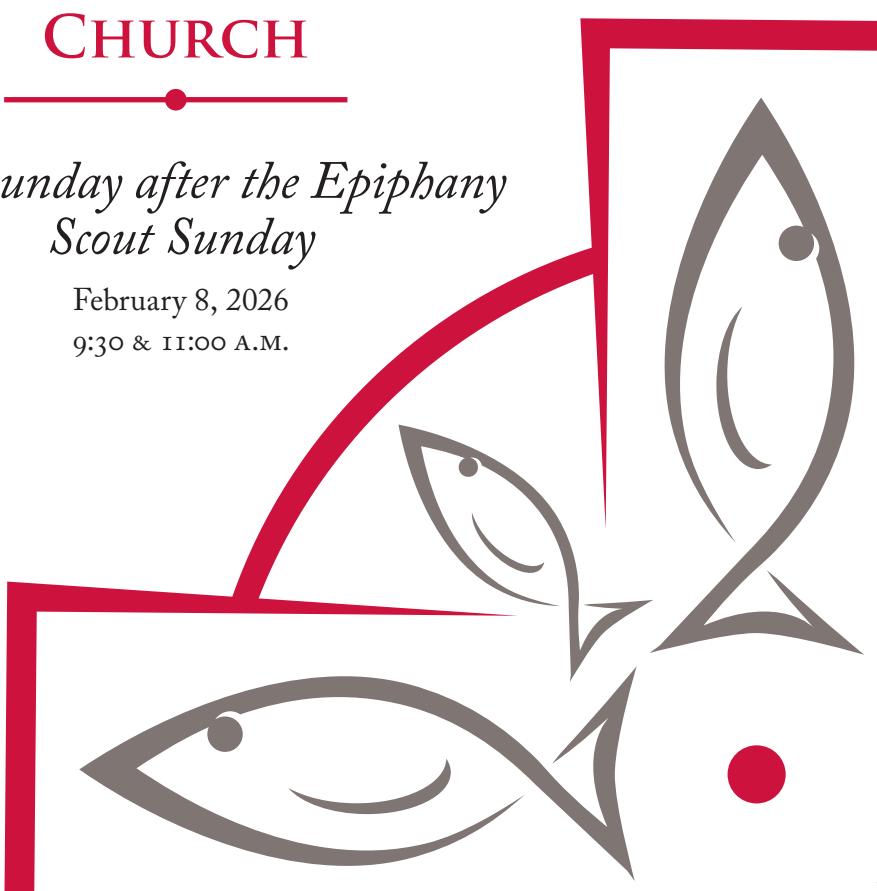




ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Scout Sunday*

February 8, 2026
9:30 & 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 Dr. and Mrs. James Green by their children.

Today, there will be no 11:00 a.m. Children's Church for Kindergarten through grade 4.

We are excited to invite children to remain in worship with their families to celebrate Scout Sunday.

Little worship bags are available outside the Sanctuary door and in the Narthex.

GATHERING

The Prelude

“Prelude in E-flat Major” | Camille Saint-Saëns

Raina Wood, Organist

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

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

The Call to Worship

9:30 a.m. | “Just Like Jesus Every Day” | Lynn Tracey

Sung by the Cherub, Sonshine, and Joy Choirs; Rosemary Belger, accompanist

Directed by Audrey Vazquez, Amy McCollum, and Patti Pitts

11:00 a.m. | "I Have a Song" | C.E. Walz

Sung by the Lyric and Celebrate Choirs; Cathy Felton, accompanist

Directed by Josh Luke and Erin Towe

Children's Choirs can be picked up in the Children's Choir room following the 11:00 service.

****The Processional Hymn***

UMH 64 "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty" | NICAEA

****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. Amen.

****The Passing of the Peace***

The Sacrament of Baptism | 11:00 a.m.

Dewey Otis "Skip" Shurling, son of Kaeti and Nick Shurling

Robert Miles Heath, son of Janeanna and Landon Heath

Children, children, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be. Children, children, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too.

The Recognition of the Scouting Ministry | 11:00 a.m.

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 189 "Fairest Lord Jesus" | ST. ELIZABETH

Verses 1-3

The Offering and Offertory Anthem

"The Majesty and Glory of Your Name" | Tom Fettke

Sung by the Sanctuary Choir; Ryan Ferguson, Director of Music and Worship

When I gaze into the night skies and see the work of your fingers; The moon and stars suspended in space. Oh, what is man that you are mindful of him? You have given man a crown of glory and honor and have made him a little lower than the angels. You have put him in charge of all creation: beasts of the field, The birds of the air, the fish of the sea. Oh, what is man? Oh, what is man that you are mindful of him? O Lord, our God the majesty and glory of your name transcends the earth and fills the heavens. O Lord, our God; little children praise You perfectly, and so would we. And so would we. Alleluia! Alleluia! The majesty and glory of Your name.

Text by Linda Lee Johnson; based on Psalm 8

**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 5:13-20

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

The Message | Rev. Jeremy Lawson

“Salt and Light”

RESPONSE

**The Hymn of Response*

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

**The Blessing and Choral Benediction*

“The Lord Bless You and Keep You” | Peter Lutkin

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious. The Lord be gracious unto you. Amen.

**The Postlude*

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past” | Gordon Young

AFUMC & SCOUTING HISTORY

Celebrating 90 Years

The year 2026 marks the 90th anniversary of the Troop 1 charter at Athens First United Methodist Church.

Troop 1 organized at the YMCA in the early 1930s, and on Feb 4, 1936, the Athens Banner-Herald reported that Troop 1 was working to recharter with AFUMC. That recharter was successful, and Troop 1 is the last active Troop that predates the organization of the modern Scouting America Northeast Georgia Council.

AFUMC sponsored other scouting units prior to the 1930s, but these early years were disorganized with units assembling and disbanding frequently until after the Great Depression. There is a long history of the Church supporting Scouting, and we are grateful for the lasting relationship with AFUMC.



BSA SCOUT TROOP 1 | boys, grades 6-12

The Mission of the Scouting America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Scouts of Troop 1 learn Scout skills and values through weekly meetings and monthly trips. Adventures this year included canoeing in the Okefenokee, tubing in Helen, kayaking the Broad River, Summer Camp at Camp Rainey Mountain, Backpacking in North Georgia Mountains, and indoor skydiving. This year we will participate in a Klondike Derby, backpacking at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, Summer Camp at Camp Woodruff, and more. One Scout earned the highest rank of Eagle, and several are working on their Eagle requirements.

Troop 1 has 16 Scouts and is always looking for more boys in 6-12th grade looking for fun, adventure, service, and leadership opportunities. Our partnership with First United Methodist Church is critical to the success of our Troop in instilling moral values into our Scouts. We appreciate all the support the Church provides and the invitation to participate in Church activities like Scout Sunday. Troop 1 meets at First United Methodist Church from 3:00-4:00 p.m. on Sundays.

For more information contact Scoutmaster Tony Paramore:
tparamore9@gmail.com



BSA CUB SCOUT PACK 1 | boys and girls, grades K-5

Pack 1 is growing and on the move! This year we focused on getting outside and completing adventures, including service projects with Keep ACC Beautiful, overnight camps at Rainey Mountain and Scoutland, day camps in Athens, and walking visits to the Memorial Park Zoo and State Botanical Gardens. This spring, we look forward to the annual Pinewood Derby race, a bicycle rodeo, coffee roaster tour, and plenty more hiking, camping, and community service.

This afternoon in Hancock Hall, Pack 1 will honor three 5th graders as they attain Cub Scouts' highest rank award: the Arrow of Light. These Scouts will continue their scouting journey with Troop 1. Additionally, 32 active Cub Scouts will receive 293 adventure completion and rank awards.

Spring is a great time for all K-4 youth to join Pack 1! Pack 1 meets at First United Methodist Church from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Sundays.

For more information contact Cubmaster Travis Bouker:
tbouker@gmail.com



GIRL SCOUT TROOP 12051 | girls, grades 3-5

The Girl Scouts of Troop 12051 have enjoyed a full year of games, swimming, and learning. The troop represented the country of Japan during the annual World Thinking Day celebration. Our girls taught sister Girl Scouts how to use chopsticks and interesting facts about Hello Kitty. They also visited booths of other countries to learn new things and taste new foods.

In September, the troop participated in the 100th anniversary of Camp Martha Johnston in Lizella, GA. The afternoon was spent honing archery skills and trading homemade SWAPS (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere). In addition, the troop survived a challenging night camping and enjoyed a pottery class at Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park.

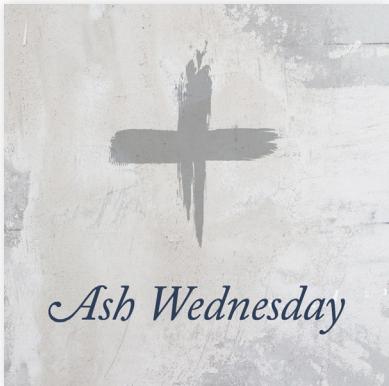
This autumn the troop again carved pumpkins and saved seeds to roast for the hungry. The troop had a marvelous time at the Winter Wonderlights at UGA's Botanical Gardens. Girls enjoyed warm treats, the lights, and each other's company. In December, the girls also had a rocking time at the Rock Lobsters hockey game. Girls enjoyed singing the hits and throwing teddy bears to donate after the first goal. Girls participated in Bench Buddies where they saw warm-ups up close, interacted with players, and were gifted a frozen puck!

The Juniors (4-5th grade) are currently working on their Bronze Award. They have researched and helped clean up waterways. Their final step is designing a graphic flyer to educate others. Be on the lookout for this creative project!

For more information contact Amy Atao: amyatao@yahoo.com

THE STEEPLE

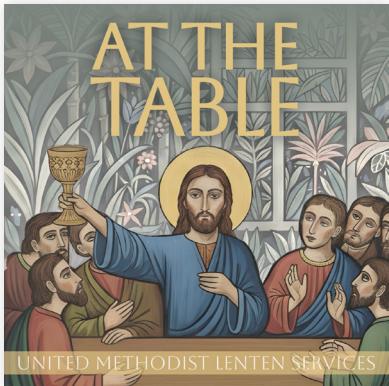
February 8, 2026



Ash Wednesday | February 18

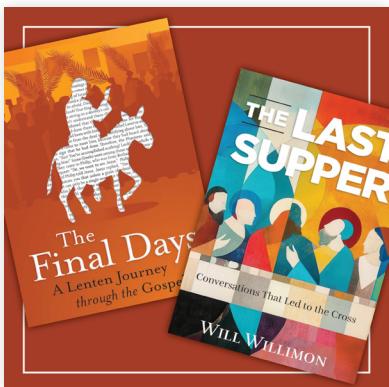
Ash Wednesday is the first day of the season of Lent, the forty days of reflection, self-examination, and repentance leading to Easter. We wear ashes on this day for many reasons. Throughout the Bible, ashes are used as symbols of grief, mourning, and solemnity. We invite you to join us in our sanctuary on **Wednesday, February 18, for the Imposition of Ashes from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. and our evening service at 6:30 p.m.**

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



At the Table | February 25

Join us throughout Lent as we journey alongside our sister United Methodist Churches in the Athens area through a weekday sermon series titled **At the Table**. You are invited to join us each Wednesday in Lent at **noon** for a brief worship service and light lunch. This is an incredible opportunity to grow in faith together within our United Methodist connection. This experience brings us together with the congregations and leaders of Watkinsville First United Methodist Church, Tuckston UMC Athens, Johnson UMC, Princeton UMC, Winterville United Methodist Church, Bogart United Methodist Church, and Oconee Street United Methodist Church. Be sure to mark your calendars for **February 25** when Rev. Mike Selleck will be preaching at the Wednesday service hosted by Athens First UMC!



Lenten Study Opportunities

We're offering two Lenten study options: a lighter, **Core Study** and an **Enrichment Study** for those wanting to dig deeper. You're welcome to participate in either, or both! Lenten studies will begin February 22-28. Sign-ups will open next week.

Core Study | The Final Days by **Rev. Matt Rawle**, explores how the four Gospels tell the story of Jesus' final week, offering multiple perspectives that deepen our understanding of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.

Enrichment Study | The Last Supper by **Bishop Will Willimon**, journeys with Jesus from Palm Sunday to the cross, exploring the parables he told and how they speak to our modern lives.

Rev. Lisa Lawrenz, Director of Small Groups | lisa@athensfirstumc.org

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



Rainforest Falls VBS | June 1-4

Save the date for Rainforest Falls VBS! Rainforest Falls promises a week of wonder as kids explore the powerful nature of God! Through life-changing Bible stories, the coolest animal buddies, and joyful worship, they'll discover who God is and how to stay rooted in His love.

Registration opens February 22. Make plans to volunteer and to participate in Rainforest Falls VBS!

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



Summer Music and Arts | July 6-9

Save the Date for Summer Music and Arts Week 2026! We will present the musical "Storms" by Mark Burrows! Where is God in the storms of life? This musical tells the story of a group of children who wonder if they have what it takes to weather storms in their lives. Camp dates are **July 6 through 9** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with a performance on **Thursday, July 9, at 3:00 p.m. in Hancock Hall**. Music and Arts is open to kids in rising Grade 1 through rising Grade 6. Registration will open mid February, so save the date and make plans to join us!

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



Our Daily Bread Breakfast

Once a month, volunteers from our congregation provide breakfast for 100 of our neighbors in need at Our Daily Bread. This breakfast can be a grab-and-go style, continental breakfast bag and a McDonald's biscuit OR you and your group can cook a hot breakfast in the kitchen at First Baptist Church. Breakfast is served at 8:00 a.m.

Volunteers can serve as a small group, Sunday School class, or UMW Circle. New dates are available for 2026! **Scan the QR Code in The Steeple to register for a date to serve.**

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

CALLED CHURCH COUNCIL/CHARGE CONFERENCE

There will be a Church Council Meeting starting with a brief Charge Conference Meeting on **Monday, February 16, at 5:30 p.m. in Hancock Hall**. The purpose of the charge conference is to approve clergy salaries for the coming conference year.

Wednesday Night

DINNER

FEBRUARY 11: Crawfish Etouffee served with a side salad and bread.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT | 2026 As of February 3, 2026 (finance@athensfirstumc.org):

YTD Actual Giving: \$322,236 | **YTD Actual Expenses:** \$270,876

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. Dr. Nancy Johnson | Associate Minister
nancy@athensfirstumc.org | 762-233-4761

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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