

FILLED TO
Overflowing

CONSECRATION
SUNDAY

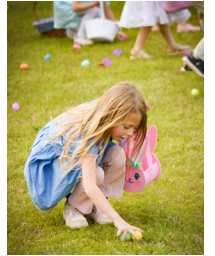
ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OCTOBER 4, 2026 | 9:30 AND 11:00 A.M.



*May the God of hope
fill you with all joy
and peace as you trust
in him, so that you may
overflow with hope
by the power
of the Holy Spirit.*

ROMANS 15:13





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 Alice and Luther Burch by Devereux and Dave Burch.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“The Emperor’s Fanfare” | Antonio Soler

Brandon Craswell and Tyler Jones, trumpets; Peter Riggs, horn; Thomas Minor, trombone;
David Stone, euphonium; Ethan Sherlock, timpani; Raina Wood, Organist;
Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

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

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 577 “God of Grace and God of Glory” | CWM RHONDDA

**God of grace and God of glory; on thy people pour thy power; crown thine ancient church’s story;
bring her bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage; for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn thy Christ, assail his ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us; free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days.

Cure thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to thy control; shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

Interlude

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore; let the search for thy salvation be our glory evermore. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore, serving thee whom we adore.

**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

"O Clap Your Hands" | Ralph Vaughan Williams

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir with the Brass Ensemble

O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible: He is a great King over all the earth. God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is King of all the earth; sing ye praises everyone that hath understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness. Sing praises unto our King, sing praises. Psalm 47

**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 | Luke 15:11-24

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

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

"Welcome Home"

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. Renew our communion with your Church throughout the world, and strengthen it in every nation and among every people to witness faithfully in your name. 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 Consecration of Our Gifts

At the direction of the ushers, the congregation is invited to present stewardship cards for the coming year by placing cards in the basket near your designated communion station and receiving 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.

The Prayer for Consecration

Most gracious God, we offer this gift as an expression of our love for you and our neighbor. Guide us along the path of giving that binds us together and connects us with you. Everything we are and all that we have is a gift that comes from you: a gift that never fails and always renews. In thanksgiving for our life and for the life of our church, we give glory to you, the source of faith, hope and love; now and forever. Amen.

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 102 “Now Thank We All Our God” | NUN DANKET

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices, who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us; and keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed; and free us from all ills, in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given; the Son, and him who reigns with them in highest heaven; the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore; for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

**The Blessing*

**The Choral Benediction* | John Rutter

**The Postlude*

“Carillon” | Herbert Murrill



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.



Churchwide BBQ | TODAY!

Join us for our Churchwide BBQ this evening in Hancock Hall! Doors will open at 4:30 p.m., with dinner beginning at 5:00 p.m. Henry Garrard and his family will be serving up their famous BBQ, and Mitch Bain will be preparing delicious sides. You're invited to bring a favorite dessert to share; please remember that Athens First is a peanut-free campus.

Throughout dinner, we'll put our Athens First knowledge to the test with Athens First Trivia and enjoy an evening of food and celebration as we give thanks for all God has done, is doing, and will continue to do in the year ahead at Athens First UMC.

We hope you'll join us for this special evening together!



Wednesday Night Dinner Missions Night October 7

Join us Wednesday, October 7, as we collect cold weather clothing items and put together hygiene kits for The Sparrow's Nest's "Keep Warm Project." Cold weather clothing items include: new or gently used jackets and coats of all sizes (including children's sizes), hats, gloves, and scarves. These items will then be taken over to The Sparrow's Nest and will be distributed to our neighbors in need in preparation for this coming winter. This mission opportunity will take place in Hancock Hall during our Wednesday Night Meal time from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Sarah Beth Barger, Director of Missions | sarahbeth@athensfirstumc.org



Agape Adult UGA Tailgate at Wire Park October 10

Join the Agape Adults Ministry for a fun afternoon of fellowship and football at our UGA Tailgate on October 10 at Wire Park (1725 Electric Ave, Watkinsville, GA 30677)! Tailgate festivities will begin at game time. Bring your favorite ballpark chair, blanket, and plenty of Bulldog spirit. Families are encouraged to eat beforehand or purchase food from one of the restaurants on site and bring it over to enjoy with the group at the tailgate. We look forward to cheering on the Dawgs together!

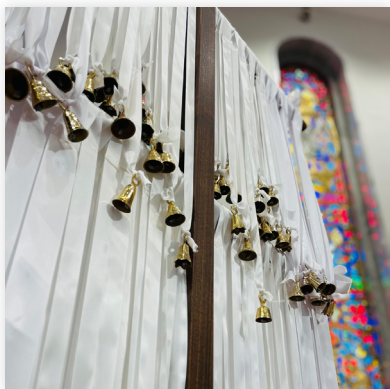
Emma Baughn, Asst. Director of Kids at Athens First and AGAPE Coordinator | emma@athensfirstumc.org



Jazz Vesper Service | October 18

Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 18 at 7:00 p.m., and invite a friend for an evening service with Theodicy Jazz Collective and the Sanctuary Choir. Theodicy Jazz has held worship residencies around the world, including the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Washington National Cathedral, and Canterbury Cathedral. This service, entitled "Love Is the Way," will explore the hope, justice, compassion, and love of the Spirituals and freedom songs. You won't want to miss this special jazz service!

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



All Saints Bell Banners

Ringling bells for the faithful departed is a long-standing tradition at Athens First. For All Saints Day, we invite you to remember friends and loved ones who have passed by hanging a bell in their memory on one of our bell banners. Beginning October 4, visit one of the bell tables in the connecting hall or near the front desk to participate. Simply fill out a Remembrance Card on the table and drop it in the collection basket, choose a bell, and hang it on the banner. As the full bell banners process into worship on November 1, the sweet sounds of the many bells will remind us of the presence of the saints who touched our lives and offered us a glimpse of the love of Christ.

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



Older Adult Ministry Dillard House Trip October 29

Join us for a fall day trip to North Georgia on October 29! Our Older Adult Ministry will enjoy lunch and explore the grounds of the Dillard House, spend the afternoon in historic downtown Clayton, and take in the beautiful fall foliage along the way. We will load onto the bus at Athens First at 9:00 a.m. and arrive at the Dillard House around 11:00 a.m. with time to explore the grounds before lunch. Following lunch, we will head downtown for the afternoon, beginning our return journey to the church at 3:00 p.m. Cost for the trip is \$75, which includes lunch and transportation. Sign up on Realm or by emailing Rev. Lisa Lawrenz or calling the church office.

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

SERMON NOTES:

WEEKLY MENUS

college lunch

TODAY'S MENU: Brunch

*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

OCTOBER 7: Baked Ham served with rice and gravy, squash casserole, and a roll.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT As of September 29, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

2026 Budget: \$3,055,000 | **YTD Total Revenue:** \$2,480,327 | **YTD Total Expenses:** \$2,462,107

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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