

# Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026 | 6:00 p.m.

The First United Methodist Church of Cheraw

# A SERVICE OF WORSHIP FOR ASH WEDNESDAY



## GREETING

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
*And also with you.*

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.  
*God's mercy endures for ever.*

## OPENING PRAYER

God who formed us in your image and breathed your love into the ground to make us. You call us to lead lives that are worthy of your praise. Help to us surrender this night our lives into your Holy Spirit and to acknowledge the truths that you have made us and not we are ourselves and apart from you, we can do nothing. Only by thy grace can we live in you. Amen.

## †HYMN 355

Depth of Mercy

CANTERBURY

## PSALM 51

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

15 Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

18 May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

## ANTHEM

Create In Me a Clean Heart O God Carl Mueller  
*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Create in me a clean heart, O God!* *from Psalm 51*

## †GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1: 9-20

## SERMON

Facing Death in New Life

## INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN

### DISCIPLINE

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation. During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church. In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church,  
to observe a holy Lent:  
by self-examination and repentance;

by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;  
and by reading and meditating on God's Holy  
Word

To make a right beginning of repentance,  
and as a mark of our mortal nature,  
let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and  
Redeemer.

## THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

Almighty God,  
you have created us out of the dust of the earth.  
Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mor-  
tality and penitence, so that we may remember that  
only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting  
life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*All are invited to come and receive ashes from the  
communion rail*

## CONFESSION AND PARDON

*Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name.*

Pastor: We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

*Have mercy on us, Lord.*

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done:

for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

*Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;  
Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.*

*Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,*

*That we may show forth your glory in the world.*

*By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,*

*Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.*

**PASTOR:**

May the almighty and merciful God,  
who desires not the death of a sinner  
but that we turn from wickedness and live,  
accept your repentance, forgive your sins,  
and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life.  
Amen.

**THE PEACE**

*Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation and love*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

†**HYMN 401**

Lord, I Want To Be a Christian

CHRISTIAN

**DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**



