

ATHENS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken

RAINA WOOD, ORGAN

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2026 | 3:00 P.M.



Glorious things of Thee are spoken,

*Zion, city of our God; God, whose word cannot be broken,
formed thee for his own abode. On the Rock of Ages
founded, what can shake thy sure repose? With salvation's
walls surrounded, thou mayst smile at all thy foes.*

*See, the streams of living waters, springing from eternal
love, well supply thy sons and daughters, and all fear of
want remove. Who can faint while such a river ever will
their thirst assuage? Grace which like the Lord, the giver,
never fails from age to age.*

*Round each habitation hovering, see the cloud and fire
appear for a glory and a covering, showing that the Lord
is near! Thus deriving from our banner light by night and
shade by day, safe we feed upon the manna which God
gives us when we pray.*

*Blest inhabitants of Zion, washed in our Redeemer's
blood; Jesus, whom our souls rely on, makes us monarchs,
priests to God. Us, by his great love, he raises, rulers over
self to reign, and as priests his solemn praises we for
thankful offering bring.*

John Newton, 1779

Program

Reception to follow in Hancock Hall

Symphony for Organ No. 5 in F minor, Op. 42, No. 1

Charles-Marie Widor

I. *Allegro Vivace*

1844-1937

IV. *Adagio*

Partita on "Now Thank We All Our God"

Timothy Albrecht

Setting I

b. 1950

Setting II

Setting III

***Sechs Chorale von verschiedener Art;
auf einer Orgel mit 2 Clavieren und Pedal***

Johann Sebastian Bach

1685-1750

"Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme", BWV 645

"Wo soli ich fliehen him", BWV 646

"Wer nur den lieben Godd lässt walten", BWV 647

"Meine Seele erhebt den Herren", BWV 648

"Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ", BWV 649

"Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter", BWV 650

***Concert Variations on the Austrian Hymn,
Op. 3, No. 1***

John Knowles Paine

1839-1906

*This concert is given to the Glory of God
and in honor of Dr. Marilyn Keiser,
who is such an inspiration sharing God's glory
through her music and herself with so many.*

Program Notes

Symphony for Organ No. 5 in F minor, Op. 42, No. 1

Charles-Marie Widor

I. Allegro Vivace

IV. Adagio

Charles-Marie Widor composed ten symphonies for organ solo. Many of you probably are familiar with the fifth and final movement of this symphony, from hearing it at special worship services and ceremonies: the Toccata. It is one of the most known and recorded pieces for organ, becoming so in 1960 when Princess Margaret chose to use it instead of Mendelssohn's Wedding March for her wedding. Now it is often associated with Easter and requested for celebrations such as weddings or graduations.

The rest of the symphony is not heard as often but is also very enticing music. The first movement is a set of variations with a cadenza for pedals in the middle of the movement. The fourth movement is beautifully calm, soaring, and lush.

Widor composed the fifth symphony between 1878 and 1879 when he was the organist at Saint-Sulpice in Paris. He played the first performance on October 19, 1879.

Partita on "Now Thank We All Our God"

Timothy Albrecht

Timothy Albrecht is Professor Emeritus at Emory University in Atlanta. From his *Grace Notes* collection, this partita on "Now Thank We All Our God" (text found in the United Methodist Hymnal No. 102) has three settings of the hymn tune. The first two settings are gentle: the first whimsically using rhythmic material from Tchaikovsky's "March" from *The Nutcracker*, and the second setting using quotations from Saint-Saëns *Fantaisie for Organ*. The third setting is bright, lively, using mixed meter.

Sechs Chorale von verschiedener Art

Johann Sebastian Bach

“Six chorales of diverse kinds, to be played on an organ with two manuals and pedal” is the English translation for “Sechs Chorale von verschiedener Art; auf einer Orgel mit 2 Clavieren und Pedal”.

This collection is commonly known as the Schübler Chorales - after Johann Georg Schübler, a student and close friend of Bach's, for whom the collection was named. Published around 1747, five of the six pieces are transcriptions from cantatas that Bach composed two decades earlier.

These six chorales, transcribed by Bach for organ, provide a more marketable version of his music that originally required larger forces than a single player to perform. This was seen as a significant public statement for Bach to go to the trouble and expense of having a master engraver to produce his note-for-note transcriptions. English translations and a bit about each chorale:

“Wake, Awake for Night is Flying”: the text advises us to be prepared for the coming of the Lord, and can be found in the United Methodist Hymnal No. 720.

“Whither Shall I Flee”: a penitential text turning to God for comfort and salvation.

“If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee”: the text reminds us to seek God's guidance and look to Him always and can be found in the United Methodist Hymnal No. 142.

“My soul doth magnify the Lord”: the response of Mary, mother of Jesus, when the angel Gabriel visited her with the news that she would bear a child, the son of God.

“Lord Jesus Christ, with us Abide”: an evening prayer for God's protection and guidance.

“Come thou, Jesus, from heaven to earth”: a plea for God to unite heaven and earth, through life on earth to eternal life.

**Concert Variations on the Austrian Hymn,
Op. 3, No. 1**

John Knowles Paine

John Knowles Paine was the first American born composer to achieve fame during his lifetime. After his passing, he was among the first to be inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame in 1998.

He grew up in a musical family in Maine, and his grandfather built the first pipe organ in the state of Maine. Paine studied organ in Europe and toured Europe giving organ recitals for three years, establishing a reputation as an organist. When he returned the United States and settled in Boston in 1861, he was appointed as Harvard University's first University Organist and Choirmaster where he offered free courses in music appreciation and music theory that became the core curriculum for Harvard's newly formed music department. This was the first such department in the United States, and so he was America's first music professor. Paine Hall, the concert hall on Harvard's campus, is named after him.

These concert variations are based on the Austrian hymn, most commonly known to us as "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken." This hymn's text, found in the cover of this program and on page 731 of the United Methodist Hymnal is based on Psalm 87:3 and Isaiah 33:20, 21. The melody, originally composed by Franz Joseph Haydn and famously used in the "Emperor" string quartet, is presented simply and clearly heard throughout the variations. The first pairs it with a counter-melody in the bass, and the second with a counter-melody in the soprano. The third moves the melody into the minor-mode. The pedal is on full display of variation four, which leads into a fugue. The piece concludes with a pedal cadenza and a fittingly glorious final presentation of the tune.



Raina Wood, Organ

Raina Wood is a native of Asheville, North Carolina, and holds a Master of Sacred Music in Organ Performance from Emory University and a double Bachelor of Music in Organ and Piano Performance from Furman University, studying with Derek Parsons, Charles Tompkins, and Timothy Albrecht. She is a member of the American Guild of Organists and has been a featured performer on NPR's Pipe Dreams.

Raina serves as Organist at Athens First UMC in Athens, Georgia. Prior to her tenure at Athens First, Raina served as Organist at Meridian Street UMC in Indianapolis, Indiana and Organist and Music Associate at Church Street UMC in Knoxville, Tennessee.

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 Cavallé-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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2026-2027 Concert Season



JAZZ VESPERS | LOVE IS THE WAY

Theodicy Jazz Collective + AFUMC Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, October 18, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.

CANDLELIGHT CAROLS

Sanctuary Choir + Georgia Children's Chorus + Orchestra

Sunday, December 13, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.

THE LONGEST NIGHT

Monday, December 21, 2026 | 6:00 p.m.

BRODY BETT, ORGAN

Sunday, February 7, 2027 | 3:00 p.m.

DURUFLÉ REQUIEM

Sanctuary Choir + Organist Raina Wood + Orchestra

Sunday, March 7, 2027 | 7:00 p.m.

HANDBELL CHOIRS SPRING RING

Sunday, April 18, 2027 | 3:00 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