



The Steeple

JANUARY 3, 2010

TRADITIONAL SERVICE
IN THE SANCTUARY

8:30 A.M.

9:45 A.M.

11:00 A.M.

Amy Valdez Barker Preaching

“THE 2010 PATHFINDER”

MATTHEW 2:1-12

Anthem:

“BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE STARS”

Hal Hopson

11:00 a.m. worship service is broadcast on
WRFC 960 AM each Sunday and
online at www.960theref.com

For a detailed calendar, see our
website: www.athensfirstumc.org

CHUCK HODGES
Senior Minister

MARTHA AENCHBACHER
Minister of Program

AMY VALDEZ BARKER
Minister of Families with Youth

JOHN PAGE
Minister of Discipleship

AMEN AND AMEN!

Whatever God has promised gets stamped with the Yes of Jesus. In him, his is what we preach and pray, the great *Amen*, God's Yes and our Yes together, gloriously evident. God affirms us, making us a sure thing in Christ, putting his Yes within us. By his Spirit he has stamped us with his eternal pledge—a sure beginning of what he is destined to complete (II Corinthians 1:20-22, The Message).

2010 seemed a long time away when I was little. It's almost here and I haven't even put away the Christmas lights! What resolutions should I choose that I might actually carry out? How do I reflect carefully on 2009 while getting ready for a new year? There is so much that can cause us unnecessary anxiety when we meet these kinds of turning points. We have some expectations that set us off in the wrong direction. Maybe we could say something more interesting than “Happy New Year” to get us on the right track. Happy New Year is a fine greeting, but limited to a countdown on one evening. I came across an article on the word *Amen* and it made me think. Perhaps it's worth saying *Amen* this year to emphasize God's presence with us in 2009 and that God will be with us in 2010!

We often use *Amen* as the last word of a solemn statement. It was transliterated directly from Hebrew into Greek, and so on, making it one of the best known words in human speech. McDonald's is recognizable in just about every country, so I am comforted that *Amen* might trump that. It is directly related to the Hebrew word for “believe” (*aman*), or “faithful.” It came to mean “sure” or “truly,” an expression of absolute trust and confidence. When God makes a promise, the believer's response is *Amen* or “so it will be!” In the case of Jesus, it is used as the first word. Jesus would often begin an affirmative statement by saying “Verily” or “Truly” which is the word *Amen*. When we say *Amen* as we close prayers or conclude a hymn, we are saying, “Yes before God I agree, I believe, and I want that to be so.”

The word *Amen* is a title of God – Isaiah 65:16 which talks about “the God of truth.” If you left “truth” untranslated it would be *Amen*. It is also a title of Christ. The last of Jesus' letters to the seven churches says: “These things saith the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God” (Revelation 3:14). God in Christ is our eternal *Amen*; the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. The last word of the Bible is *Amen* (Rev. 22:21). So whatever our thoughts are on the old year or the new year, it is worth considering that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever! From beginning to end, we have a God who loves us and gives us an *Amen*; a yes to life, love and truth. And all God's people said, “*Amen!*”

Amen and Amen!

Martha

MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

www.athensfirstumc.org

MEMBER NEWS

In Sympathy

Heartfelt Christian sympathy is extended to:
Mike and Peggy Sue Williams on the loss of his brother, Phil Williams, on December 16.

Mary and Curtis Tate on the loss of her sister, Betty Combs Driver, on December 18 in Carrollton, Georgia.

Matt Dixon and Diane Black on the loss of their brother, Glenn Briscoe, on December 22 in Monroe, Georgia.

Cindy and Bill Walker and children on the loss of her grandfather, Loyce Todd, on December 23 in Blackshear, Georgia.

New Arrival

Congratulations to:
Chip and Julie Small on the birth of their son, Logan Jennings Small, on December 16.

John and Whitney McMullan on the birth of their son, Harris McKinley McMullan, on December 16.

Baptism

David Jackson Dupree, III received the Sacrament of Baptism on December 20 in our Sanctuary. Jack is the son of David and Shannon Dupree.

Dorothy Rose Parker received the Sacrament of Baptism on December 27 in our Sanctuary. Dorothy Rose is the daughter of Rachael Marie and Olin Grant Parker and the great granddaughter of Olin Griffith Parker.

New Members

We welcome to the First United Methodist Family:
David and Shannon Dupree, 216 Claystone Woods Drive, Athens, Georgia 30606. Son, Jack, also joins as a baptized member.

Wedding Bells

Congratulations to:
Emily Woodall and Jack McCormack who were married on December 18 in our chapel. Emily is the daughter of Sue and Chuck Gammill.

Altar Flowers

The flowers on the altar, January 3, are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Dr. and Mrs. R.P. Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. Howell Erwin, Jr., and Mr. Howell Erwin, III by Chad Erwin, Lucy and Buddy Allen and children, and Steve and Debbie Erwin and children.

BIBLE STUDY AND LEARNING OPTIONS

On Mission with God

Bible Study for Men - Based on the premise that those who have experienced God should thereafter join in God's mission. Starts Wednesday, January 13, at 6:30 p.m. Contact Keith Wilson kwilson99@charter.net. Cost is \$15 for the book.

Beth Moore's Believing God

This women's Bible study will begin on Wednesday, January 20, and go through Wednesday, March 24. Two sessions are available: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. **or** 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Childcare will not be available for these studies. Please sign up by contacting jstrickland@bellsouth.net or hweston43@charter.net.

FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church-wide Birthday Party!

Our Church-wide Birthday Party will take place at Wednesday Night Supper on January 13! Please come and let's celebrate the New Year and all our birthdays together. Call the church office and make your reservations for dinner. For dessert, we will have Cecilia Cakes and ice cream! See you there!

Sunday Parking

Through the graciousness of our business neighbor, parking is available on Sunday mornings across the street at Athens First Bank and Trust. However, please be aware that the ATM drive-through lane must remain open at all times to ensure accessibility for their customers. Thank you for your help with this.

Women's Retreat

This retreat is planned for February 26-27, 2010 at the Marriott Evergreen Resort in Stone Mountain. The program will be *Home Sweet Home* with Leslie Barron as the speaker. The cost is \$160 per person for a one night stay, three meals, and the speaker. You can register online at www.athensfirstumc.org. For additional information, contact Kelly Jones at pnkjones@bellsouth.net.

DISCIPLESHIP & MISSIONS

Thank You!

You cooked food, or served a meal, even cleaned up. You brought socks or hard candy. Maybe you sat and talked with a guest at a meal, or delivered presents for a family. Whether it was Monthly Agape (300+ pairs of socks), Souper Supper (80 people served so far), Project Safe Angel Tree (18 families adopted), or the Christmas Community Meal (250 meals served), you extended Christ's love in a tangible way in December. I wish I could tell each of you in person, but allow me to say "Thank You," in this way. Your investment of time, money, and energy is greatly appreciated! - John Page

Sack Lunch Ministry

It is time again to sign up for our Sunday Sack Lunch Ministry. If you are interested in providing sack lunches for persons in need following the 11:00 a.m. worship services, please contact Kelly Channell, kellychannell@gmail.com. We are signing up for January, February and March. This is a great way to help people in our community. For questions or more information, call Tracy Tringleth in the church office, 706-543-1442, ext. 206.

Costa Rica Mission Trip: March 2010

Join us Saturday, March 6, through Saturday, March 13, for another great mission adventure in Costa Rica! The cost is \$850 per person. Please contact Martha Aenchbacher if you are interested in going on this trip, martha@athensfirstumc.org. Deadline to sign up in January 15, 2010.

Thursday Souper Suppers

Volunteers are needed for this event in February to prepare and serve meals to persons in need. These suppers are every Thursday from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Hancock Hall. Contact tracy@athensfirstumc.org if you can help.



Children's Ministry

Touching Hearts, Shaping Lives

The New Year is a great time to set expectations for your children. Expect that they will:

- ...Learn quickly
- ...Grow spiritually
- ...Worship reverently
- ...Pray earnestly
- ...Love faithfully
- ...Give generously
- ...Play joyfully
- ...Do their best
- ...They will

Join us on Sunday mornings as we seek Him in all that we do.

**“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”
Jeremiah 29:13**



A MESSAGE FOR YOU...TH!

- • • • •
- **January 3, 2010**
- 9:45 a.m. FIRST WORD
- NO EVENING PROGRAMMING
-
- **This Week...January 3-9, 2010**
- **Tuesday, January 5**
- 7:15 a.m. Youth Breakfast @ Watkinsville
- Waffle House
-
- **Wednesday, January 6**
- 7:15 a.m. Youth Breakfast @ Beechwood
- Chick-fil-a
- NO BIBLE STUDY
-
- **Saturday, January 9**
- 9 a.m.-2 p.m. WYC Retreat (please bring \$10 to
- cover food and bowling)
-
- **UPCOMING...**
- **January 10** Warmth in the Winter
- **January 13** Wednesday night Bible Study returns
- **Jan 15-18** Jr./Sr. Retreat
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Daynes's Devo

Everything was supposed to be fine in 2009 and, for a lot of us, it just wasn't. I was reflecting on the past year the other day and thinking about how rough it's been when I received a Christmas note from a good friend of mine. Her year has been rougher than mine. In 2009 her entire family had the flu at one time, her car broke down, she had brain surgery followed closely by her son getting chicken pox, and all while trying to obtain her doctorate and trying not to kill her 5th grader. It's enough to drive anyone mad, but she has taken it all in stride with a smile on her face.

The note she sent was a letter to Santa in which she listed everything she wanted this year. The unique thing was that she decided not to ask for things. She made a list of all the qualities she admired in her friends and family. All of us would have understood if she wanted to complain...she's earned the right, but instead she sent something to make us smile.

What she taught me is that it's all about attitude. It's being thankful for the blessings in our lives rather than dwelling on the hardships. It's looking to the future instead of fixating on the past. Mostly, it's about putting others ahead of ourselves, which, coincidentally is my resolution this year. I wish all of you a very happy New Year and, to quote my friend, "Here's to everything zen in 2010!"



SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

Isaiah 43:1-7

- 8:30 a.m. Worship Service
- 8:30 a.m. Preschool Nursery & Sunday School
- 8:50 a.m. Partners Too Sunday School
- 9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School
- 9:45 a.m. Worship Service
- 9:45 a.m. First Word
- 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

MONDAY, JANUARY 4

Judges 4:1-16

- 1:00 p.m. Monday Bible Study Group
- 3:00 p.m. After School Program
- 5:00 p.m. Youth Basketball
- 6:00 p.m. Karate
- 7:30 p.m. Volleyball

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

Judges 5:12-21

- 7:15 a.m. Youth Breakfast (Watkinsville Waffle House)
- 10:00 a.m. ISM New Student Lunch
- 4:30 p.m. Youth Basketball
- 6:00 p.m. Karate
- 7:30 p.m. Volleyball

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6

Numbers 27:1-11

- 7:15 a.m. Youth Breakfast (Beechwood Chick-fil-a)
- 5:30 p.m. Chamber Ensemble
- 6:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- Companions in Christ
- Disciple II
- Disciple III
- 8:00 p.m. Co-ed Volleyball

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

Jeremiah 3:1-5

- 9:00 a.m. Community Bible Study
- 4:30 p.m. Youth Basketball
- 5:00 p.m. Souper Supper
- 6:00 p.m. Karate
- 6:30 p.m. ISM Snack & Chat

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

Jeremiah 3:19-25

- 5:00 p.m. Youth Basketball

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

Jeremiah 4:1-4

- 8:30 a.m. Youth Basketball
- 9:00 a.m. WYC Winter Retreat
- 9:30 a.m. Youth Retreat Training

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WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER

SUPPER WILL RESUME ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13.

Reservations required by noon on Tuesday (706-543-1442)
 Cost is \$6 for regular plate; \$2 for pizza; \$20 family max
 Pizza available only by reservation;
 please specify cheese or pepperoni.

ATTENDANCE -

December 27

Sunday School	212
8:30 a.m. Worship	103
9:45 a.m.	146
11:00 a.m.	421
Total Worship Services	670

NURSERY PARENT HELPERS - Jan 3

- Babies: Chris & Julie Caldwell
- Beginning Walker: Todd & Katie Roath
- Toddlers: Chad & Sabrina Collins
- 2-Year-Olds: Mac & Luci Furlow
- 3-Year-Olds: Charlie & Shohn Calvin
- 4-Year-Olds: Matt & Marion Marvel

FIRST LIGHT ACOLYTES - Jan 3

- (8:30) William English, Erin McCollum
- (9:45) Campbell Cona, Jackson Keene, Anna Schramski
- (11:00) Makenzie Bramblett, Madeline Murphey, Tesh Parris
- Acolyte Manager: Richard Golden, Emily Harvel

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget for 2009	\$2,217,633
Giving Goal through November	\$1,848,928
Amount Received through November	\$1,861,266
Giving Goal for December	\$368,705
Amount given through Christmas Eve	\$285,632
Additional donations since BBQ	\$46,016
Prepare a Place received (this period)	\$4,820
Current Bank Loan(s) Debt	\$2,477,181.85

JANUARY USHERS

- (8:30) Jim Belger, Ann Brown, Paul Brown, Don Crews, Larry Deal, Jim Lyons, Candler Meadors, Olan Moore, Bob Noble, Grace Rabek, Ken Reece, Keith Wilson
- (9:45) Chris Bostdorff, David and Jane Disney, Mark Ellison, Tom Milton, Sharon Milton, Marvin Reynolds, Al Rogers, Bill Trigleth, Dave Matthews
- (11:00) John Bateman, Lee Brinson, Ryan Brinson, Nathan King, Claude Felton, Steve Greer, Mack Furlow

OFFERING STEWARDS

- Bob Booth & Charlie Grimes, co-chairman;
- Nat Belger, Charles Braucher, Nat Carmack, Henry Garrard, Al Hawley, Sean Rogers, Charlie Upchurch III.