



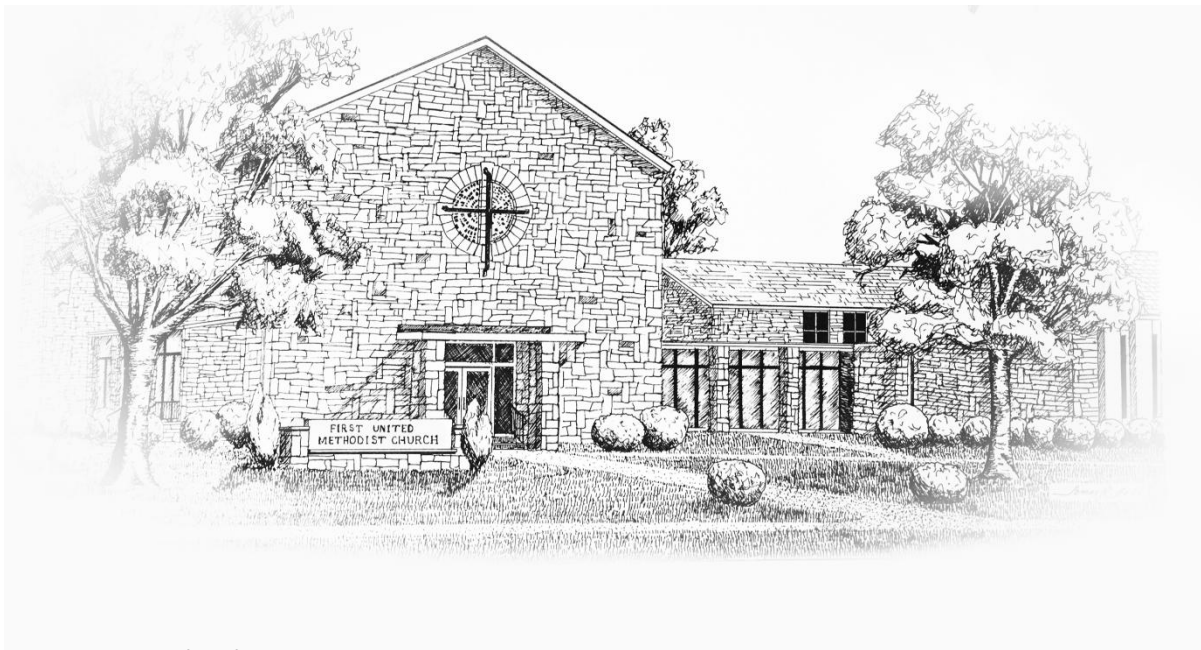
First United Methodist Church Graham, NC

www.fumcgraham-nc.org

303 North Main Street, Graham, NC 27253

336/226-4343

***Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2026***



Our Mission

To make disciples for Jesus Christ through love and service

Our Vision

A loving and diverse community meeting the real needs of our neighbors through spirit-filled worship, intergenerational discipleship, and caring service

Come, Let Us Worship the Lord

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2026

Gathering

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Largo

Corelli

†CALL TO WORSHIP

From the mustard seed a great and mighty shrub emerges.

Good things can come from something that seemed so insignificant!

Come, let us praise the God of great and mighty wonders.

Let our spirits soar in gratitude for the small signs that point to God's coming reign!

†OPENING HYMN

I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

*(UMH #540)**

1. I love thy kingdom, Lord,
the house of thine abode,
the church our blest Redeemer saved
with his own precious blood.
2. I love thy church, O God!
Her walls before thee stand
dear as the apple of thine eye,
and graven on thy hand.
3. For her my tears shall fall,
for her my prayers ascend,
to her my cares and toils be given,
till toils and cares shall end.
4. Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
her sweet communion, solemn vows,
her hymns of love and praise.
5. Sure as thy truth shall last,

to Zion shall be given
the brightest glories earth can yield
and brighter bliss of heaven.

†SHARING THE PEACE

Please greet your neighbor and pass the Connect pads to register your attendance.

Proclamation

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, Life of all creation, you fill the world, uniting strangers, and enfolding us together. Ignite our minds, and fill these gathered here with love and praise for our greatest gift and hope, Jesus Christ. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Romans 8:26-39](#)

Carolyn Barnes

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit comes to help our weakness. We don't know what we should pray, but the Spirit himself pleads our case with unexpressed groans. ²⁷ The one who searches hearts knows how the Spirit thinks, because he pleads for the saints, consistent with God's will. ²⁸ We know that God works all things together for good for the ones who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ We know this because God knew them in advance, and he decided in advance that they would be conformed to the image of his Son. That way his Son would be the first of many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ Those who God decided in advance would be conformed to his Son, he also called. Those whom he called, he also made righteous. Those whom he made righteous, he also glorified.

³¹ So what are we going to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He didn't spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. Won't he also freely give us all things with him?

³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect people? It is God who acquits them. ³⁴ Who is going to convict them? It is Christ Jesus who died, even more, who was raised, and who also is at God's right side. It is Christ Jesus who also pleads our case for us.

³⁵ Who will separate us from Christ's love? Will we be separated by trouble, or distress, or harassment, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

We are being put to death all day long for your sake.

We are treated like sheep for slaughter.

³⁷ But in all these things we win a sweeping victory through the one who loved us. ³⁸ I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers ³⁹ or height or depth, or any other thing that is created.

SHARING FAITH WITH ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN

Chris Fulkerson

Childcare is available for children up to age 5 in Room 121. Red drawstring "Worship Kids Kits" with children's bulletins are available in the entrance area each week for children to use throughout worship.

ANTHEM

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

arr. Christopher

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
mount of Thy redeeming love.

Here I raise mine Ebenezer;
Hither by Thy help I've come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wand'ring from the fold of God.
He, to rescue me from danger,
bought me with His precious blood.

O to grace how Great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
seal it for Thy courts above.
Seal it for Thy courts above.
Seal it for Thy courts above!

†GOSPEL LESSON

[Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52](#)

³¹ He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

Response

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(UMH #895)*

**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.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

†A STATEMENT OF FAITH (based on Matthew 13)

**I believe in God the Father, the sower of the good seed, who sent His Son, Jesus Christ,
to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth.**

**I affirm that the Word of God is living and active. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, I
surrender my heart to be good soil, so that the Word may take deep root and produce a
harvest of righteousness, yielding thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.**

**I believe the kingdom of heaven is a hidden treasure and a pearl of great price.
Therefore, I joyfully lay down the cares and deceptions of this world, committing all
that I have to follow Christ.**

**Though the kingdom begins small like a mustard seed, I trust in its power to grow and
bring shade, rest, and transformation to the world. I stand firm, knowing that the Son of
Man is the ultimate Lord of the harvest, and I look forward to the glorious day when the
righteous will shine like the sun in the Father's kingdom. Amen.**

†GLORIA PATRI

(UMH #71)*

**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.**

Sending Forth

RESPOND TO THE WORD

The altar is always open if you would like to pray. Feel free to stay as long as you desire. If people remain in prayer after the dismissal, those who must leave are asked to move quietly and reverently toward the back of the sanctuary.

†CLOSING HYMN

Seek Ye First

*(UMH #405)**

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia!
2. Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
seek and ye shall find;
knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, alleluia!

† THE BLESSING

†CHORAL RESPONSE (Choir and Congregation)

*(UMH #898)**

Amen, amen, amen.

†CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

†POSTLUDE

Chorale Postlude

Bach

†Please stand if you are able.
*Songbooks are located in pew rack.