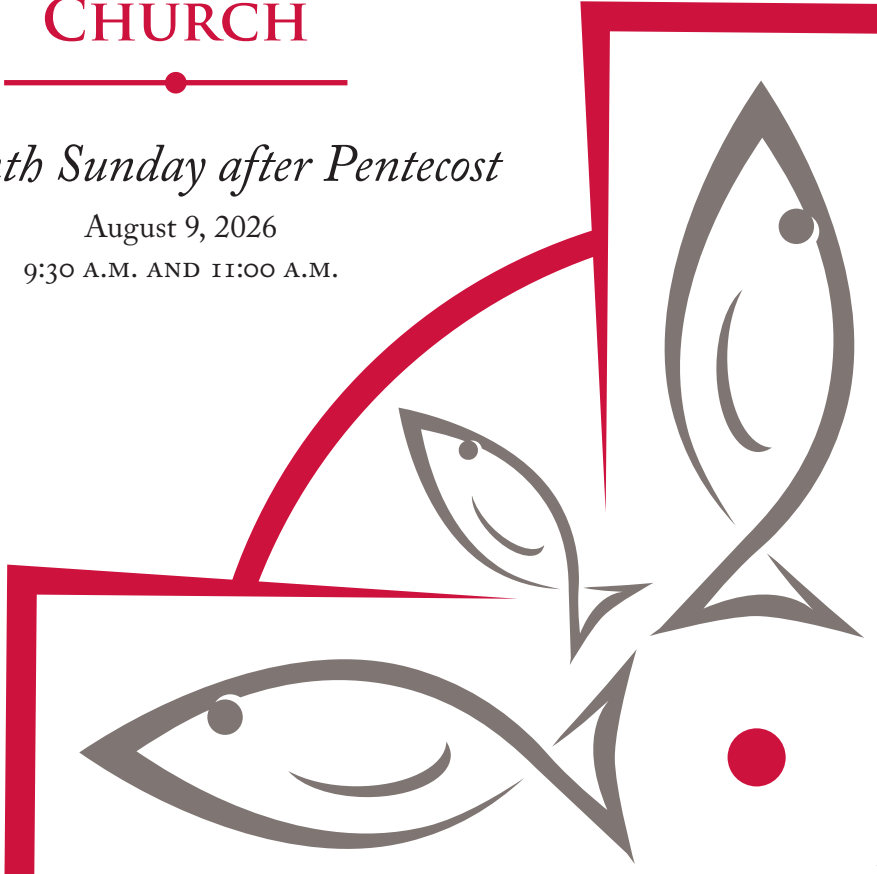


ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

August 9, 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 Nancy and Chester Witherington by Blake Witherington, Leslie Muscarella, and Carole Lumpkin.

GATHERING

The Prelude

"Holy, Holy, Holy" | Calvin Hampton

Raina Wood, Organist

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

The Choral Introit

"Eat This Bread" | BERTHIER

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

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 73 "O Worship the King" | LYONS

**The Prayer of Confession*

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All pray in silence.

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory 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 Offering and Offertory Anthem

"Open My Eyes" | Gilbert Martin

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

The text of this anthem can be found on page 454 of The United Methodist Hymnal.

**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 | John 9:1-12

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

The Message | “Getting Your Hands Dirty” | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image, delivered us from captivity, and made covenant to be our sovereign God. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sung: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name, who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine.* Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

Sung: **Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.**

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, given for you.

Sung: **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.**

*During the singing, those serving communion are invited to the Chancel. *In the United Methodist Church, grape juice is used for the Sacrament of Holy Communion.*

The Receiving of the Bread and Cup

At Athens First United Methodist Church, all are invited to commune at Christ's table. If you need to be served in your pew, please call this to the attention of an usher. Gluten-free communion elements are available in the Narthex. The altar is open for prayer.

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response* | UMH 378 "Amazing Grace" | AMAZING GRACE

**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* | "Trumpet Tune in C Major" | David N. Johnson



Wesleyan Youth Choir Kick-off | Today!

The Wesleyan Youth Choir returns today, August 9! We meet each week in the choir room from **4:30 to 5:45 p.m.**, and most students continue on to Dinner and Encounter afterward.

We welcome all students in grades 6-12 to be part of WYC. Our choir sings in worship, in the community, and even across the United States on choir tour!

We hope you'll come sing with us and become part of our choir family.

Janis Maxwell, Director of Children's and Youth Music Ministry
janis@athensfirstumc.org



Student Ministry Kick-off | Tonight!

Kick off the new school year with Students at Athens First UMC Students tonight at Inflatapalooza! Get ready for an unforgettable evening as we launch our fall semester of Encounter with the most fun you've ever had with inflatables. Come test your skills on an oversized obstacle course, slide down the water slide, and challenge your friends in the Wrecking Ball Arena! The fun begins at 5:45 p.m. with dinner in Hancock Hall, followed by worship and all the inflatable action. Pick-up is at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$20 to help offset the meals and inflatable rentals. Don't miss out on one of the most exciting nights of the semester. We can't wait to see you there!

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



5th Grade Retreat | September 11-13

Calling all 5th graders! Join us at Camp Glisson **September 11-13** for an incredible weekend filled with faith, fun, and discovery. This year's theme is "Faith-ology," a fun exploration of faith stories from scripture combined with the wonders of science and nature. We'll dive into Bible stories, explore the wonders of science and nature, and enjoy worship, hands-on workshops, drama, music, and crafts. Plus, campers will experience some of Camp Glisson's favorite activities, including a campfire and ziplining into the lake! The cost is \$190, and the deadline to register is August 23. Don't miss this weekend of friends and adventure!

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



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!

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



Fall Adult Choir Retreat | August 21 and 22

All singers are invited to join the Sanctuary Choir for Fall Retreat! The retreat is scheduled for Friday, **August 21 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.** and Saturday, **August 22 from 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** This year's retreat location is the **Hugh Hodgson School of Music** at the University of Georgia. We will gather for devotion, fellowship, technique, and dive into music for fall. For those interested in singing at Athens First, this is the perfect time to join the choir! Scan the QR code to register.

Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship | ryan@athensfirstumc.org



2026 Fall Confirmation

Registration is closing soon for Fall Confirmation. Confirmation is one of the milestones of faith that we celebrate at Athens First UMC within our Student Ministry. All 6th grade 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

Wedding Bells

Congratulations to Caroline Block and John McMahon IV on their marriage on August 1 in our sanctuary.

FINANCIAL REPORT *As of August 5, 2026* (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Total Revenue:** \$1,981,007 | **YTD Total Expenses:** \$1,923,580

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. Lisa Lawrenz | Associate Minister
lisa@athensfirstumc.org | 706-338-6952

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