



February 18, 2026
 Ash Wednesday
 The Reverend Jenny Anderson

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

**All who are able, standing*

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Please gather in silence.

MUSIC AT THE GATHERING

WELCOME

* SILENT PROCESSIONAL

* 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

O God, you delight not in pomp and show,
 but in a humble and contrite heart.
 Overturn our love of worldly possessions
 and fix our hearts more firmly on you,
 that, having nothing,
 we may yet possess everything,
 a treasure stored up for us in heaven. **Amen.**

* HYMN

269 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

Land of Rest

**1 Lord who throughout these forty days
 For us didst fast and pray,
 Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins
 And close by Thee to stay.**

2 As Thou with Satan didst contend,

And didst the victory win,
O give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.

3 As Thou didst hunger bear, and thirst
So teach us gracious Lord,
To die to self and chiefly live
By Thy most holy word.

4 And through these days of penitence,
And through Thy passiontide,
Yea, evermore in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.

5 Abide with us, that so this life
Of suffering over past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Old Testament p.1037

HYMN

395 Take Time to Be Holy

verse 1, seated

Holiness

Take time to be holy,
speak oft with thy Lord;
abide in him always,
and feed on his word.
Make friends of God's children,
help those who are weak,
forgetting in nothing
his blessing to seek.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 51:1-17

Old Testament p. 640

HYMN

395 Take Time to Be Holy

verse 2, seated

Holiness

Take time to be holy,
the world rushes on;
spend much time in secret
with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus,
like him thou shalt be;
thy friends in thy conduct
his likeness shall see.

* GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

New Testament p. 6

SERMON

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 bow before our Creator and Redeemer.

A brief silence is kept; the congregation bowed.

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 mortality

and penitence so we may remember that only by your gracious gift

are we given everlasting life;

through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

ANTHEM

Teach Me the Measure of My Days

arr. Alice Parker

Teach me the measure of my days,
 Thou maker of my frame;
 I would survey life's narrow space,
 and learn how frail I am.

A span is all that we can boast,
 an inch or two of time;
 man is but vanity and dust
 in all his flower and prime.

See the vain race of mortals move
 like shadows over the plain;
 they rage and strive, desire and love,
 but all the noise is vain.

What should I wish or wait for, then,
 from creatures earth and dust?
 They make our expectations vain,
 and disappoint our trust.

Now I forbid my carnal hope,
 my fond desires recall;
 I give my mortal interest up,
 and make my God my all.

- Isaac Watts

* IMPOSITION OF ASHES

All are invited to come forward and kneel or stand at the communion rail to receive ashes.

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. Amen.

All pray in silence.

Almighty God have mercy on you,
 forgive all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 strengthen you in all goodness
 and by the power of the Holy Spirit
 keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

* THE PEACE

* HYMN

292 What Wondrous Love is This

Wondrous Love

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
 What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
 What wondrous love is this
 That caused the Lord of bliss
 To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
 To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
 What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
 What wondrous love is this
 That caused the Lord of life
 To lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
 to lay aside his crown for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;
 To God and to the Lamb I will sing;
 To God and to the Lamb,
 Who is the great I AM,
 While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
 While millions join the theme, I will sing.

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.
 And when from death I'm free
 I'll sing and joyful be,
 And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
 And through eternity I'll sing on.

* DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

* GOING FORTH

All depart in silence after the retiring procession of the worship leaders.

Ministry of Worship

Preacher	The Reverend Jenny Anderson
Liturgist	Jeff Pullium
Lay Reader	Rebekah Bryant
Greeters	Becky Rogers, Alison Wright
Ushers	Millie and Jeff Huff
Acolyte	Annabelle Quattlebaum
Crucifer	Alexandra Anderson
Organist and Choir Director	Jamie Council Garvey
Choir	The St. John Choir
Worship Technicians	Donald Tilton, Adam Kuehl

St. John United Methodist Church

St. John is a welcoming and affirming congregation.

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