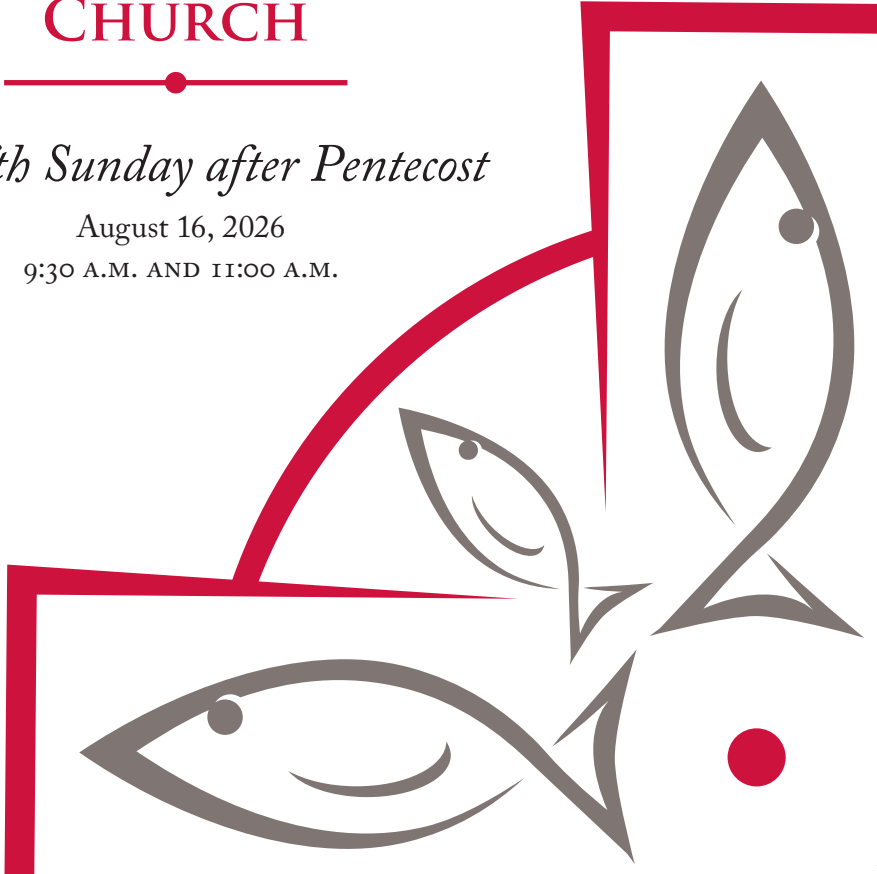


ATHENS FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 16, 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.

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

In loving memory of her father, Sidney Dickerson, by Dianne Wall.

Children's Church returns today at 11:00 a.m.

Pre-K and younger are welcome to be dropped off in the nursery prior to service.

Kindergarten through Grade 4 are invited to exit with the Kids Ministry team during the hymn following the Prayers of the People. They can be picked up in Room 320 following the service.

GATHERING

The Prelude

"Andante" from *Sonata in C minor* | Joseph Rheinberger
Raina Wood, Organist

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

The Choral Introit

"O Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord" | Charles Callahan
Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving and show ourselves glad in him with psalms. Let us make a joyful noise with songs of praise! Psalm 95:1-2

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 166 “All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine” | SINE NOMINE

**The Affirmation of Faith* | “The Apostles’ Creed”

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. 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 Responsive Reading | Psalm 19

Choir: Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy love.

All singing: **Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy love.**

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them.

Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.

All singing: **Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy love.**

The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.

The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.

They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;

They are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

All singing: **Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy love.**

By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me.

Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

All singing: **Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of Thy love.**

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 463 "Lord, Speak to Me" | CANONBURY

Verses 1-4

During the singing of the hymn at 11:00 a.m., children Kindergarten to grade 4 are dismissed through the front, lectern side doors to attend Children's Church. They can be picked up at the conclusion of worship in Room 320.

The Offering and Offertory Anthem

"With a Voice of Singing" | Martin Shaw

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir

With a voice of singing declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia! Utter it even unto the ends of the earth. The Lord hath delivered His people, Alleluia! O be joyful in God, all ye lands. O sing praises to the honor of His name, make His praise to be glorious. With a voice of singing, declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia!

**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 | James 3:1-12

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

The Message | “A Double-Edged Sword” | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response* | UMH 451 “Be Thou My Vision” | SLANE

**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* | “Carillon” | Louis Vierne



College Lunch | Starts TODAY!

Welcome back, college and graduate students! Whether you're brand new to Athens or returning for another year, we'd love to have you join us after the 11:00 a.m. service this Sunday as we kick off a new semester of College Ministry with Willy's Mexicana Grill. College Lunch is a weekly gathering place at the heart of our college community and the best place to start getting connected. Come meet new people, reconnect with friends, hear about what's coming up this semester, and find a community that can become a home away from home!

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



Children's Music Ministry | Meet the Teacher

The Children's Choirs can find their classrooms and meet their teachers on Wednesday, **August 19**. Teachers and leaders will be in their classrooms from 5:00 - 5:15 p.m. to say hello to old friends and new ones, too. Drop by on your way to First Fest to see your choir friends! Our theme for 2026-27 is "Heroes of the Faith." We will learn and sing about heroes in the Bible and how we can be a superhero with the many special powers that God gives us. We can't wait to be back in the choir room with you!

Janis Maxwell, Director of Children's and Youth Music Ministry
janis@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! Register using the QR code.

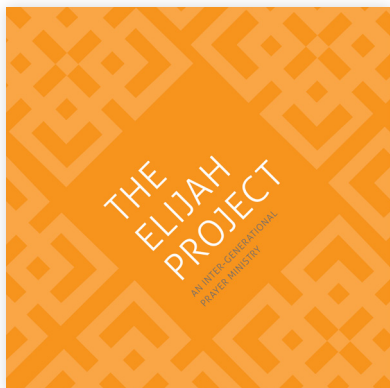
Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby, Associate Minister
natalee@athensfirstumc.org



New Member Sunday | August 23

You're invited to take the next step in becoming part of the AFUMC community! Our next Membership Sunday is **August 23**, when we will welcome new members through their commitment of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. If you would like to join the church on August 23, we invite you to attend our **New Member Meeting** on Tuesday, **August 18 at 6:00 p.m.**, which will help prepare you for membership and give you an opportunity to learn more about Athens First UMC. Please email Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby or Caroline Anne Chapura if you would like to attend and join on August 23. We would be delighted to welcome you!

Caroline Anne Chapura, Asst. Director of Discipleship and Hospitality
carolineanne@athensfirstumc.org



The Elijah Project | Registration Open

The Elijah Project is an intergenerational prayer ministry connecting adults and youth in our congregation through consistent, expectant prayer. Students and adults are paired as prayer partners to encourage one another and build community throughout the school year.

How does it work? Adults and students sign up to participate, and each student is paired with an adult prayer partner. Partners stay connected through cards and email, sharing prayers and encouragement throughout the school year.

Registration is now open for both students and congregation members. Sign up to pray, encourage, and grow together!

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



High School Mission Trip | Registration Open

We are excited for the return of our High School Spring Break Mission Trip to Guatemala the week of **April 3-10, 2027**! All of our students grades 9 to 12 are invited to join us as we travel together to serve in the community of San Juan as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Our mission team will serve alongside Impacto Ministry connecting with some of the youngest and oldest members of the community through Bible stories, crafts, games, and food delivery. Nestled along the volcano crater Lake Atitlan, the beauty of Guatemala is the only thing that compares to the beauty of the people your student will meet! Registration for the High School Mission Trip is online.

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

MEMBER NEWS

Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Marcus Gresham and his family in the loss of his mother, Sallie D. Battle, on August 2.

FINANCIAL REPORT *As of August 11, 2026* (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Total Revenue:** \$2,041,500 | **YTD Total Expenses:** \$1,970,769

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

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