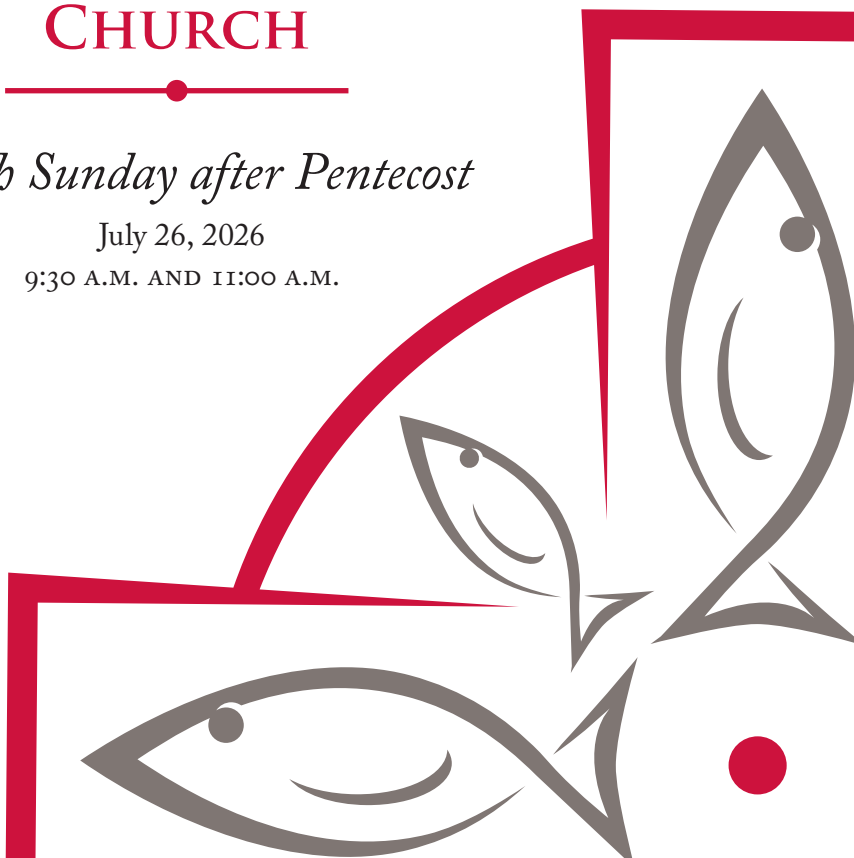


ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2026

9:30 A.M. 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 IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In loving memory of Carole Langley by her Connect and Grow Group.

GATHERING

The Prelude

"Meditation" | Gabriel Dupont

Raina Wood, Organist

The Welcome and Opening Prayer | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

The Call to Worship | from Psalm 65

Minister: By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation.

People: You are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

Minister: You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; You provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.

People: The meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain.

Minister: They shout and sing together for joy!

People: Let us shout and sing to the Rock of our salvation!

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 368 "My Hope Is Built" | THE SOLID ROCK

Led by Alex Gilliam

**The Affirmation 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 130 “God Will Take Care of You” | MARTIN

The Offering and Offertory Solo

“His Eye Is on the Sparrow” | arr. Hugh Alexander

Offered by Ava Bogarde, soprano

Why should we be discouraged? Why should the shadows come? Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heav’n and home? When love is my portion, a constant friend to me, His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me; His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me. I sing because I’m happy, I sing because I’m free, for His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me. Let not your heart be troubled: His tender word I hear, and rising on His goodness, I lose my doubt and fear. Tho’ by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see, His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me. Text by Civilla D. Martin, 1905.

**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 | Matthew 6:25-34

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

The Message | Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby

“Summer Playlist: Three Little Birds”

Don’t worry about a thing ‘cause every little thing is gonna be alright. Rise up this morning, smiled with the rising sun three little birds pitch by my doorstep, singing sweet songs of melodies pure and true saying, “This is my message to you.” Don’t worry about a thing ‘cause every little thing is gonna be alright. Written by Bob Marley

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 369 "Blessed Assurance" | ASSURANCE

**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*

"III. Allegro" from Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major, BWV 525 | Johann Sebastian Bach

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING

Athens First UMC

Back to School Blessing | August 2

Back to School Blessing Sunday is next 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.

FIRST FEST AUGUST 19

First Fest | August 19

Join us on August 19 for First Fest, our Wednesday Night fall kickoff! Enjoy a delicious taco dinner from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. then explore ministry booths featuring everything you need to know about Wednesday Night Dinners, kids and student programming, adult small groups, and other opportunities to connect on Wednesdays this fall. Small group leaders will be available to answer questions, help you find the right study, and distribute books before groups begin the following week. Children and families can also enjoy inflatables, gaga ball, games, music, and more in the gym. Dinner is \$5 per person. Come share a meal, have fun, and find your place on Wednesday Nights at AFUMC!



The MUSIC
MINISTRY
ATHENS FIRST UMC

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



New Assistive Listening Option Available

We are pleased to offer a new app-based listening system in our sanctuary. To use our assistive listening system, you'll need a smartphone and Bluetooth-enabled headphones or hearing aids. Simply download the Listen WiFi app and then connect to the dedicated WiFi network in the sanctuary. Audio will stream directly to your device, and you can adjust the volume just like any other app. Detailed instructions are available in our Narthex or email Mark Maxwell to help get connected.

Mark Maxwell, Director of Media Services | mark@athensfirstumc.org



Student Ministry Fall Retreats

Register today for our 2026 Student Ministry Fall Retreats! The Momentum High School Retreat will travel to Camp Glisson the weekend of **August 15-16** for a one-night retreat of worship, fellowship, and zip lining. The Spark Retreat will take place the weekend of **August 21-23** at Camp Glisson. Spark is open to all Middle School age students and includes retreat break outs designed for both Confirmation and Middle School ages.

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



Fall Confirmation 2026

Registration is now open for Fall Confirmation 2026. Confirmation is one of the milestones of faith that we celebrate at Athens First UMC within our Student Ministry. All Grade 6 students are invited to join our Confirmation Class of 2026 as we grow and learn together about what we believe and what it means to be an active participant in the life of our congregation. Confirmation begins with our **Confirmation Retreat at Camp Glisson the weekend of August 21-23** and meets on Sunday nights during the fall. Register your student today and prepare to celebrate this next part of their faith journey.

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

MEMBER NEWS

In Memoriam

Butch Clifton
July 14, 2026

Rev. Ken Kulp
July 19, 2026

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Charlotte Knight and her family in the loss of her mother, Charlotte Adams Clark, on July 9.

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to family and friends in the loss of Butch Clifton on July 14.

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to family and friends in the loss of Rev. Ken Kulp on July 19.

FINANCIAL REPORT *As of July 20, 2026* (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Actual Giving:** \$1,559,239 | **YTD Actual Expenses:** \$1,818,934

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
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