

**Ash Thursday**  
**Little Prairie United Methodist Church**  
**February 19, 2026, 7:00 pm**



***Beyond Ashes***

2980 130<sup>th</sup> ST E, P.O. Box 276, Dundas, MN 55019  
507-663-6150  
[www.littleprairieumc.org](http://www.littleprairieumc.org)

Our vision: Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well, and serves well; transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

**WELCOME AND GATHERING**

**Gathering Music**    *Come and Find the Quiet*            *arr. B. F. White*  
                                  *Fill Me Now*    *arr. J. Sweeney*  
                                  *I Cast My Cares on You*    *arr. K. Willard*

*Nan Winsell*

**Welcome**

*Pastor Penny Bonsell*

## **Call to Worship**

Children of God, we gather to prepare for our journey through Lent, a journey of repentance and mercy.

**We gather to be renewed in God's mercy.**

We gather to confess, to tell the truth about sin and our dependence on God's grace.

**We gather to call upon God's mercy.**

We gather to repent, to receive and cooperate with grace as we turn from sin and toward love of God and neighbor.

**We gather to live in the promise of God's mercy.**

People of God, we gather to worship God, whose steadfast mercy and love never fail!

**We gather to worship, trusting in God's mercy as we follow Jesus on the road to new life.**

*Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2025.*

**Hymn**

*Take Time to Be Holy (UMH #395)*

*All*

## **Opening Prayer**

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors.

**Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **THE WORD**

**Psalm 51:1-17**

**Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks Be to God**

**Message**

*Beyond Ashes*

*Pastor Penny Bonsell*

## **RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**Hymn**

*Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes TFWS #2138*

*All*

## **Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline**

Dear siblings 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 grace and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith, to continually receive God's mercies anew. 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 kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

## **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 that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life;**

only by your mercy are we made new;

**only by your steadfast love can we live in the joy of your salvation now and forever; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## **Imposition of Ashes**

*Forgive Our Sins arr. R. Herklots*

*Nan Winsell*

## **Confession and Pardon**

Merciful God, we confess that too often we make choices about what we should and should not do based on what others will think of us. We seek the validation of family, friends, and even strangers instead of resting in our sacred worth and identity in you. And so, we travel the path of least resistance when we know that path does not align with yours.

**Forgive us, God, when we perform for one another instead of living with integrity in you.**

Merciful God, we confess that we place too much value on money, prestige, and influence. We live in a society that tells us we need more and more and more in order to live secure and satisfied lives, and we choose to live according to this lie to the detriment of ourselves and our neighbors.

**Forgive us, God, when we treasure wealth, status, possessions, and power over and above contrition, humility, generosity, and mutuality.**

Merciful God, we confess that we do not love you rightly. While we may love you with part of our lives, we do not love you as God with our whole lives. We resist your call to surrender our lives into your hands and to trust that you will care for us as individuals and as a community better than we could ever do on our own.

**Forgive us, God, when we point our hearts toward selfish gain instead of the lasting worth of life with you.**

*Offer prayers of silent confession.*

Repent and believe, for God's grace empowers us to live in the humility of the beautiful and freeing truth of the love of God. As Lent begins, know that God understands how we struggle to stay open and compassionate. The invitation is not to focus on our inadequacies but on God's gift of grace and love which transforms our hearts and minds. **That gift is given to us again, here and now. Be encouraged. Amen.**

## **Sharing the Peace**

**Offering and Silent Prayer**  
*Winsell*

*Take My Life arr. L. Line*

*Nan*

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Merciful God of New Beginnings, on this day of dust and devotion, we return to you, seeking clean hearts and renewed spirits.

**We offer these gifts as signs of our desire to be reconciled—not only to you, but to one another and to a world aching for healing.**

Receive what we bring—our resources, our repentance, and our resolve—as tools you may use to mend what is broken, build what is needed, and proclaim your redeeming love.

**Strengthen us to walk this Lenten journey together, shaped by grace, grounded in community, and sustained by hope. In the name of Christ, our reconciliation and peace. Amen.**

## **The 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.**

**Hymn**

*Grace Alone TFWS #2162*

*All*

## **SENDING**

Beloved, as you go from this place, go in the blessing of God who forgives, cleanses, redeems, and sustains us to observe a holy Lent, to cooperate with grace, and to encounter God's mercy anew each day. **Amen.**

**Go in Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Shalom. Amen.**

**Postlude**

*God Give Us Strength*

*Nan Winsell*

## **INFORMATION**

Pastor: Penny Bonsell, Administrator: Sara French, Certified Lay Minister and Youth Director: Theresa Siemers, assistants Maddy Heinz-Kline and Kory Larson, Technology Administrator: Jesse Steed, Admin Council Chair: Kevin Larson, Admin Secretary: Sue Rollins, SPRC Chair: Deb Little, Treasurer: Lori Noreen, Finance Committee Co-Chairs: Kevin Larson and Mel Henrichs, Trustees Chair: Tom Stowe, Missions, Nurture and Outreach: Barb Liebenstein, Lay Servant: Karen Nelson, Soundboard Technician: Tom Hollenhorst, Accompanist: Nan Winsell

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Sundays, Worship at 9:30 am**

**Tuesdays, 8:30 am:** Breakfast Club, at L&M

**Wednesdays, 9-10:30 am:** Pastor Penny at James Gang coffee shop

**Saturdays 9-11 am** Soul Sisters (see Theresa for details)

**Wed, Feb 25, 5:30 pm:** Lenten Soup Suppers begin

**Friday, Mar 27, 3-8 pm:** Fish dinner

**Sunday, April 5: Easter Sunday**

See our website for more details at [www.littleprairieumc.org](http://www.littleprairieumc.org)



**Website**



**Online Giving**