

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sungjoo Kim, Organ

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2026 | 3:00 P.M.



*This concert is given
to the Glory of God*

*and in honor of church organists, whose
faithful artistry lifts prayer, inspires
rejoicing, and sustains all who hear
with resounding hope.*

Program

Introduction and Passacaglia in D Minor

Max Reger
1873-1916

Meditation on 'Amazing Grace'

arr. Frederick Swann
1931-2022

Celebration on 'Holy, Holy, Holy'

arr. Rhonda Furr
b. 1953

Prelude and Fugue in G Major, BWV 541

Johann Sebastian Bach
1685-1750

~ 15 Minute Intermission ~

First Sonata: Symphony in D Minor, Op. 42

Alexandre Guilmant
1837-1911

I. *Introduction (Largo e maestoso) et Allegro*

II. *Pastorale: Andante quasi Allegretto*

III. *Final: Allegro assai*

*Reception to Follow
in Hancock Hall*

Program Notes

As a composer, **Max Reger** wrote numerous orchestral and chamber music as well as a large amount of organ works. Reger stands between late Romanticism and early modernism, but he was both a traditionalist and a modernist who combined old forms, contrapuntal technique, symphonic idiom, Romantic virtuosic style, and his own characteristic style of chromaticism in his compositions. Reger, greatly influenced by Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, possessed prodigious contrapuntal technique and a copious imagination, and his harmony is for the most part a complex post-Wagnerian style of extreme chromaticism and modulation. Reger was Music Director at Leipzig University Church, Professor at the Royal Conservatory of Leipzig, and Music Director at the court of Duke George II of Saxe-Meiningen. ***Introduction and Passacaglia in D Minor***, composed in 1899, is one of his most popular and widely performed pieces. It was written for the *Schönberger Orgelalbum*, which intended to fund the new organ in *Schönberg im Taunus*. *Introduction* has a brief fifteen measure statement with a great intensity using full organ. After that, the passacaglia theme appears with the quiet flutes and strings and is repeated in the manuals and pedals with variations. Then the *Passacaglia* gradually builds up to full organ, and the ending is highly dramatic in D Major.

Frederick Swann was an American organist, choral conductor, and composer. He graduated from Northwestern University and Union Theological Seminary. As one of the most well-known organists, he was the former Director of Music and Organist at Riverside Church in New York City and Organist Emeritus of the Crystal Cathedral and the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles. He also served as president of the American Guild of Organists. ***Meditation on 'Amazing Grace'*** starts with a pedal solo, which states the hymn melody once through, and then fully harmonized hymn comes next in a different key. This piece is a peaceful, meditative arrangement of the most beloved hymn by John Newton with series of modulation and a quiet coda at the end.

Rhonda Furr, an organist, composer, and educator, is Professor Emerita of Houston Baptist University. She received her Bachelor and Master's degrees in music from Western Carolina University and completed a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ and musicology at Southern Seminary in Kentucky. Her teachers include Boyd Jones, Donald Hustad, and Hugh McElrath. ***Celebration on 'Holy, Holy, Holy'*** is one of her most popular pieces and well suitable for worship services and concerts. This creative arrangement consists of an improvisatory opening and variations based on the well-known hymn tune by John B. Dykes, NICAIA. At the end, the improvisatory toccata section concludes with a triumphant coda.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach into a family of professional musicians and trained by his father and elder brother. The organ, Bach's principal sacred instrument, and organ music occupied Bach throughout his entire life. Bach served as church organist at Arnstadt (1703-07) and Mühlhausen (1707-08). Later, he was court organist and concertmaster in the chapel of the duke of Weimar (1708-1717), and *Kapellmeister* at the Calvinist court in Cöthen (1717-1723). Finally, he served as Cantor and Music Director at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig (1723-50) where he composed series of cantatas for the church year. Bach used the musical resources of German, Italian, and French styles into his organ works. Bach composed the ***Prelude and Fugue in G Major, BWV 541*** at the end of his Weimar period, and later in Leipzig he revised this work for his son, Wilhelm Friedemann. Influenced by North-German *Praeludium* and the Vivaldi's Concertos, the *Prelude* begins with a single line of music using arpeggios and scales, and then the theme enters with the strict rhythms and repeated chords. The alternation between *concertino* (small group of solo instruments) and *ripieno* (full orchestra) of the Italian concertos appear throughout the *Prelude*. The emphatic rhythm of the *Prelude* continues in the *Fugue*, which utilizes a repeated note subject, and after a fermata at the end, a climax reaches in a series of stretto entries.

Alexandre Guilmant, one of the greatest organists, a great improviser, and a renowned teacher in the late nineteenth century, was born in *Boulogne-sur-Mer*, France. He studied with Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens in Brussels and lived and worked in Paris since 1871. He was titular organist at *La Trinité* from 1871 to 1901 and appointed as Professor of Organ at the *Conservatoire de Paris* in 1896. Guilmant, world famous in his time, made three concert trips to the United States of America. Guilmant was the first organist to introduce the genre of the organ sonata as it was composed for the symphonic organ of *Aristide Cavaillé-Coll*. The first movement of Guilmant's ***First Sonata in D Minor, Op. 42*** is in sonata form and consists of a symphonic introduction and the two main subjects. The *Pastorale* opens with a lyrical melody in the *cromorne-hautbois* dialogue, and the variations unfold into a ternary form. The *Final*, in the form of a rondo, gives a contrast between an exciting subject and a long-breathed chorale. Finally, it ends with a grandiose closing section and a jubilant coda.



Sungjoo Kim

Organist Sungjoo Kim received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Organ Performance from the University of Washington, studying organ with Dr. Carole Terry. Her dissertation is titled “Max Reger’s *Symphonische Fantasie und Fuge*, Op. 57: A Study of Thematic and Harmonic Structure and Issues of

Performance Practice.” As a brilliant performer, she has given many recitals in the U.S. including her five doctoral recitals at St. Mark’s Cathedral and University Presbyterian Church in Seattle. Dr. Kim earned her Bachelor’s degree in Organ with distinction from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, CUNY. There she studied organ with Paul Maynard (pupil of Paul Hindemith) and Donald Joyce. She also received her Master’s degree from Queens College, studying organ with Dr. John Weaver of The Juilliard School, and was elected as a member of *Pi Kappa Lambda*. After that, she pursued doctoral studies in Organ and Church Music with Dr. Marilyn Keiser at Indiana University.

Dr. Kim had opportunities to study with the world’s most preeminent organists and pedagogues throughout her studies. She participated in the organ master classes led by Daniel Roth, David Briggs, Hans-Ola Ericsson, Dr. Jon Gillock, and Christophe Mantoux. In addition, she pursued private organ study with Dr. Gerre Hancock at St. Thomas Church in New York City, Dr. John Bernthal of Valparaiso University, and Richard Amend. While in New York, she also studied piano under the tutelage of Jeanne Lee (pupil of Alfred Cortot), and gave a joint piano recital in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Dr. Kim received several awards including the Peter B. Knock Memorial Music Award and has had twenty years of experience as a church musician. Currently, she is Director of Music and Organist at Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Bethesda, Maryland.

The Quimby Sanctuary Organ, 2020

In February 2018, Athens First United Methodist Church entered into an agreement with Quimby Pipe Organs of Warrensburg, Missouri for a new 4-manual, 68 rank pipe organ. The organ was completed and installed in July 2020 and dedicated in September 2021.

The instrument is designed primarily to fulfill its first job of leading worship and then to serve a variety of musical functions. The Op. 77 instrument contains certain features of the symphonic style of organ that were sought after in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The tonal design is not intended to copy any one particular school or period of organbuilding; however, Michael Quimby draws inspiration from the great builders of the past, such as Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, Father Willis, Ernest M. Skinner, and the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company, as well as renowned English organbuilder T. C. Lewis, among others.

Mechanically, Quimby instruments feature the use of a customized Blackinton slider windchest, distinguished by a pneumatic pallet design and absence of slider seals, allowing for the flue pipes in each division to speak without the “explosive attack” experienced by individual valves since each note shares a common note channel with the other ranks. The reed ranks, Solo, Pedal, and offset pipes are on electro-pneumatic, pouch-style windchests. Of particular interest are two contrasting solo reeds, the Tuba in the Solo division and the Hooded Trumpet in the Antiphonal division, voiced on twenty inches wind pressure and ten inches wind pressure, respectively.

Made of solid mahogany, in the Aeolian-Skinner style, with walnut drawknob jambs, coupler rails, and accents, the console incorporates the Virtuoso control system, provided by Integrated Organ Technologies of Alpharetta, Georgia. The solid mahogany case, designed by T. Daniel Hancock, and built by Southern Elegance Custom Cabinetry of Crawford, Georgia, incorporates design features from both the existing grillwork and the sanctuary, achieving an aesthetically elegant display. Located in the twin chancel façades are notes 1-21 of the Great 16' Double Open Diapason and notes 1-12 of the Pedal 8' Octave.

For detailed specifications and stop list, scan the QR code.





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Upcoming Concerts

REMAINING IN THE 2025-26 CONCERT SEASON:



LENTEN CHORAL EVENSONG

Sunday, March 15, 2026 | 5:00 p.m.

ANNA LAPWOOD, ORGAN

Sunday, April 19, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.



DAN FORREST'S CREATION

Sunday, May 17, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.

Join us on Sundays for Worship | 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

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327 N LUMPKIN ST. ATHENS, GA 30601 • 706-543-1442 | athensfirstumc.org