

SERVICE OF WORSHIP
First Sunday of Lent

First United Methodist Church
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

February 22, 2026 at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.



“Temptation in the Wilderness”
Briton Rivière, 1898

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. During this season we are invited to examine the roots of our Christian discipleship and identify with Jesus’s journey to the cross. We will observe Lent in our worship services by adapting our practices for the season. In addition to removing “Alleluias” from the liturgy and flowers from the sanctuary, we also use a Lenten affirmation of faith. May these corporate practices, along with our individual Lenten disciplines, shape our journey with Jesus to the cross.

Today’s Gospel lesson tells the story of Jesus’s journey into the wilderness, where he fasted for forty days and resisted the temptations of the devil. The early Sundays of Lent are a wilderness time— an opportunity to go deep into our hearts and the souls of our communities, to recognize the horror and depth of our estrangement from God, and to strive systematically to put things right, even as we resist temptation.

CHIMES

Worship begins with the opening voluntary. At the sound of the chimes, we invite you into a period of quiet reflection preparing for today’s service.

OPENING VOLUNTARY “Give Me Jesus”

Setting by Duane Funderburk

GREETING

† HYMN “The Glory of These Forty Days”



The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e - brate with songs of praise;
 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing God who gave the law;
 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered from the li - on's might;
 Then grant that we like them be true, con - sumed in fast and prayer with you;



for Christ, by whom all things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
 and to E - li - jah, fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
 and John, the Bride - groom's friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
 our spir - its strength - en with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR LENT

Adapted from 2 Corinthians 5:14–19

**We believe the love of Christ urges us on,
 because we are convinced Jesus died for all,
 so that we who live might no longer live for ourselves,
 but for him who died and was raised for us.
 From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view.
 If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:
 everything old has passed away; see,
 everything has become new!
 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ,
 and has given us the ministry of reconciliation;
 in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself,
 not counting our trespasses against us,
 and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.**

† GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

PRESENTATION OF SECOND GRADE BIBLES

Bella Barry	Alice Grand	Allie McIlwain	Molly Tyler
Luca Centanni	Miller Green	Day'Shawn Mitchell	Asher Valiollahi
Avery Claire Corkern	Pierre Haynes	Sage Mitchell	Avery Waldrop
Brooks Courville	Lucy Hood	Frances Marin Myers	Jaylee Warren
Lucy Clare Dugas	Sloan Hurley	Elizabeth Grace Pernici	
Benjamin Ferrari	Thomas Ledet	Estelle Selig	
Caroline Goodner	Beckett Lundgren	Madeleine Tonguis	

OUR SHARED LIFE

Today's music is underwritten by Jayson and Beth Newell in memory of Samuel Newell and in honor of Joshua Newell's birthday on February 18, and in memory of Fred Loy, by his family.

DIALOGUE

O God, you are the source of our hope. **Guide us through change and chance.**

When we grow weary and faint, **call our hearts to be your own.**

When our plans fall to dust, **be our temple and our tower.**

When the world lacks joy and beauty, **reveal your splendor, light, and life.**

O God, we praise you for the gift of your Son. **Strengthen us to follow the way of the cross.**

CALL TO PRAYER “If You But Trust in God to Guide You”

Setting by David Cherwien

If you but trust in God to guide you, with hopeful heart through all your ways, you will find strength, with God beside you, to bear the worst of evil days; for those who trust God’s changeless love build on the rock that will not move. What gain is there in futile weeping, in helpless anger and distress? If you are in God’s care and keeping, in sorrow will God love you less? For Christ who took for you a cross will bring you safe through every loss. Be still and wait God’s pleasure in cheerful hope, with heart content, trusting that grace which knows no measure will by unbounded Love be sent; nor doubt our inmost wants are clear to One who holds us always near. Sing, pray, and keep God’s ways unswerving; offer your service faithfully, and trust God’s word, though undeserving, there find the truth to set you free; God will not fail to guide and bless those who embrace God’s faithfulness.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Children are invited to come forward for the children’s sermon during “Jesus Loves Me.”

HYMN “Jesus Loves Me”

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

An offering is collected to support the work of First United Methodist Church sharing God’s love with the world. Please take a moment and record your attendance on a card located in the blue folders in the pews. Place the card in the offering plate when passed to you. Make a secure gift by scanning the QR Code or visit fumcbr.org/give to give online.



OFFERTORY “I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”

Setting by Kyle Pederson

I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Come unto me and rest; in me your soul will find its peace, in me you draw each breath.” I came to Jesus as I was, so weary and so worn; I found in him a resting place, where peace and hope are born. I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Behold I freely give.” I am the living water, quench your thirst, come drink and live. I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Come unto me and rest; my thirst was quenched, my soul renewed, and now I live in him. Speak now, Spirit, come and speak! I heard the voice of Jesus say, “I am this

dark world's light; look unto me, and night will fade, and all your mornings rise." I come to Jesus, and I find in him my star, my sun. And in that light of life I'll walk 'til traveling days are done. I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am life, I am light, I am love, now come and live."

† DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

† PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are: send your Spirit to strengthen us through your holy word: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

† GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ²He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" ⁷Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" ¹¹Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON "Built on Belovedness"

Reverend Whitton

† HYMN 377 "It Is Well with My Soul"

† BENEDICTION

CLOSING VOLUNTARY "Caprice"

Louis-Nicolas Clérambault

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP

Acolyte	(8:30 a.m.); (11:00 a.m.)
Children's Sermon	Sarah Wright, <i>Associate Director of Children's Ministry</i>
Lay Reader	Jennifer Winstead (8:30 a.m.); Robert Ezelle (11:00 a.m.)
Liturgist	Pattye Hewitt, <i>Executive Director of Adult Education, Hospitality, and Care</i>
Musicians	Dr. Chelsey Geeting, <i>Soprano</i> (8:30 a.m.) Glyn Morden, <i>Tenor</i> ; Chancel Choir (11:00 a.m.) Nathan Anderson, <i>Flute</i> ; Dr. Susannah Knoll, <i>Cello</i> Holden Miller, <i>Associate Director of Music and Organist</i> Lamar Drummonds, <i>Director of Music and Worship</i>
Preaching	Reverend Brady Whitton, <i>Senior Pastor</i>
Soundboard	Jim Hewitt

Welcome to First United Methodist Church

Families with Children – Children are always welcome in worship! Childcare is available during all services for children ages 6 weeks through Kindergarten. FUMC also offers Sunday morning groups for children and youth from 9:45-10:45 a.m. To find a group, visit the check-in table located across from the welcome desk in the Conference Center lobby.

Café 930 - Enjoy fellowship and a cup of hot coffee or tea from 8:00-11:00 a.m. (Ory Parish Hall) every Sunday morning. An assortment of teas, flavored syrups, and sweeteners are available. All are welcome.

If you are new to First United Methodist and are ready to learn more or have questions, we invite you to join us for our monthly **Newcomer Coffee**. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and meet others. This event takes place on the first Sunday of each month from 9:45–10:45 a.m. in Ory Parish Hall. Registration is helpful (scan the QR code) but not required. For more information, contact Shan Schatzle, Coordinator, at shan@firstmethodist.org.



Believe & Belong – Are you discerning becoming a member of FUMC or ready to join? Attend the next Believe & Belong on March 15 from 9:45–10:45 a.m. in the Conference Center. Childcare and Children’s Sunday School are available during this hour. Register by scanning the QR code. Questions? Email Pattye Hewitt, *Executive Director of Adult Education, Hospitality, and Care*, at phewitt@firstmethodist.org.



Resource Table - Looking to grow your love for God, self, and others? Stop by the Resource Table located in the narthex off the back of the sanctuary and help yourself to a Bible and highly recommended books. These free resources will encourage and inspire you in following Jesus and loving others in his name.

Do you receive our E-News? Our weekly email newsletter is one of the primary means by which we communicate with our congregation and friends. If you’d like to be added to the distribution list, please email info@firstmethodist.org.

Announcements

The Love Your Neighbor Van needs restocking! Please place your donations in the box near the America Street entrance. Visit the Love Your Neighbor Van Amazon Registry by scanning the QR code. We are currently collecting the following items: large backpacks; men’s crew socks; flushable wipes; soft breakfast bars; and men’s elastic waist pants (medium/large and new or gently used).



“The Sanctuary for Lent” 2026 devotionals are available at all sanctuary entrances. This resource contains brief readings for each of the 40 days in Lent. Those wanting a printed copy mailed to their home, or a downloadable version, should email Pattye Hewitt at phewitt@firstmethodist.org

Draw closer to God by attending a service of Holy Communion each Wednesday in Lent from 12:10-12:40 p.m. in the Aldrich Chapel. The first service will be held this Wednesday, February 25.

Beginning today, you are invited to join **“Ancient Near East: The Environment that Produced the Bible.”** Led by Dr. Tasha Whitton, this six-week offering will explore the cultures, stories, law, empires, and ideas that formed the backdrop of scripture. The class will meet in the Aldrich Chapel from 9:45–10:45 a.m. Question? Contact Pattye Hewitt at phewitt@firstmethodist.org.

Men's Walk to Emmaus on February 26-March 1. Men are invited to experience the Men's Walk to Emmaus, a three-day spiritual retreat hosted at Broadmoor United Methodist Church. The Walk to Emmaus is designed to inspire and equip Christian disciples and leaders. It is a meaningful opportunity for anyone seeking spiritual renewal. Several members of FUMC will serve in leadership roles, including Rev. Brady Whitton as Spiritual Director. For more information, please email Patty Hewitt at phewitt@firstmethodist.org.

You are invited to a daylong retreat, "Open the Door," to seek spiritual disciplines that enhances your awareness of how the doors of Christ are opening in your life. This day will focus your faith journey. Saturday, February 28 from 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. Registration is \$15. Led by Mary Rotenberg. Register by scanning the QR code.



Ladies are invited to attend **Free to Be Women's Retreat** on March 20-22 at the Feliciana Retreat and Conference Center, led by Mary Byo, Cherri Johnson, and Cindy Mann. This weekend will center around rest, reflection, prayer, and making space for the presence of God. This is your invitation to remember that faith is meant to heal and restore the whole of who you are: body, mind, heart, and soul. For more information, email mary@nurturedbr.com and to register, visit fumcbr.org/freetobe or scan the QR code.



Our Ministries Require Your Support: Your contributions help underwrite the important ministries of FUMC. Recurring gifts provide stability for our church, helping us know how much income to expect and to manage cash flow throughout the year. To establish a recurring gift via ACH bank draft, contact Destiny Muse, *Contributions Coordinator*, at dmuse@firstmethodist.org, or at 225-383-2777, extension 218. For instructions on setting up an online recurring gift, visit <http://www.fumcbr.org/give>.



This April, Easter Sunday 2026, marks the centennial of the completion and dedication of the Baton Rouge First United Methodist Church sanctuary. Accounts regarding the "new" church will be shared in the bulletin over the coming months.

The site chosen for the new church was said by a Baton Rouge *State-Times* reporter to be "the most commanding, picturesquely situated and centrally located church building spot in the city, overlooking [at that time] the Jefferson highway, one of the great thoroughfares of the south."

The Building Committee, formed in 1922, consisted of twenty-six members and was chaired by Steve Russ, owner of a wholesale lumber company in the city. Church pastor Dr. Charles Crisler, cited Russ as the one person most responsible for construction of the new church building and noted that Russ's own business had suffered while he devoted so much time and effort toward the church building project.

Construction of the new building began in 1924 under the guidance of church member A.C. Stewart. Architect of the new church, Raymond B. Spencer of Memphis, Tennessee, described the FUMC architecture as "late English Tudor Gothic" with an exterior "trimmed with cut stone" and walls of "rough rock-faced stone." "Heavy buttresses" used as part of the construction, "give the walls and towers an effect of massive dignity," said Spencer. He likely was anticipating being selected as the architect for the job, since Spencer submitted renderings of the new church only a week after his selection.



The Berta Bates Hurst home that occupied the site where the sanctuary now stands.

"Worship at River's Edge" by Ronald Garay, Ph.D.