



**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**Wednesday, February 18, 2026**  
**St. Mark's United Church of Christ**  
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor  
Peter Grunwald, Reader  
Ann Rodewald, Organist

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Yet in Christ, even dust holds promise. As we begin Lent, may we embrace our humanity and trust in God's power to bring life from dust.

Meditative Music  
Bells Ring  
Prelude Gathering for Worship:

*God So Loved the World*



**\*\*Bold text means to read in unison**

**Call to Worship:**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**And all that is within me, bless God's holy name.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

**And forget not all God's benefits.**

Who forgives all your sins

**And heals all your infirmities;**

Who redeems your life from the grave,

**And crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness.**

**[Please be seated]**

**First Reading:**

Job 42:1-6 ESV

*Then Job answered the LORD and said:*

*"I know that you can do all things,*

*and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.*

*'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'*

*Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,*  
*things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.*

*'Hear, and I will speak;*

*I will question you, and you make it known to me.'*

*I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,*

*but now my eye sees you;*

*therefore I despise myself,*

*and repent in dust and ashes."*

**Prayer:**

God of hope, you breathe into the dust of our lives and remind us of your steadfast love. Give us strength, faith and courage to open ourselves to pain and joy, death and life, repentance and redemption. Remind us of who we are - vessels of your love and grace. In Christ's name, *Amen*.

**Hymn: (#348)**

*Softly and Tenderly*

## **Imposition of Ashes:**

Dear sisters and brothers 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 those new to the faith were prepared for Baptism. It was also a time when those who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled through repentance and forgiveness, and restored to the life of the Church.

In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the need we have to renew our faith.

I invite you now to observe a holy Lent:

Renew yourself through prayer, repentance, and scripture – God's Holy Word.

Refresh yourself in mind, body and spirit; be healed of wrong and sin.

Be reunited, in God's great love, with Jesus Christ.

Come now, before a merciful God, Creator and Redeemer, to receive the imposition of ashes.

## **Second Reading:**

Matthew 6:16-18 ESV

*"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."*

## **Message:**

*I Have Seen The Lord, And I Repent*

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

## **Sacrament of Holy Communion:**

Beloved people of God:

At a table that Jesus sets,

God forgives us and feeds us with love eternal.

In water and promise, in body and blood

God brings us to new life

and breathes into us gifts to serve the world.

You are forgiven, in the name of Christ,  
who calls us into the coming of God's reign  
where all are supported, nourished, and loved.

Blessed are you, O God of love.  
You birthed all creation,  
and became human for us in Jesus Christ.  
You speak to us through Scripture and Spirit;  
Your love is eternal.  
Meet us now in bread, wine, and juice.

On the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

In this meal, we remember your Son Jesus,  
who took on our pain and suffering  
and transformed it into new life.  
Send your Spirit to meet us now.  
Compel your whole creation toward mercy,  
and fill us all with your everlasting and wide-reaching love.

Gracious God,  
We give you thanks for the abundance of your steadfast love. As we are filled with your grace and mercy, as we are renewed in spirit, may you guide us and use us to bring about your reign of peace on earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, the holy one, we now pray:

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### **Offering:**

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website ([stmstjucc.org](http://stmstjucc.org)).

### **Offertory Music:**

*~ The offering is brought to the altar ~*

*I Cannot Tell*

**Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:**

With gratitude for all the blessings you have poured into our lives, Lord Jesus, we come bringing these our gifts that they may be used in service to those in need. Bless these gifts and those who have given them, that they may truly be a blessing in your holy name. *Amen.*

**Hymn of Sending:** (#569)

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

**Benediction:**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give to you peace of mind and heart.

Go now to love and serve the Lord

In all that you do, all that you are, and all that you will be.

**Postlude:**

*Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow*



# LENTEN WORSHIP

Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, pm at St. James

Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at St. Mark's

Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at St. James

Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at St. Mark's

Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at St. James

Palm Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>,

9am St. James, 10:30am St. Mark's

Maundy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
7pm, St. James, Communion

Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7pm  
St. Mark's, Communion

Easter! April 5<sup>th</sup>, Communion  
9am St. Mark's  
10:30am St. James

*Our Mission is to help others deepen their relationship with God, become faithful followers of Christ, and to share the message of Christ's love with others.*

## **COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS!**

### **St. James UCC**

**1st & 3rd Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.**

**2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday School at St. James 9-10am every Sunday.**

### **St. Mark's UCC**

**1st & 3rd Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.**

**2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.**

Visit our Church Website: <https://www.stmarksstjamesucc.org>  
Worship Services are recorded weekly and uploaded to our church

YouTube channel: St. Mark's & St. James UCC

Facebook: St Marks & St James UCC

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in our Church office: [stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com)