Athens First United Methodist Church

The Service of Confirmation

November 15, 2026

9:30 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 Betty and Bob Poss, Mike Williams, and Bobby Poss by Peggy Sue Williams and Cindy Mills.

GATHERING

The Prelude
"Pastorella in F Major, BWV 590: Movement I" | Johann Sebastian Bach
Raina Wood, Organist

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

The Call to Worship
"Over My Head" | MUSIC IN THE AIR
Sung by the Wesleyan Youth Choir
Janis Maxwell, Director of Children's and Youth Music Ministry; Beth Rector, accompanist

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

**The Processional Hymn*

UMH 545 “The Church’s One Foundation” | AURELIA

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.
From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder we see her sore oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
and soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
till, with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

**The Affirmation of Faith* | Written by the 2026 Confirmation Class
Art Woodall

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things with grace and love. We believe there are no limits to God's love, and God has a vision for each of us. We believe in Jesus Christ, who is God's only Son, our Lord and Savior, who was both human and God. We believe Jesus healed the hurting and gave his life for all people. He was crucified, died, and was buried and on the third day he rose from the grave. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who was present at creation and is present in our lives helping us remember the truth of Jesus Christ. We believe in God's grace, a gift we cannot earn, given before we are born, and lasting forever. We believe in God's grace and the forgiveness of sins, and that God promises us life everlasting. We believe in the church as a community of faith where everyone is welcome and all are accepted. We believe we are called to the church to worship, be baptized, and gather together at the Lord's Table, and that God sends us out to serve. We believe that God was, is, and always will be with us. 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. Amen.

**The Passing of the Peace*

The Peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

The Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer | Rev. Lisa Lawrenz

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

The Offertory Anthem

"To God Be the Glory" | Vickie Hancock Wright

Sung by the Wesleyan Youth Choir

To God be the glory, great things he hath done; so loved he the world that he gave us his Son. Who yielded his life an atonement for sin, and opened the life-gate that all may go in. Praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice! Praise the Lord, let the people rejoice! Come to the Father through Jesus the Son, and give him the glory great things he hath done. Great things He hath taught us, great things he hath done. And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son. But purer and higher and greater will be our wonder our vict'ry when Jesus we see!

**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 7:24-29

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

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

"How Firm a Foundation"

RESPONSE

The Service of Confirmation

**The Profession of Faith*

Respond as directed

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin? **I do.**

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves? **I do.**

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races? **I do.**

**The Parent Response*

Respond as directed

Parents, will you nurture these children in Christ's holy church, that by your teaching and example they may be guided to accept God's grace for themselves, to profess their faith openly, and to lead a Christian life? **We will.**

**The Congregational Response*

Respond as directed

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life and include these persons now before you in your care?

With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.

The Ritual of Confirmation

**The Welcome of the 2026 Confirmands and New Members*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I commend these persons to your love and care. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

We rejoice to recognize you as members of Christ's holy church, and bid you welcome to this congregation of the United Methodist Church. With you, we renew our vows to uphold it by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. With God's help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that, surrounded by steadfast love, you may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.

**The Hymn of Response*

UMH 451 "Be Thou My Vision" | SLANE

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art. Thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord; thou and thou only, first in my heart, great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, my victory won, may I reach heave's joys, O bright heaven's Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

The Introduction of the Confirmands

Please see the end of the bulletin for a photo directory of the 2026 Confirmands.

**The Blessing and Recessional*

**The Postlude*

"We Believe in One True God, BWV 680" | Bach



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 Advent Study 2026

Join us this Christmas season for our churchwide Advent study *Advent Can Still Change the World: Bringing Christmas Past Into Christmas Present* by Josh Scott.



Christmas is a nostalgic time for many, often with memories of twinkling lights, presents, carols, meals around the table, and time spent with family. This 4-week study brings the warm feelings of Christmas cheer into the past as we navigate the historical and cultural background surrounding the birth of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Discover how Old Testament prophecy finds its fulfillment in the incarnation of Jesus. Together, we'll see how the Christmas story can bring fresh meaning to our hopes, challenges, and celebrations this season.

Rebecca Cochran, Small Groups Coordinator
rebecca@athensfirstumc.org

Register on Realm to participate with a Small Group, Sunday School class, or for personal study. When registered, books are available for pickup at the front desk. The following Sunday School classes and Small Groups plan to participate in this year's Advent Study:

- Open Doors
- High Point
- Marthas and Marys
- Outreach
- Pathfinders
- Stepping Stones
- Partners
- HC Tuck
- Men's Wednesday Night Bible Study
- Tuesday Women's Bible Study (12:30 p.m.)
- College & Young Adult Small Group
- Wednesday Night Bible Study
- Friday Morning Mom's Group

The 2026 Confirmands

*These students are receiving the Sacrament of Baptism



McGinnis Revere Allen



Elizabeth Kate Austin



Ansley Elizabeth Bates



Robert Poss Bixby



Justin Davis Brooks, Jr.



Charlotte Kathleen Broun



Jackson Baylor Bush



Cason Lee Byce



Isabelle Marie Cochran



Clayton Elizabeth Coffee



Paul Winn Collar, Jr.



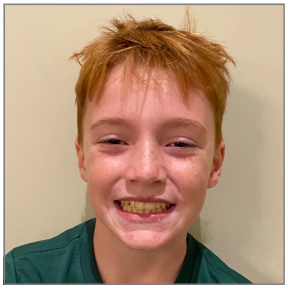
Flora Mae Crisler



Ruby McCord Dasher



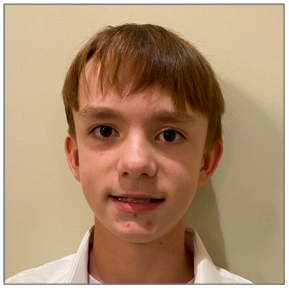
Benjamin Pierce Douglas, Jr.



Quinn Fletcher Eady*



August Michael Eckles



Evan Joseph Fernandez*



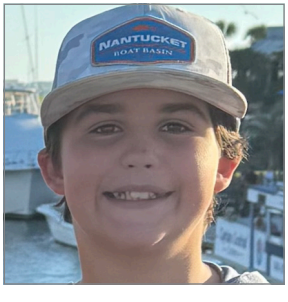
Richard John Ford IV



Robert James Gravely



William Alexander Hall



William Shepherd Hardin



Millie Moss Heery



Weston Alan Hodge



Campbell Cutrer Hopkins



Marian Elaine Jackson



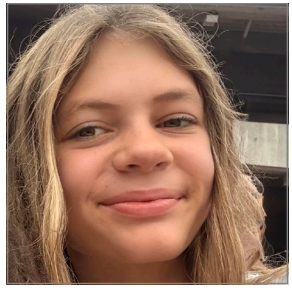
Piper Wynne Kikly



John Lumpkin Kinney



Henry Matthew Laflin



Quinn Cecilia Laflin



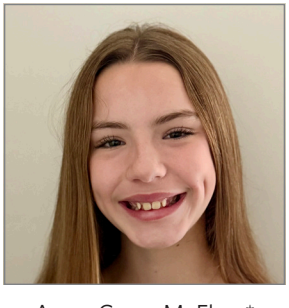
Anna Madisen Liebowitz



Jacob Paul Liebowitz



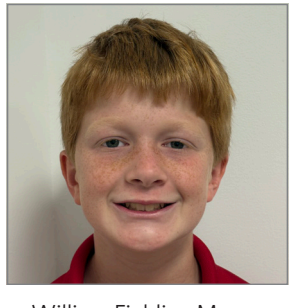
James Anderson Lystad*



Avery Grace McElroy*



William Arthur Melendez



William Fielding Moore



Adelyn Raegan Newell*



Nora Catherine O'Neill



Mary Tatum Rooker



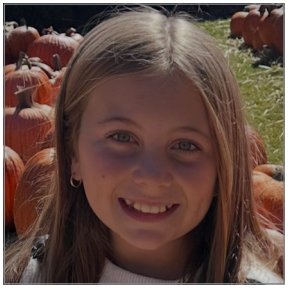
Anna Jane Stephens



Charles Russell Stewart



Giles Edgar Talley



Caldwell Elizabeth Tuttle



Riggs Coleman Williams



Burch Duckett Wilson



Arthur Neil Woodall*



Charles Akers Woodward



Sweet Life Friendsgiving | November 19

Let's gather for a Sweet Life Thanksgiving covered dish meal with friends! Join us on Thursday, November 19, at 12:00 p.m. in Hancock Hall. We will provide the turkey; you bring your favorite side or dessert to share. We will also be collecting new socks to support the work of our missions ministry. Bring a pair, or a few, and help us share a little warmth with our neighbors this season! Let us know you're planning to attend by registering online or by calling the church office by Wednesday at noon.

Rebecca Cochran, Small Groups and Older Adult Ministry Coordinator
rebecca@athensfirstumc.org



New Member Sunday | November 22

You're invited to take the next step in becoming part of the AFUMC community! Our next Membership Sunday is November 22, 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 November 22. We would be delighted to welcome you!

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



Family Advent Breakfast | November 29

The 2026 Advent Breakfast is set for Sunday, November 29. Our entire church family is invited for a meaningful, joy-filled morning together. Enjoy a delicious breakfast served by Waffle House beginning at 9:45 a.m. in Hancock Hall. Breakfast is $15 per person. Through Scripture and readings, we'll discover the meaning of Advent and prepare our hearts for Christmas. Each family will receive *The Legend of the Candy Cane*, a story that connects this sweet Christmas treat to Jesus and reminds us of His love. Children are invited to gather for a Christmas Processional after the program, ending with the lighting of the Sanctuary Christmas trees during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Following the tree lighting, children will be dismissed to Children's Church. **Register online by November 20**.

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

Quick Links | This QR code will allow you to quickly access information for events, giving, prayer, and more.



Baby Recognition | December 13

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also celebrate the babies born into our church family in the last year. We hope you will join us during the 11:00 a.m. worship service on December 13 as we recognize your precious baby and family. We will gather in Hancock Hall at 10:30 a.m. for a reception and time of fellowship before we move to the Sanctuary for worship. Families, please register by Wednesday, December 9, to let us know if you will be attending worship and how you would like your family's names to be printed on our commemorative Baby Recognition card.

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



Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Join us on Thursday, December 24, as we celebrate Christmas Eve together!

3:00 p.m. Children's Candlelight Service*

5:00 p.m. Candlelight Service | Wesleyan Youth Choir and Brass*

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service | Sanctuary Choir and Brass*

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Holy Communion | Sanctuary Choir and Strings

**Nursery care is available at the 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m. services.*



Rock Lobsters | January 10

Join Athens First UMC for a fun afternoon as we cheer on the Rock Lobsters at Akins Ford Arena on Sunday, January 10, at 4:05 p.m. Our Wesleyan Youth Choir will be performing the National Anthem to open the game, and we would love to fill the stands with support. Anyone who would like to sit closest to the choir and other church families may select seats in or near Section 118 where the Youth Choir will be seated.

Students (WYC and Non-Choir) can register through Realm so our leaders can handle tickets. **Family members and congregants** who would like to attend the game can purchase tickets directly through the Athens Rock Lobsters group ticketing portal. Scan the QR code to register.

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

MEMBER NEWS

In Memoriam
Edd Lowe
November 6, 2026

Sympathy
Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to Melissa Halbach and her family in the loss of her mother, Lynne Lemke Menson, on October 29.

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to family and friends in the loss of Edd Lowe on November 6.

Baptisms
We celebrate that Camellia Grace Poirot, daughter of Katie and Alex Poirot, received the sacrament of baptism on November 8.

WEEKLY MENUS

college lunch

TODAY'S MENU: BBQ

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

NOVEMBER 18: Spaghetti with Meat Sauce *served with a side salad and garlic bread.*

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

FINANCIAL REPORT *As of November 10, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):*

2026 Budget: $3,055,000 **| YTD Total Revenue:** $2,990,618 **| YTD Total Expenses:** $2,889,874

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