

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

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*Seventh Sunday after Pentecost*

July 12, 2026

9:30 A.M. AND 11:00 A.M.

# *The Worship of God*

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\*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.

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**THE FLOWERS IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD**

**In loving memory of** Patrick G. McKeown by Carolyn, Chris, and Ashley McKeown and Todd, Keegan, and Kathryn Ahlman.

## **GATHERING**

### *The Prelude*

“Grave and Adagio” from *Sonata No. 2* | Felix Mendelssohn  
Raina Wood, Organist

*The Welcome and Opening Prayer* | Rev. Dr. Gary Whetstone

### *The Call to Worship*

Minister: Welcome, friends, to this holy ground.

**People: We come to offer thanks; to sing and to pray.**

Minister: Welcome, friends, to this time set apart,

**People: A time to remember God's promises and abiding.**

Minister: Welcome, friends, to this community of love,

**People: where there is always welcome and room for more.**

Minister: Come, Christians, join to sing of God's never-ending love.

**All: Friends, let us worship God!**

## PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

### *\*The Processional Hymn*

UMH 158 “Come, Christians, Join to Sing” | SPANISH HYMN

Led by Alex Gilliam, Choral Scholar

### *\*The Affirmation of Faith*

“A Statement of Faith of The United Church of Canada”

**We are not alone, we live in God’s world. We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the church: to celebrate God’s presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be 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 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 526 “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” | CONVERSE

## *The Offering and Offertory Solo*

"Amazing Grace" | Iain Mundy

Offered by David Stone, Euphonium

## *\*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* | John 15:9-17

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

### *The Message* | Rev. Montana Hamby

"Summer Playlist: You've Got a Friend in Me"

*You've got a friend in me. You've got a friend in me.*

*When the road looks rough ahead, and you're miles and miles from your nice warm bed,*

*Just remember what your old pal said, boy, you've got a friend in me.*

*Yeah, you've got a friend in me.*

*You've got a friend in me. You've got a friend in me.*

*If you've got troubles, I've got 'em too. There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you.*

*We stick together, we can see it through. 'Cause you've got a friend in me.*

*Yeah, you've got a friend in me. Written by Randy Newman*

## RESPONSE

### *\*The Hymn Medley*

"Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" | TRUST IN JESUS

Verses 1 and 4

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, and to take him at his word; just to rest upon his promise, and to know, "Thus saith the Lord." Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him! How I've proved him o'er and o'er! Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust him more!

I'm so glad I learned to trust thee, precious Jesus, Savior, friend; and I know that thou art with me, wilt be with me to the end. Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him! How I've proved him o'er and o'er! Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust him more!

"O How I Love Jesus" | O HOW I LOVE JESUS

Verses 1 and 3

There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth; it sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth. O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!

It tells of one whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe; who in each sorrow bears a part that none can bear below. O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!

"I Love to Tell the Story" | HANKEY

Verses 1 and 4

I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true; it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do. I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory, to tell the old, old, story of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest. And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song, 'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long. I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory, to tell the old, old, story of Jesus and his love.

*\*The Blessing and Congregational Response*

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" | DENNIS

Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

*\*The Postlude*

"Allegro maestoso e vivace" from *Sonata No. 2* | Mendelssohn



## Murphy-Harpst Special Offering | July 19

Our congregation has the opportunity to join with other United Methodist Churches across North Georgia to put love into action for at-risk children and youth. On Sunday, July 19, we will take up a special offering for Murphy-Harpst. Over the last 100 years, Murphy-Harpst has stood in the gap for Georgia's most vulnerable children. Our donations give Murphy-Harpst the ability to provide critical services that truly heal these children and allow them to achieve their potential and lead successful lives. Please give generously and be a part of the 100-year legacy of Murphy-Harpst. Give in-person during the 9:30 or 11:00 a.m. worship service on July 19 or online by scanning the QR code in your bulletin.



## Summer Sunday School | Next Sunday

Join us Sunday, July 19, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in Hancock Hall as we continue our Summer Adult Sunday School series, *Good News, Great Joy, All People*. Next week, we will focus on "Great Joy" as we hear how ministries for children, students, and adults are nurturing our faith and fostering spiritual growth. You will learn from staff and laity across our church as we share how we can cultivate joy and discipleship at Athens First. There might even be a few joyful surprises along the way!

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister  
[natalee@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:natalee@athensfirstumc.org)



## Congregational Care Update

At Athens First, caring for one another is a vital part of who we are as a congregation. If you or someone you know would benefit from a visit, prayer, or pastoral support, we encourage you to let us know. This includes those who are hospitalized, recovering at home, navigating a difficult season, or living in an assisted living, memory care, or skilled nursing community. As circumstances change, we rely on our church family to help us stay connected with one another and ensure we don't miss anyone. Help us by letting us know about care needs so we can walk alongside one another through every season.

Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister  
[natalee@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:natalee@athensfirstumc.org)



## Thank you, Athens First UMC Family!

Dear members and participants at Athens First United Methodist Church, I don't have the words to offer enough thanks for all the love you have shown me in the past few weeks. So many of you have offered cards and gifts, given to the love offering and offered kind words remembering our time together. These have all meant so much to me. What has meant the most is the four years we have worshiped, studied, and enjoyed fellowship together. I am so grateful to you, and I will carry with me the joy you have given me as I go to my next place of service. Thank you again!

Nancy



## Fall Children's and Student Music Kickoff

Our children's and youth choirs will begin again in August, and we invite all children and students to be part of this exciting ministry. Choir is a great opportunity to make friends, learn to sing, lead in worship, and participate in fun trips and activities throughout the year. Children's choir opportunities include Cherub Choir (age 3 by September 1, 2026), Sunshine Choir (age 4), Joy Choir (Kindergarten), Lyric Choir (1st and 2nd grades), and Celebrate Choir (3rd-5th grades). Youth music opportunities include Wesleyan Youth Choir for students in grades 6-12 (no audition required) and the Youth Praise Team for high school students (audition required). Come join the fun this fall!

Janis Maxwell, Director of Children and Youth Music  
[janis@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:janis@athensfirstumc.org)



## Fall Adult Music Kickoff

Next month, our adult choirs return to the Music Suite as we kick off our 2026-2027 music season at Athens First! If you are interested in becoming a member of a choir, we invite you to join us for a rehearsal. These choirs are open to all without audition, and nursery is available during rehearsal times.

**The Sanctuary Choir** leads music for our 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services and presents concerts each season.

First rehearsal: Wednesday, August 5 (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

**The Athens First Ringers** handbell choir offers music each month in services and rings for special events each season.

First rehearsal: Sunday, August 16 (5:00-6:00 p.m.)

Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship | [ryan@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:ryan@athensfirstumc.org)

## MEMBER NEWS

### New Arrival

Congratulations to Kaite & Alex Poirot on the birth of their daughter, Camellia Grace Poirot, who was born July 1.

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### FINANCIAL REPORT *As of July 6, 2026* ([finance@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:finance@athensfirstumc.org)):

**2026 Budget:** \$3,055,000 | **YTD Actual Giving:** \$1,466,794 | **YTD Actual Expenses:** \$1,706,278

#### 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.

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### FOLLOW UP WITH A MINISTER

**Rev. Jeremy Lawson** | Senior Minister  
[jeremy@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:jeremy@athensfirstumc.org) | 404-304-3574

**Rev. Montana Hamby** | Associate Minister  
[montana@athensfirstumc.org](mailto:montana@athensfirstumc.org) | 770-633-3140

**Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby** | Associate Minister  
[natalee@athensfirstumc.org](mailto: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](mailto:prayer@athensfirstumc.org).

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CCS #12591 • CCLI #1097880

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