

FILLED TO
Overflowing

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 | 9:30 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 Virginia P. Whitehead by Anne Whitehead Garner and Bob Whitehead.

In loving memory of Ed Michna, beloved husband, Daddy, and Poppie by Pam Michna and her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild, Charlie.

GATHERING

The Prelude

"Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling" | Timothy Albrecht
Raina Wood, Organist

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

The Call to Worship

"It Is Well with My Soul" | arr. Lloyd Larson
Rung by the Athens First Ringers; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 66 “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven” | LAUDA ANIMA

**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 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 707 “Hymn of Promise” | PROMISE

During the singing of the hymn at 11:00 a.m., children grades Kindergarten through grade four 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

“This is My Father’s World” | arr. Ēriks Ešenvālds

Sung by the Chamber Ensemble; Macey Smith, soprano

The text for this anthem may be found on page 144 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 | Matthew 13:1-23

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

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

“Seeds and Soil”

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 581 “Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service” | BEACH SPRING

**The Blessing and Choral Benediction* | John Rutter

**The Postlude*

“Allegro” from *Concerto in b-minor* | Johann Gottfried Walther



We're Glad You're Here | If you are visiting with us, we welcome you to Athens First! We invite you to visit our Hospitality Table in the Narthex following the service.

Membership at Athens First | If you are interested in becoming a member of our church community, please contact Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby (natalee@athensfirstumc.org) or Caroline Anne Chapura (carolineanne@athensfirstumc.org).

College Lunch | College and graduate students, join us in Hancock Hall for lunch and fellowship following the 11:00 a.m. service.



College Hangout | September 17

College and graduate students are invited to join us Thursday, September 17, at the State Botanical Garden for a night of hanging out and fun! We'll have Publix Subs and some fun activities to do together as we relax and enjoy the garden. Meet us at 6:00 p.m. in the main parking lot of the botanical gardens! Let us know you're coming by registering online using the QR code above or texting Natalee at 404-414-1701. Carpool is available if you need a ride.

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



Men's Breakfast | September 19

The Athens First Men's Ministry will be hosting a Men's Breakfast on Saturday, September 19, from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. in Hancock Hall. Bob Beckwith from the UGA Wesley Foundation will be speaking, and Ward Simonton will share a devotional.

Men of all ages are encouraged to attend and bring friends and neighbors! The cost is \$15 per person.

Please register on Realm or by calling the church office, (706) 543-1442, by Wednesday, September 16!

Rev. Lisa Lawrenz, Associate Minister | lisa@athensfirstumc.org



Wellroot Special Offering | September 20

Next Sunday, our congregation will join churches across the North Georgia Annual Conference to support Wellroot's Amazing Grace Special Offering. For more than 155 years, Wellroot has partnered with churches to care for children, youth, and families. Their evidence-based programs are designed to keep families together whenever possible, provide short-term foster families when needed, and nurture and educate teens and young adults to break the cycle of trauma in their lives. In 2025, Wellroot served over 3,840 children and families. This special offering will be taken during both worship services. You may also give online or mail a check to the church office with "Wellroot" in the memo.



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

New Member Sunday | September 20

You're invited to take the next step in becoming part of the AFUMC community! Our next Membership Sunday is September 20, when we will welcome new members through their commitment of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Please email Rev. Dr. Natalee Dukes Hamby or Caroline Anne Chapura if you would like to join on September 20. We would be delighted to welcome you!

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



Consecration Sunday & BBQ | October 4

We will be celebrating Consecration Sunday on Sunday, October 4. We hope you will make plans to join us for an amazing morning of worship, followed by our annual churchwide BBQ that evening. Our annual Churchwide BBQ will begin at 5:00 p.m. in Hancock Hall, and all are invited to attend. Henry Garrard and his family will be providing their famous BBQ, while Mitch Bain will be serving up our mouthwatering sides and desserts. Join us as we celebrate all that God has done, is doing, and will continue to do in the coming year at Athens First UMC!



Congregational Care Update

At Athens First, it is our privilege to walk alongside you through life's hard moments and celebrate with you in its joys. If you or someone close to you could use a phone call, a visit, prayer, or simply a reminder that you are loved by the people of Athens First, please let Rev. Lisa Lawrenz know. This includes times of illness, hospitalization, recovery, grief, a new baby, or other significant life transitions. If you are not sure whether we already know, please reach out! We would much rather hear about a need ten times than not hear about it at all. Thank you for helping us care for one another and reminding our community that each person is loved and never alone.

Rev. Lisa Lawrenz, Associate Minister | lisa@athensfirstumc.org

SERMON NOTES:

WEEKLY MENUS

college
lunch

TODAY'S MENU: Olive Garden

All college and graduate students are invited to join us for a **free lunch** in Hancock Hall following the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Wednesday
NIGHT
DINNER

SEPTEMBER 16: Shrimp & Grits, served with a side salad.

Register by noon on Tuesday | Scan the Steeple QR Code to register online or Call the Church Office.

FINANCIAL REPORT As of September 9, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | YTD Total Revenue: \$2,269,707 | YTD Total Expenses: \$2,274,450

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

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