



# Ash Wednesday

7:00pm

February 18, 2026

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A joint worship service of Community Church of the Brethren & First Mennonite Church

*To take the sign of the cross  
means to allow oneself to be stretched out wide  
in solidarity with the Christ  
and in compassion for all,  
even at cost,  
and to believe against defeat and despair  
that hope can rise and life begin again.*

*(William Loader)*

Music for Meditation  
Gathering Words

June Goodman  
Tonya Ramer Wenger

### Call to Worship\*

One: Listen for the voice of the shepherd:

All: I came that they may have life.

One: Listen for the voice of the shepherd:

All: I am going ahead of you so you will know the way.

One: Listen for the voice of the shepherd:

All: I lay down my life, and I will take it up again.

One: Listen for the voice of the shepherd:

All: we will come in, and go out, and find pasture.

HYMN *The Lord's My Shepherd* VT 660

Pauline Buller, June Goodman

### Prayer

Scripture Reading: *Isaiah 58:1-12*

Jim Unruh

Silence ... to hold with God what you noticed in the Isaiah passage

Scripture Reading: *John 10:1-18*

Marlys Best

Meditation

Matt Christian

Imposition of Ashes ... with Music for Meditation & Prayers around the Cross

Tonya Ramer Wenger, Matt Christian, June Goodman



A period of silence with music for meditation will be held during this time as we lean into the care of God our Shepherd. Those who wish to may come forward to have the sign of the cross placed on foreheads or hands. The ashes are from palm branches used at Palm Sunday services in the past, mixed with oil.

Before or after you have been marked with ashes, light a candle and spend some time in prayer as we cross the threshold into this year's Lenten journey, with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, inviting us in, loving and guiding us along the way.

**Psalm 23** (*The Message*)

<sup>1-3</sup> GOD, my shepherd!

I don't need a thing.

You have bedded me down in lush meadows,  
you find me quiet pools to drink from.

True to your word,

you let me catch my breath  
and send me in the right direction.

<sup>4</sup> Even when the way goes through

Death Valley,

I'm not afraid

when you walk at my side.

Your trusty shepherd's crook  
makes me feel secure.

<sup>5</sup> You serve me a six-course dinner

right in front of my enemies.

You revive my drooping head;  
my cup brims with blessing.

<sup>6</sup> Your beauty and love chase after me  
every day of my life.

I'm back home in the house of GOD  
for the rest of my life.

HYMN *Lead Me Forth* VT 837

Pauline Buller, June Goodman

Benediction

Matt Christian

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\*Call to Worship - written by Rev. Teri Peterson

\*\*Invitation for Imposition of Ashes adapted from a liturgy written by Thom Shuman

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*God, our Shepherd, amid all the perplexities of a changing situation,  
help us to learn the new ways you would have us tread; and, along every unknown path,  
give us the courage to follow Jesus, the same Savior, yesterday, today and forever.*

(Adapted from a prayer from Uganda, found in [A Procession of Prayers - Meditations and Prayers from Around the World](#). Compiled by John Carden. Morehouse Publishing. 1998)