



February 22, 2026 | FIRST TRADITION 11:00 AM
First Sunday In Lent

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Exaltation | Karen Beaumont

James Stanley

CALL TO WORSHIP † (From Psalm 32)

Rev. Heather Rose

Happy are those whose sins are forgiven.

Happy are those whose sins are cast away.

Rejoice in the Lord! Be glad!

Sing out! Shout for joy!

Rejoice in the Lord!

Rejoice! Amen!

PROCESSIONAL HYMN 160 †

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart | *United Methodist Hymnal*

The processional cross is draped in purple as part of the practice of covering brass items during Lent. It signifies the season of intense fasting, repentance, and preparation for the Passion of Christ.

PRAYER OF THE DAY †

**Holy One,
we are constantly bombarded
with temptations and enticements.
When we yield, when we fail,
who will help us?
You, Lord, have come to our aid.
You teach us, counsel us, and guide us
in the ways we should go.
We rejoice in your unfailing love. Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE †

**May the peace of Christ be with you
And also with you**

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

Rev. Haley Jones Wells

From Fast to Feast

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

SONG

**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 TIME

Rev. Brittany Richardson Watson

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE AND CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We gather during Black History Month
to remember a story too often silenced,
a faith too often ignored,
and a people too often asked to wait.

We come to remember.

We come to give thanks.

We come to continue the work.

We worship the God who was present in the hush harbors,
in the church basements,
in the streets and sanctuaries.

**“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.”**

We remember Harriet Tubman,
who trusted God enough to walk people toward freedom.

“I always told God, I’m going to hold steady on You,
and You’ve got to see me through.”

**“Go from your country and your kindred...
to the land I will show you.”**

We remember Sojourner Truth,
who spoke truth to church and nation alike.

“Truth is powerful and it prevails.”

**“Speak truth to one another;
render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace.”**
(Zechariah 8:16)

We remember Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,
who preached a love that was never passive.

“Justice at its best is love correcting everything
that stands against love.”

“Let us not grow weary in doing what is right.” (Galatians 6:9)

We remember Fannie Lou Hamer,
who believed God hears the cries of everyday people.

“I’m sick and tired of being sick and tired.”

**“The Lord executes justice for the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.”** (Psalm 146:7)

We remember Rev. James Cone,
who taught us that faith must be honest about suffering.

“God is not colorblind.

God is on the side of the oppressed.”

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”

(Matthew 5:6)

Black history is not only what happened then—

It is what we carry now.

It lives in our bodies, our worship, our resistance, our joy.

“We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses.” (Hebrews 12:1)

God of our ancestors,

we thank you for faith that survived chains,

hope that outlasted laws,

and love that refused to disappear.

Make us a remembering people.

Make us a resisting people.

Make us a hopeful people.

As we honor Black history,

send us out to shape the future.

To do justice.

To love kindness.

To walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)

Amen.

ANTHEM

Chancel Choir, Cory Olson, Soloist

Lead With Love | Melanie Demore

GOSPEL LESSON †

Matthew 17: 1-9

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,

Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

SERMON

Holy Disruption

Rev. David C. Freeman

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Lord, your summons echoes true when I but call your name!

Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.

In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.

Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY

Chancel Choir

It Is Well with My Soul | arr. John Ness Beck

DOXOLOGY 95 †

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 OF THANKSGIVING †

SENDING FORTH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

PRAYER FOR HOLY DISRUPTION †

God of the new and unexpected, Grant us the grace to welcome the "Holy Disruptions" you send our way. Break into our predictable lives with the untamed, unsettling wonder of your Spirit. Shake the foundations of our tidy faith with the fierce urgency of your love, dismantling the systems we have built to keep us safe from your risky, transforming call. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus - our comforter and disrupter. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN 519 †

Lift Every Voice and Sing | United Methodist Hymnal

Verse 1: Congregation

Verse 2: Solo

Verse 3: Congregation

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS †

We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ and in this congregation of the United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

BENEDICTION †

CHORAL BENEDICTON EXCERPT †

When I Survey The Wondrous Cross | Gilbert Martin

POSTLUDE

James Stanley

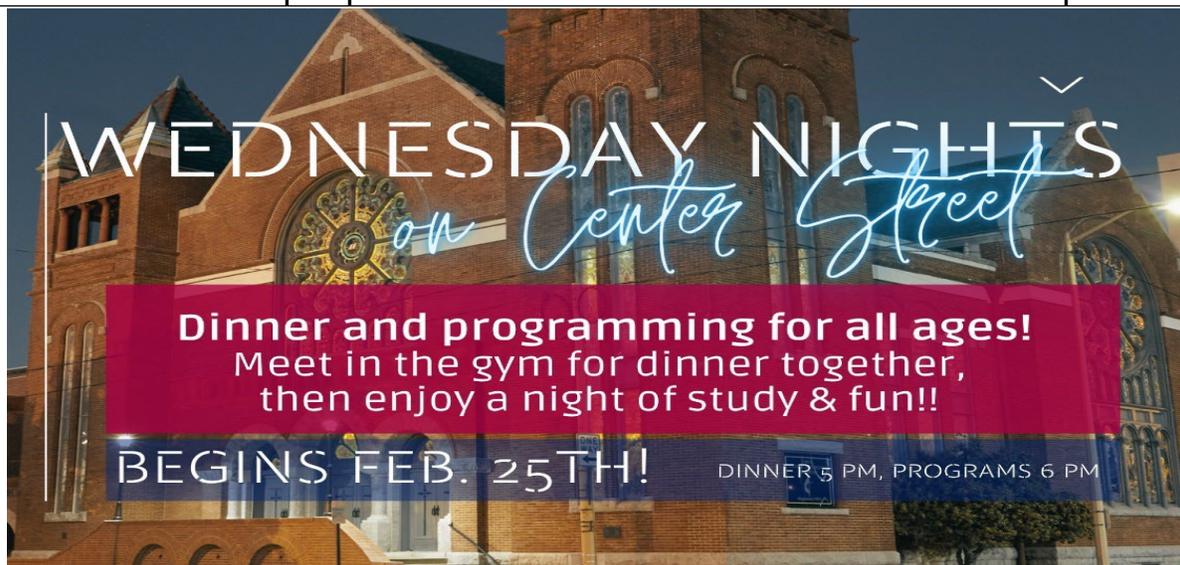
Postlude on Psalm 86 | Karen Beaumont

New Lenten Sunday School Class

Join us for a Sunday school class during Lent led by Alex Wells. This class will help us step off the spiritual roller coaster and find steady ground in Scripture. Using the book *The Fire of the Word* by Chris Webb, we'll explore the Bible as a source of inspiration and grounding, cultivating curiosity and discernment as we learn to step more deeply into God's unfolding story. This class will meet in Room 205 (formerly the Quadrilateral Class) at 10:00 on Sunday mornings starting February 22nd.

United Women in Faith will meet on Sunday, March 8

Everyone is invited to attend on Sunday, March 8, after the 11:00 am worship service, the UWF lunch and program in the Fellowship Hall. Our speaker will be Ben Goodwin, Executive Director of Our House. He will provide updates on Our House's continued growth and innovation and share stories of people who have transformed their lives with Our House's help. If you plan to attend, please fill out the Journey Card in the bulletin starting February 22 or call the church office at 501-372-2256 so enough food will be prepared. Donations for food will be accepted.



ASSISTING IN THE SERVICE

Clergy:

Rev. David C. Freeman

Rev. Brittany Richardson Watson

Rev. Heather Rose

Rev. Haley Jones Wells

Music & Worship Arts: Chancel Choir, Cory Olson, Shannon Webb, James Stanley

Liturgist: Janet Uchendu

Audio/Visual: Chris Cone, Gilbert Ponder

Altar Guild: Suzanne Mackey, Kelly Jackson

Altar Flowers: Thank you for allowing us to be partners in your ministries, The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Requesting Prayer:

Hilda Thomas, Donna Bair, Amelia Botteicher, Nancy Harber, Sandy Watson, Pat Matthews, Bill Hudgens, William Gerrard, John Gill

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday, February 22, 2026

9:00 am First Word (Cokesbury)
10:00 am Sunday School
11:00 am First Tradition (Sanctuary)
12:00 pm Faith & Advocacy Team Meeting
1:00 pm Beginner Taiko
2:30 pm Mike Charles Basketball Academy
3:00 pm Intermediate Drumming
5:00 pm Downtown Youth Olympics
5:30 pm Canvas Community Worship

Monday, February 23, 2026

9:00 am Flower Girls
12:00 pm Martha Faulkner's Circle
12:00 pm 3 Pastors Walk Into A Bar
1:00 pm Community Café

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

7:00 am Tues. Morning Bible Study
9:30 am Staff Meeting
10:30 pm Worship Planning
1:00 pm Community Café
4:00 pm Mike Charles Basketball Academy
4:15 pm FANN
6:30 pm Enneagram Book Study
6:30 pm Intermediate Taiko

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

1:00 pm Community Café
5:00 pm Wednesday Nights On Center
5:45 pm Handbells
7:00 pm Choir

Thursday, February 26, 2026

10:00 pm PALS Small Group
4:00 pm Mike Charles Basketball Academy