

KNIGHTSVILLE Methodist Church

Faith - Family - Fellowship

ASH WEDNESDAY

ORDER OF WORSHIP

FEBRUARY 18, 2026

The Prelude and Candle Lighting		Layne Thompson
Call to Worship	Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy	Chancel Choir
Greeting		
	Pastor: Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.	
	People: Jesus, I belong to you. I lift my heart to you. I set my mind on you. I fix my eyes on you. I offer my body to you, as a living sacrifice. Jesus, we belong to you. Praying in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.	
Prayer for the People of God		Doug Hammond
Responsive Reading for Ash Wednesday		Doug Hammond
Hymn of Lent	Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling (OGRP #504 - Verses 1, 3, & 4)	Congregation & Chancel Choir
Words of Wisdom	Genesis 3:1-24	Alec Schumacher
Special Music	Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days	Chancel Choir
Word of God	Titus 3:3-8	Pastor Randy
Ash Wednesday Mediation		Lynn Wimpee
Spiritual Vitamin	From Dust to Hope	Pastor Robert
Anthem of Praise	O the Wonderful Cross/When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	Chancel Choir
Litany of Penitence		Pastor Bill
Thanksgiving / Imposition of Ashes		Pastor Robert & Pastor Bill
Prayer of Repentance		Pastor Robert
Hymn of Repentance	All to Jesus I Surrender (OGRP #607 - Verses 1 & 2)	Congregation & Chancel Choir
Lenten Blessing		Pastor Randy

Prayer for the People of God

Holy and gracious God, On this Ash Wednesday, we come before You with open hearts. We confess our need for Your mercy, our longing for Your presence, and our desire to be made whole. As the ashes touch our foreheads, remind us of both our frailty and Your faithfulness. Teach us to number our days, not in fear, but in wisdom and gratitude.

Lord, turn our hearts back to You. Strip away what distracts us, heal what is broken within us, and renew what has grown weary. Let this season of Lent be a time of honest reflection and deep transformation. May Your Spirit guide us, Your grace sustain us, and Your love draw us ever closer to the way of Christ.

We entrust ourselves to You – our past, our present, and our future. Shape us, cleanse us, and lead us into the fullness of life You promise. In the name of Jesus, our Redeemer and our hope, Amen

Responsive Reading for Ash Wednesday

Leader: Lord, You formed us from the dust and breathed life into our lungs.

People: We remember our dependence on You. Our lives are in Your hands.

Leader: You call us to return to You with all our hearts.

People: Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.

Leader: In Your mercy, You do not leave us in our sin or our sorrow.

People: Your grace meets us, restores us, and leads us into new life.

Leader: As we begin this Lenten journey, teach us to walk in humility and truth.

People: We turn our hearts toward You. We trust in Your steadfast love.

All: From dust we came, and to dust we will return – yet in Christ, we are made new.

Ash Wednesday Meditation

Ash Wednesday invites us into a holy pause – a moment when the noise of life quiets long enough for us to hear the truth about ourselves and the truth about God. The ashes we receive are not symbols of despair but reminders of reality: we are finite, fragile, and deeply dependent on the One who formed us from the dust.

Yet the ashes are placed in the shape of a cross. That's the heart of today. We face our mortality, but we do so under the sign of mercy. We acknowledge our sin, but we do so beneath the promise of forgiveness. We remember that life is short, but we also remember that God's love is everlasting.

Ash Wednesday is not about shame. It's about honesty. It's about returning – returning to the God who already knows us, already loves us, and already invites us into renewal. As we begin this Lenten journey, we do so with humility, but also with hope. The God who calls us to repentance is the same God who restores, renews, and resurrects.

Words of Wisdom - Genesis 3

Genesis 3 is the turning point of the entire biblical story. In a garden overflowing with God's goodness, a subtle voice questions God's word, planting seeds of doubt in the human heart. Adam and Eve face a choice between trust and autonomy, between receiving life as a gift or grasping for it on their own terms. Their decision unleashes consequences that ripple through creation—shame, fear, broken relationships, and exile. Yet even in judgment, God speaks a promise: evil will not have the final word. A future Redeemer will rise to crush the serpent's work and restore what was lost.

Allow this scripture to open up your heart, mind, and soul as we start our Lenten journey.

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful, and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So, she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So, they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So, they hid from the Lord God among the trees. Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked." "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?" The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it." Then the Lord God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

Then the Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you."

And to the man he said, "Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains.

By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made.

For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return."

Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live. And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

Then the Lord God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

May God bless our discernment to His holy word.

Word of God - Titus 3:3-8

Titus 3 calls the church to live as a transformed people in a watching world. Paul reminds believers of who they once were—lost, foolish, and enslaved to passions—so they never lose sight of God’s mercy. Through the kindness and saving grace of Jesus, we are washed, renewed, and made heirs of eternal life. Out of that new identity, Paul urges practical goodness: gentleness toward others, obedience to authority, and a life marked by good works. The chapter closes by warning against divisive behavior and encouraging believers to devote themselves to what is excellent and profitable.

Now hear the word of the Lord.

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—
When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone.

This is the word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Litany of Penitence

Pastor: Holy and merciful God, we come before you acknowledging our sin, our frailty, and our deep need for your grace.

People: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Pastor: For the times we have turned away from your voice, trusted our own wisdom, and resisted your Spirit's leading.

People: Forgive us and renew us.

Pastor: For careless words, hard hearts, and the harm we have done to others— in thought, word, and deed.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For our pride, our impatience, our anger, and our failure to love as you have loved us.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Pastor: For neglecting the poor, ignoring the lonely, and withholding compassion from those who needed it most.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the sins we cannot forget, the sins we cannot escape, and the sins we cannot even name.

People: Have mercy on us, O God.

Pastor: Create in us clean hearts, restore to us the joy of your salvation, and shape us again in the likeness of Christ.

People: Make us new, O Lord.

Pastor: As we receive the ashes, remind us that we are dust— yet beloved dust, redeemed by your grace and held in your everlasting mercy.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.