A solid red circle is positioned in the upper left, and another is in the lower right.

ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

June 28, 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

On this day in 1703, John Wesley, the Anglican priest who founded the Methodist movement, was born in Epworth, England. Today in worship we celebrate Wesley's birthday and legacy with historic liturgy and hymns of early Methodism.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“Variations II, III on *Be Strong in the Lord*” | Richard Proulx

Raina Wood, Organist

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

The Invocation

Minister: In the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

All: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to God's holy name!

Minister: I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name for ever and ever.

All: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and God's greatness is unsearchable.

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 57 "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" | AZMON

"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," written in 1739, has traditionally been the opening hymn in Methodist hymnals throughout the world since the time of Wesley's "Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists," 1780.

**The Call to Confession* | from John Wesley's *The Sunday Service of the Methodists*, 1825

Dearly beloved, the Scripture moves us, in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God, our heavenly Father; but confess them with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and a humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying with me:

**The Prayer of Confession*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father. For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive all that is past; and grant that we may hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All pray in silence.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to thee: Have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Assurance of Pardon*

Hear what comfortable words the Scriptures say to all that truly turn to the Lord:

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

O Lord, open thou our lips;

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

**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 peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

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

The Prayers of the People and 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 121 “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” | WELLESLEY

The Offering and Offertory Anthem

“Grace” | Mark Hayes

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

The text for this anthem can be found on page 378 of The United Methodist Hymnal.

**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 Prayer for Illumination*

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and your Word proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

**The Gospel Lesson* | Matthew 22:34-37; Acts 26:28 (NKJV)

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

The Sermon | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

“Moving Beyond Almost”

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 400 "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" | NETTLETON

**The Blessing and Choral Benediction*

"God Be with You till We Meet Again" | Ralph Vaughan Williams

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

God be with you till we meet again; by his counsels guide, uphold you, with his sheep securely fold you;

God be with you till we meet again.

**The Postlude*

"Final Variation on *Be Strong in the Lord*" | Proulx



One Worship Service on July 5

As we celebrate 250 years of our nation's history over the July 4th holiday weekend, we invite our church family to gather for one combined worship service on **Sunday, July 5, at 11:00 a.m.** Childcare for infants through Pre-K will be available during worship. Sunday School will not meet. We look forward to worshipping together for this Patriotic Celebration!



Summer Sunday School | July 12, 19, & 26

Throughout July, all adult Sunday School classes will meet together in **Hancock Hall from 9:30-10:30 a.m.** for our Summer Adult Sunday School series, Good News, Great Joy, All People. Each week, staff and lay leaders will share how faith formation, worship, and outreach shape our church and community while offering opportunities to learn and connects. On **July 12**, we'll explore how worship ministries share the good news of Jesus Christ through worship, guilds, hospitality, and ways to deepen our faith in worship. On **July 19**, we'll hear how ministries for children, students, and adults nurture faith and cultivate joy and discipleship (with a few surprises!). And on **July 26**, we'll discover how AFUMC serves others through missions and outreach as we work toward reaching over 10,000 people this year, ending with a hands-on project we can do together.



Back to School Blessing | August 2

Save the Date for our Back to School Blessing Sunday! Join us for a special time of prayer and encouragement as we bless our students, teachers, school staff, and families at the start of a new school year. This meaningful tradition invites our whole church family to come together in support and love. We will conclude the celebration in Hancock Hall with ministry areas from across our church, who will be there with fun giveaways, helpful information, and ways for you to get involved. As we step into a new season of discipleship this fall, come celebrate, reconnect, and discover how you can grow in faith and community this year.

MEMBER NEWS

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to family and friends in the loss of Celeste Arrington on June 14.

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to family and friends in the loss of Barrie Finney on June 14.

New Arrival

Congratulations to Caroline and Tom Coggins on the birth of their daughter, Marly Frances Coggins, who was born on June 13.

Quick Links | This QR code will allow you to quickly access information for events, giving, prayer, and more.



FINANCIAL REPORT *As of June 22, 2026* (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Actual Giving:** \$1,403,223 | **YTD Actual Expenses:** \$1,531,458

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

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