



First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

July 26, 2026
10:00 a.m.

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, please silence your cell phone.

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty Johann Sebastian Bach

Words of Welcome

Song of Gathering

DIX

Make a joyful noise to God! All creation sings your praise!

**Great your wonders here displayed,
unexcelled throughout our days.**

Glorious is your sacred name, ages old, yet still the same.

Call to Worship

Hope in Christ!

Hear the word of truth, the good news of our salvation.

Believe in Christ!

We are sealed with the mark of the Holy Spirit.

Live in Christ!

We embrace our inheritance, as children of God.

Live to the glory of Christ!

Let us worship God.

***Hymn 482** *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty* LOBE DEN HERREN

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Lord, so often we fail to seek your heart and your will for our lives. Instead, we become focused on our own wants, our own needs and our own ambitions. We confess that we can be narrow-minded, self-centered, and slow to listen to you. Forgive us, Lord, and give us ears to hear your voice. Help us tune out the noise of the world and instead listen for the quiet whisper of your Spirit, who faithfully leads us into your good purpose. Speak, Lord, for Your servants are listening. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

*Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, check in on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram (firstpresathensga).

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty is a strong 17th-century German hymn that employs phrases from the psalms, especially Psalm 150 and 103. The current English translation is from the mid-19th century. The hymn has remained popular in part due to its stirring tune.

**Those who are able please stand.*

At "The Peace," worshipers are invited to greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

All children are invited to remain in worship on Sunday mornings with family during the summer months.

*Lay Reader:
Anne Marie Miller*

The anthem is an arrangement of a well-known hymn, often used at church dedications, though the first stanza clearly refers to the people of God and the second to the place where they meet. The stately tune was composed by Henry Purcell.

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart is a reflection on Galatians 5:25, written by an Anglican priest whose preaching drew people from many different social classes to a formerly poor London church. The tune was written for the text *Abide with Me*.

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 579

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 Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 339, stanza 1

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
nought 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.**

First Lesson

Psalm 85:8-13, page 532

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Christ is Made the Sure Foundation

Rachel Aarons after Henry Purcell

Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious, binding all the church in one;
holy Zion's help forever, and her confidence alone.
All that dedicated city, dearly loved of God on high,
in exultant jubilation pours perpetual melody;
God the One in Three abiding in glad hymns eternally.
To this temple, where we call thee, come, O Lord of Hosts, today;
with thy wonted lovingkindness hear your servants as they pray,
and thy fullest benediction shed within its walls always.
Here vouchsafe to all thy servants what they ask of thee to gain;
what they gain from thee, forever with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in your glory evermore with you to reign.

Second Lesson

Ephesians 1:3-14, page 1066

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Adopted The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 326**

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

MORECAMBE

***Affirmation of Faith**

Philippians 2:5-11

**Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form, he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death –
even death on a cross.**

**Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name
that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and
under the earth, and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the
power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Westminster Abbey* Richard Proulx

***Doxology** Hymn 592
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.

***Prayer of Dedication**

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 356** *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* NETTLETON

***Charge and Benediction**

***Congregational Response** Hymn 540, stanza 1
God be with you till we meet again,
loving counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.

Postlude *Toccata in Seven* John Ritter

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Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, is full of biblical terms like “Ebenezer,” Hebrew for “a stone of help” set up to give thanks for God’s assistance. The tune honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton.

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 9:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., are located next to the Children’s Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the Fellowship Pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

FPC History Book Club
Led by Ron Bogue, Richard Lane, and Smith Wilson
July 26 from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Friends of all ages and stages are invited to join us for our special summer Sunday School class focusing on the history of our First Presbyterian Church of Athens. We will meet following the 10:00 a.m. service in Moses Waddel Room.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor*
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Lay Reader

Anne Marie Miller

USHERS

Jimbo LaBoon, John Simpson, Emily LaBoon

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Justin Winstanley

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God and in memory of Harold Wilson Hartman III (H.W.) by his family.

JULY FLOWER TEAM

Lucy Bell Johnson, Vera Lee-Schoenfeld,
Rebekah Seabolt, Ethelyn Simpson

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium, on Facebook, and YouTube.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

The Affordable Housing Challenge in Athens:
Stats, Systemic Issues & Strategies

The Matthew 25 commission invites you to join us in the Moses Waddel Room on **Sunday, August 2 at 11:15 a.m.** for a panel discussion moderated by Becky Hartman on the status of affordable housing in Athens, the impact on our citizens, and strategies that are being implemented in our community to address this important issue. Light refreshments will be served.

Panel Participants will be:

Courtney Etheredge, Director of Community Impact United Way of Northeast Georgia
Melinda Lord, Director of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Athens Clarke County
J. Richard (Rick) Parker, II, Retired Executive Director Athens Housing Authority, Board Member Envision Athens

Summer Choir

If you’ve ever wondered what it’s like to sing in the choir, but have never done so, this may be a chance to give choir a “test drive.” If you would like to sing but can’t make the commitment to Wednesday night rehearsals during the regular season, this is the time to join the choir. **Through August 16**, we will meet in the choir room at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays to rehearse music for that morning’s service. Singers may join for any single Sunday or for as many as they wish, even for the whole summer. There is no obligation, but we do hope some will decide they enjoy singing in the choir enough to continue in the fall. Although this choir is made up mostly of adults, youth and children are also welcome. For more information, contact John Coble at jcoble@firstpresathens.org.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, July 26

- 9:15 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service, The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard preaching
- 11:15 a.m. FPC History Book Club Sunday School, Moses Waddel Room
- 11:15 a.m. Generosity Team Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Monday, July 27

- 9:00 a.m. WDS Camp
- 10:00 a.m. Lay Callers Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Campus Kitchen, Main Kitchen

Tuesday, July 28

- 7:00 a.m. Our Daily Bread Breakfast, First Baptist Church
- 9:00 a.m. WDS Camp
- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 6:00 p.m. Athens Area Homeless Shelter Board Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Wednesday, July 29

- 9:00 a.m. WDS Camp
- 5:00 p.m. Summer Fellowship - Happy Hour at Creature Comforts

Thursday, July 30

- 9:00 a.m. WDS Camp
- 2:00 p.m. Summer Fellowship - All Ages Mellows Outing, PVA Memory Care

Sunday, August 2 - Communion Sunday, Food Sunday

- 9:15 a.m. Summer Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service, The Rev. Margaret Davis preaching
- 11:15 a.m. M25 Housing Challenge Discussion, Staff Conference Room

Food Sunday, August 2

You may bring donations of **pork 'n beans, hamburger helper, and tomato sauce/food enhancement items (ie. tomato sauce or paste, sloppy joe sauce, jarred or packet gravy, etc.)** to church on **Sunday, August 2**. You may also bring items to the church office until **Friday, July 31**. Our neighbors in need are very grateful for your donations! Many thanks for your thoughtfulness. and generosity!

Summer Fellowship Outings

Summer is here! We hope you'll plan to join us for some (or all!) of these fun fellowship outings. Each of these is open to anyone who would like to attend – all ages and stages of our church family! Please RSVP to Whitney (whitney@firstpresathens.org) so we can keep a headcount and feel free to reach out with questions.

Wednesday, July 29 at 5:00 p.m. Happy Hour at Creature Comforts Brewing Company (271 W. Hancock Ave)

Peruse local vendors at the Athens Farmers' Market and enjoy a beverage and a bite with friends!

Thursday, July 30 at 2:00 p.m. All Ages Mellows Outing at PVA Memory Care (1400 Live Oak Lane)

Members of all ages can join together to brighten the day of the PVA Memory Care residents with a fun singing session.

Thursday, August 6 at 6:00 p.m. Downtown Dinner, Ted's Most Best (254 W. Washington St.)

Bring the whole family and head downtown for food, drink, and fun!

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

Joachim Neander, 1680

Trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.

Stralsund *Ernewerten Gesangbuch*, 1665Harm. *The Chorale Book for England*, 1863

Desc. Craig Sellar Lang, 1953

Descant

3. Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

1. Praise ye the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
2. Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things - so won - drous - ly
3. Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

dore Him! All that hath life and breath, come now with
a tion! O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy
reign - eth, Shel - ters thee un - der His wings, yea, so
dore Him! All that hath life and breath, come now with

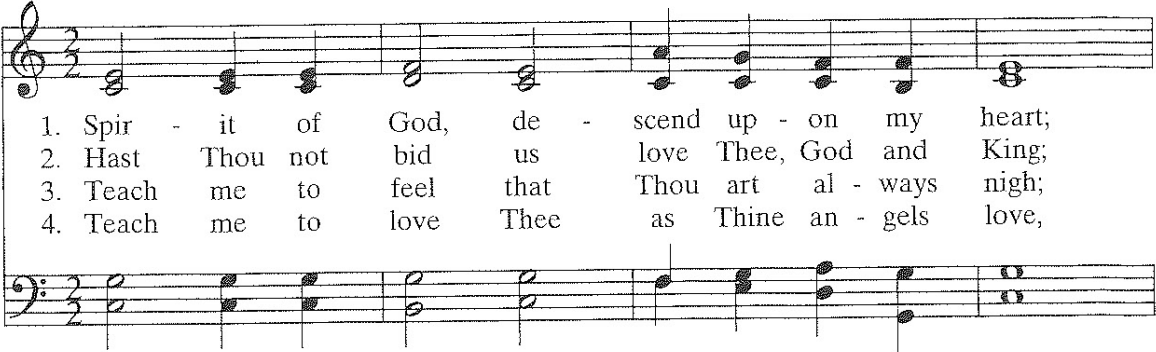
prais - es be - fore Him! Let the a - men Sound from His
health and sal - va - tion! All ye who hear, Now to His
gen - tly sus - tain - eth! Hast thou not seen How thy de -
prais - es be - fore Him! Let the a - men Sound from His

326 Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

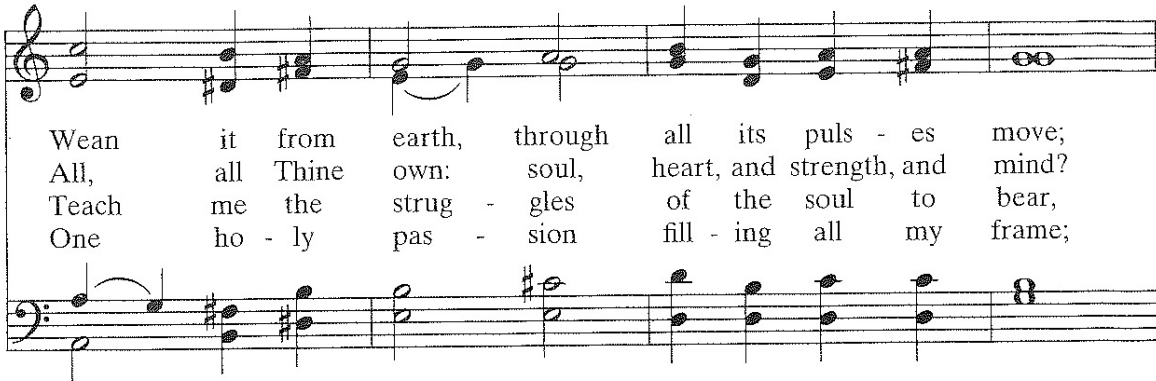
MORECAMBE 10.10.10.10

George Croly, 1854

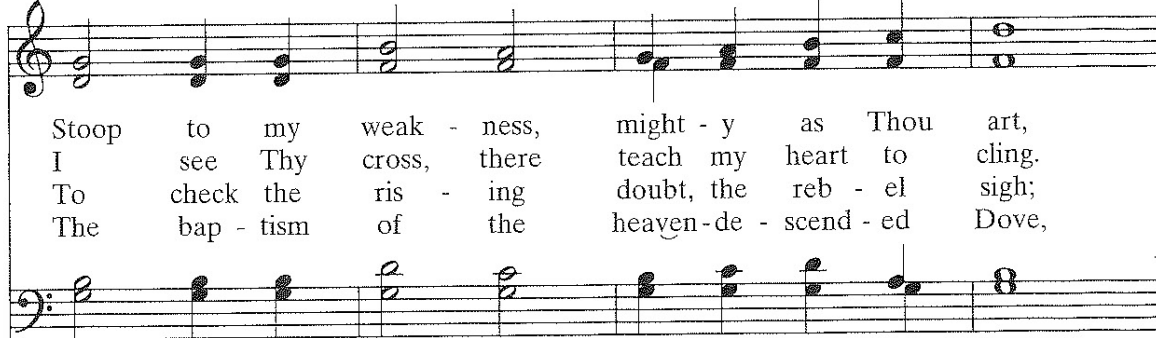
Frederick Cook Atkinson, 1870



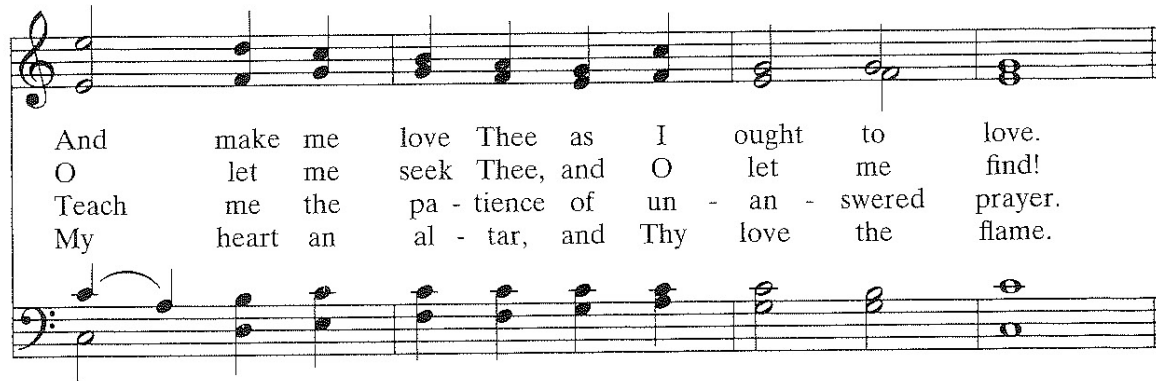
1. Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;
2. Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King;
3. Teach me to feel that Thou art al - ways nigh;
4. Teach me to love Thee as Thine an - gels love,



Wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;
All, all Thine own: soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
Teach me the strug - gles of the soul to bear,
One ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame;



Stoop to my weak - ness, might - y as Thou art,
I see Thy cross, there teach my heart to cling.
To check the ris - ing doubt, the reb - el sigh;
The bap - tism of the heaven - de - scend - ed Dove,



And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!
Teach me the pa - tience of un - an - swered prayer.
My heart an al - tar, and Thy love the flame.

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 356

Robert Robinson, c. 1758

1. 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 God's unchanging love!
2. Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.

3. O to gracê how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Senior Pastor Pat Waldrip, Clerk of Session
Whitney Booth Lockard, Associate Pastor

CLASS OF 2027

Susan Baldwin
Bill Bushnell
Amy Cowsert
Matt Crim
Jay Holloway
Tom Lane
Joan Pinson
Paige Simmons

CLASS OF 2028

Steven Brooks
Courtney Dantzer
Shannon Ferguson
Edward W. (Ned) Phares
Holly Sheats
Lawton Stephens
Madeline Van Dyck
John Webster

CLASS OF 2029

Meghan Bawcum
Stephen Covington
Andrew Griffeth
Anne Marie Miller
Mike Morris
Leslye Queen
Laura Toney
Gail Wilfong

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor* (ryan@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor* (whitney@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate* (margaret@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist* (jcoble@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Hannah Knight, *Director of Children and Youth Ministries* (hannah@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Mikel Williams, *Director of Weekday School* (mikel@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Office Administrator* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Jennifer Adams, *Church Accountant* (jadams@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Joli Winstanley, *Administrative & Communications Assistant* (frontdesk@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Deanna Rollins, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant* (wds@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant* (charlotte@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*
Mr. Wayne Brock, *Sexton*
Mr. Justin Winstanley, *Sunday Morning Manager*
Ms. Morgan Cassidy, *Children and Youth Ministries Intern*