

ASH WEDNESDAY

Parkway Heights United Methodist Church
& Westminster Presbyterian Church (USA)

February 18, 2026

PRELUDE – *WONDRIOUS LOVE*

Rebecca Groom Te Velde

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP – *COME, YE SINNERS, POOR AND Needy*

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Christopher Crotwell

CONGREGATIONAL CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

Let us worship God. God sent Christ into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

God’s love endures forever.

God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God’s love endures forever.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (*unison*)

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of tenderness, and strengthen us to face our mortality, that we may reach with confidence for your mercy; in Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN 165 – *THE GLORY OF THESE FORTY DAYS*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God our helper, by your Holy Spirit open our minds, that as the scriptures are read we may be led into your truth, and be taught your will, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING – PSALM 51

ANTHEM – *LIKE AS THE HART DESIRETH THE WATERBROOKS*

Herbert Howells

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee,
O God my soul is athirst for God yea, even for the living God.
When I shall come to appear before the presence of God?
My tears have been my meat day and night while they daily say unto me.
Where, where is now thy God?

My tears have been my meat day and night. My meat day and night.
Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is a thirst for God, yea, for the living God. When shall I come before the presence, the presence of God?

SCRIPTURE READING – MATTHEW 6:1-6,16-21

SERMON

The Rev. Keith Keeton

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is the time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditation on the Word of God.

Litany of Penitence (*responsive*)

Let us pray.

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault 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, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We have not listened 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, O God.

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

We confess to you, O God.

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

We confess to you, O God.

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

We confess to you, O God.

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

We confess to you, O God.

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

We confess to you, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, O God.

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, O God.

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

Accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES (*responsive*)

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

(Those who wish to receive the imposition of ashes are invited to come forward)

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

That we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of our Savior,

Bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.

*HYMN 450 – BE THOU MY VISION

*BLESSING AND CHARGE (*responsive*)

May the God of peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being — spirit, soul, and body — free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

* POSTLUDE – *ABERYSTWYTH*

Ashley Grote

* Please stand at the * as you are able. Unison readings are **printed in bold**.

