

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Serving Atlanta and the World since 1867

August 30, 2026
11:00 am

The Reverend Dr. Dwight D. Andrews, Pastor
The Reverend Andrew Young, Pastor of Global Mission

First Congregational Church, UCC
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost **August 30, 2026**

THE PRELUDE

Frank Hoke, organist

CHIMING OF THE HOUR AND LIGHTING THE WORSHIP CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP AND INVOCATION Reverend Harold Eichelberger

* OPENING HYMN *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*
Congregation and Chancel Choir
*All who are able please stand and sing.

A Litany for Sunday School Teachers, (page 3) Minister Myles Amir Riley

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND WELCOMING OF VISITORS
Reverend Andrews

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY WORDS

"Give and it will be given to you
A good measure, pressed down, shaken together,
Running over, will be put into your lap
For the measure you give,
Will be the measure you get back"
---Luke 6:38 NRSV

OFFERTORY *O Give Thanks Unto the Lord* Judith McCallister
First Church Voices

OFFERTORY PRAYER AND RESPONSE

* We give thee but thine own, what 'er the gift may be
all that we have is thine alone, a trust O Lord from thee

THE PRAYER HYMN Precious Lord, Take My Hand
The Congregation and First Church Voices

THE PASTORAL PRAYER Reverend Andrews

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON Deacon Ruth Chin-Hicks
Old Testament: Psalm 32:1-10 New Testament: Ephesians 4: 11-16

MUSICAL OFFERING *Total Praise* Richard Smallwood
Chancel Choir

SERMON Reverend Dwight Andrews

HYMN OF INVITATION *Praise is What I Do* William Murphy
First Church Voices

INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Reverend Angela Dempsey Williams

BENEDICTION Reverend Andrews

CHORAL BENEDICTION *God Be With You Till We Meet Again*
Chancel Choir

THE POSTLUDE
Frank Hoke, organist

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Leader: Good and Gracious God,
You have called us to the teaching ministry of the church. We pray for men, women, boys, and girls who study to show themselves approved.
Congregation: We thank you God for those who give of their time, talent, and treasure to teach and help others grow in discipleship.

Leader: Lord God, we recommit ourselves to this common ministry. Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We lift to you the Christian educators who give leadership at every level of the church.
Congregation: We thank you for every opportunity to pause and learn more of you.

Leader: Empower and inspire us by your Holy Spirit. May the evidence of our devotion and discipleship be clear and serve as a witness to others of your love, peace, liberation, reconciliation, and salvation as we move throughout this day and the days to come in our conversations and actions.
Congregation: We thank you, God, for calling us to grow and serve as Christian disciples.

Leader: As Christ's disciples, we are sent forth to proclaim our faith. Led by those who were called forth to lead and teach and model the faith, we follow their example and witness.
Congregation: We thank you, God, for providing the gifts of leading, teaching, and learning.

Leader: Teachers and leaders, you have heard God's call. Will you let your light shine before others so they see our good works?
Congregation: With God as our helper, we will.

ALL: With God's help we will support and encourage one another. We dedicate ourselves to growing and serving. We thank you, God, for claiming us and blessing us with so many gifts. As we use these gifts, may our service reflect your abiding presence and the light of faith we bear together We pray this prayer in the name of the master teacher, Jesus Christ, AMEN.

Prayer of Dedication **Minister Myles Amir Riley**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Congregational UCC Atlanta was pleased and honored to host the **60th Anniversary of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ** last week. The conference included workshops, plenary sessions, and worship services. We thank the many volunteers who served to welcome and host the many clergy, delegates, guests, and visitors from across the Southeast Conference. Special thanks to Pamela Cook and Reverend Ginnie Ferrell for coordinating the First Church effort.

Deacon Ruth Chin Hicks wishes to thank everyone for the cards, and the birthday wishes she received on August 19th. God Bless You All!

A beautiful Celebration of Life for Cedric Jordan was held yesterday at First Church. Please keep his wife Carol and children Taylor, Rachel, Jacob, and Randall in your prayers.

The Celebration of Life for Erma Jean Thomas will be held on Friday, September 11h, at First Church. Please keep the Thomas and Cheese families in your prayers.

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK!

A new season of Sunday School begins **Sunday, September 20 at 10:00 a.m.** in the **Fellowship Hall**! All students in grades K–12 are invited to join us on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month for an engaging journey of faith, fellowship, and discovery.

Through age-appropriate Bible study, interactive activities, creative experiences, and meaningful conversation, our young people will explore Scripture, build friendships, ask big questions, and discover how faith connects with everyday life. Throughout the year, even more is in store — service opportunities, special gatherings, and field trips! There's a place for every young person to be seen, heard, encouraged, and empowered as they grow in faith and community. We look forward to all that God will do in and through the lives of the youth and young families of First Church.

Abundant Blessings,

Minister Miles Amir Riley

Get ready for the Cookout in style—our official **Annual Cookout T-shirts are on sale** in the atrium following church! Be among the **first 10 people to purchase your shirt** and you'll receive a **special gift** as our way of saying thank you. Don't wait—grab your shirt early, claim your surprise, and get ready for a great day of food, fellowship, and fun! Thanks, Deacon Cinque Axam

The Board of Missions is restarting and we need your vision and energy. If you're interested in helping the board plan upcoming activities and partnerships or if you want to know more, please contact John Blevins, the committee chair, at john.blevins@emory.edu or 404-213-8514.

A Special Call meeting will be held immediately following worship service to vote on several important revisions to the 2026 Operations Budget. Please make every effort to participate in this important Congregational meeting. The items to be considered were affirmed by the Church Council and presented to the membership at the Summer Quarterly Meeting. They include: Grant Income (CASA UCC Grant), College Ministry Coordinator, Assistant Minister - Digital Strategy and Membership Services, Assistant Minister - Congregational Life and Community Engagement, Chief Executive Associate, Cornerstone Mortgage Loan Payment adjustment, Arts and Education Initiatives.

First Friday in September will feature dynamic drummer and keyboardist Larry Wilson. Be sure to purchase your tickets in Event Brite. The remaining all First Friday schedule is equally exciting. October 2nd will feature saxophonist Mace Hibbard and on Friday, November 6th, the amazing Nnenna Freelon will perform a special concert in the Sanctuary!

ALL MEMBER ALERT! Good Communication is essential to any church ministry. We need EVERY MEMBER to allow us to communicate with you via our Text Msg system, Newsletter, and the Instant Church Directory. These social platforms allow you to know what's going on at First Church from your mobile device. For the Sundays in August, we will help you sign up for these essential services. Please visit the Minister Myles at Help Desk in the atrium after service today and let us help you get fully connected with the ministries and blessings of First Church.

The Monday Night Virtual Bible Study Group will gather at **6:30 pm on Monday, August 31, 2026.** The discussion will focus on **Acts 19:23-41, Acts 20, and Acts 21.** Discussion leaders will be Jack Williams, Donna Harper and Beth Brown. All are welcome to join this 90 minute conversation! All are welcome. Please invite your friends. **Zoom Meeting ID: 815 2035 8883. Passcode: 108214**

Theater Lovers Alert. A group trip to see the Alliance Theater Production of PURPOSE is in the works. Contact Terri Vismale Morris for more information.

ALTAR FLOWERS Altar Flowers are a wonderful way to remember a loved one or celebrate some good news. Scan the QR code to place an order or contact the church office. Altar flower announcements for the bulletin must be submitted by Tuesday at 5pm.

A Stewardship Thought Inspired by 1 Timothy 6:10
"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." Scan the QR code to give.

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Giving generously:

- **Growing as disciples**
- **Living in integrity**
- **Bearing faithful witness**

"...Give, and it will be given to you.
A good measure, pressed down, shaken together,
running over, will be put into your lap,
for the measure you give will be the measure
you get back." Luke 6:38

Supplemental Contribution to 2026 Operations Budget
and
Pledge to the Support the 2027 Budget

Having prayerfully considered God's blessings in my/our lives and my/our commitment to Christ's ministry through First Congregational Church, I/we joyfully affirm my/our covenant of generosity by making a supplemental gift to the 2026 Operations Budget and by pledging my/our support for the 2027 Operations Budget as indicated on the reverse side of this pledge card.

Dear Member of First Church,

I hope this note finds you well and in good spirits despite the sweltering heat and many upheavals in our world. As we approach the end of summer and begin the wonders of autumn, I write to encourage you to participate in the new Pledge Campaign for 2026-2027 being initiated on our behalf by the Stewardship Council. The Stewardship Council has been working diligently to engage in a critical assessment of our financial needs and capacity. We believe that now is the right time to initiate a Pledge Campaign in which every member can participate and support. Although formal pledge campaigns have been done before at First Church, it has been several years since we incorporated a pledge campaign into our budget and stewardship process. Please note that the Operations Budget of the church is based on the commitment and generosity of its members.

God continues to bless First Church in countless ways and the possibilities of a bright future are all around us. The arrival of our new assistant minister for youth and young families and better utilization of the gifts of our other clergy, inspiring worship services which uplift our members and friends both in-person and online, and a strategic plan that will help guide us for years to come--- all these represent signs of promise and purpose.

As you know we have encountered many challenges this year, including the Truist bank fraud, the HVAC system and parking lot retaining wall failures, and our own decline in membership giving. Our promise and purpose rely on God's grace as well as *our* Christian witness.

You may submit your pledge card electronically as follows: download the attachment, fill in the blanks with your name, contact information and the amount of your pledge. After completing the card, save the card on your device and identify it with your full name, then attach it to an email sent to info@firstchurchatl.org. Alternatively, you may mail your completed card to the Church Office at 105 Courtland Street, Atlanta, GA 30303. The Stewardship Council requests that all pledge cards be submitted by Sept. 13th.

I am extremely grateful and proud to be a part of the purposeful ministry and mission of First Church. Please join me in acknowledging God's blessing with a pledge.
May God Bless You and Keep You!

Rev. Dwight

SUMMER AND FALL CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

9/4 First Friday at First Featuring Larry Wilson
9-20 **Ambassador Young preaching** and special Interfaith Service of Remembrance of the Atlanta Race Massacre of 1906.
9/20 After worship **Annual Diaconate Cookout** in the Memorial Garden
9/27 Homecoming Worship with Gubernatorial candidate and former Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms as Guest Speaker.

10/2 First Friday at First Featuring Mace Hibbard
10/4 Servette Sunday
10/11 Women's Fellowship
10/18 Men's Day with special guest speaker Dr. Willie Underwood, III, President of the American Medical Association.
10/25 "Faith and AI Inforum" after worship with author, activist, and scholar Dr. Kamau Bobb. He discusses his new book, *The Bullwhip's Algorithm: Artificial Intelligence and America's Racial Caste System.* Co-sponsored by the Social Action Committee.

11/6 A Special First Friday with Nnenna Freelon in the Sanctuary
11/8 Stewardship Sunday
11/29 First Sunday of Advent Hanging of the Green

12/6 2nd Sunday of Advent. Many Moods of Christmas
12/11-12 Annual Holiday Jazz Vespers
12/13 Children's Christmas Play
12/20 Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
12/25 Christmas Day Service
12/31 Watch Night Service- In Person

GETTING TO KNOW
THE FIRST CHURCH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP. (FCCDC)

Many members are unaware of the First Church Community Development Corp. (FCCDC). FCCDC is a separate sister organization to First Church. It was formed in 1999 to extend the reach of First Church out into the community. Its mission is to *empower people and communities by creating local, regional, national, and international pathways as well as strategic partnerships designed to build capacity through the arts, spiritual formation, civic and cultural endeavors, education programs, and economic initiatives whose combined impact will advance a more just and loving world*.

The FCCDC has been revitalized with new leadership and a new sense of purpose. Michael Harris is the Chairperson, and the board is comprised of both FCC members and members of the Atlanta community. This spring and summer, the CDC served as the sponsor of the Rhythm and Robots Summer Camp and Discovery Day. It will sponsor the Annual Holiday Jazz Vespers program at Christmas. Now is the time to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations so that we can creatively serve our neighbors, both young and old, at greater capacity. I anticipate the creation of a Memorandum of Agreement between the two organizations to outline how the organizations will share resources to effect innovative onsite activities for youth and seasoned citizens. I also envision a more active use of the Commons as the site of our collaborative efforts. Imagine a seven-days-a-week site for spiritual formation, imagination, creativity, and community building.

-Rev. Andrews

FCCDC Board Members

Michael Harris
Kamau Bobb
Dwight Andrews
Lynne Alston Leonard
Jane Thorpe
Leslie Gordon
Sheri Moore-Change
Michael Varzi
Cameron Pennybacker
Wanda McMullen
Tashuana White
Michele Mateno Silatchom

Welcome to First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of First Congregational Church, UCC is to be a Christ-centered church which leads people to God through a commitment to, and the practice of our five key precepts of: worship, prayer, study, service, and stewardship.

VISION STATEMENT

To be a Christ-centered church that models the love of God, builds relationships, and empowers people of all walks of life through our creative services, discipleship, outreach, ministries, and teaching, as well as striving always to use our time, talents, and treasures to the building of the beloved community.

OUR INVITATION

First Church is an inclusive, social justice, and social gospel church. Founded in 1867, it has been a Christian witness to Atlanta and the World for over one hundred and fifty-nine years! Its mission is rooted in the Christian concept of love and our efforts for social justice, human rights, equity, and inclusion of all people, and racial reconciliation are hallmarks of our ministry. As a congregational church we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Each of us is called to do our part to make this a better world. Looking for a church home? Please consider First Church!

Contact Us:

105 Courtland Street, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30303 | 404-659-6255 |

www.firstchurchatl.org