



**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**FEBRUARY 18, 2026**  
**NOON AND 6:45 PM**

*Welcome to worship at First Presbyterian Church, Franklin.  
Please join us in silent meditation upon entering the sanctuary.  
The asterisk (\*) invites all to rise in body and/or spirit.  
The people's responses are in **bold type**. Please silence cell phones.*

**PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent in the Christian church around the world. The ashes, made from burning the palms from last year's Palm Sunday service, are an ancient sign of our dependence upon God for life and our commitment to the discipline of penitence this holy season.

The first step of the journey calls us to acknowledge and confront our mortality, individually and as a community. The ashes remind us that we are dust and we live by grace. Let us observe a holy Lent.

**Mid-Week Lenten Service**

March 4: 6:45 PM – Sam Belcher  
March 11: 6:45 PM – Marilyn Doering  
March 18: 6:45 PM – Mary Sellers Shaw  
March 25: 6:45 PM – Seder in Wilson Hall led by Gottlieb Family

**Holy Week Services**

**Palm Sunday** – Sunday March 29, 10:15 AM  
All Children are invited to join in the Processional of the Palms  
**Maundy Thursday Meal and Service** – April 2, 6:00 PM  
**Good Friday Service** – April 3, Noon  
**Easter Sunday** – April 5  
Sunrise Service – 6:00 AM, Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church  
Worship at FPC –8:30 AM and 10:15 AM (Livestream)

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S WORD

WELCOME

PRELUDE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

We long to be reconciled to God.

**As we worship, let us clear away any obstacle that prevents us from accepting the grace of Christ.**

We are creatures, made of ash, mere dust, in need of grace even to take our next breath.

**By God's grace, may we be increased in knowledge and patience, genuine love and truthful speech.**

By the power of God at work in us, may we live even as we are dying.

**Though we are frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, if we are reconciled to God, we possess everything.**

In the strength of these promises, let us take the risk of following. Let us pray together:

**God of all seasons, in your pattern of things there is a time for keeping and a time for losing, a time for building up and a time for pulling down. In this holy season of Lent, as we journey with our Lord to the cross, help us to discern in our lives what we must lay down and what we must take up; what we must end and what we must begin. Give us grace to be reconciled to you and to lead a disciplined life, in glad obedience and with the joy which comes from a closer walk with Christ. Amen.**

In the name of Jesus Christ, let us worship God!

**\*HYMN 65**

*Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*

CWM RHONDDA

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Merciful God, your word is our way of truth and life. Create in us hearts that are clean and put your Holy Spirit within us, so that we may receive your grace and declare your praise forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 5:15-6:2

SERMON

Anne Keener

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

**\*HYMN 227**

*Jesus, Remember Me*

REMEMBER ME (Taize)

INVITATION TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

*A Brief Silence and Time for Personal Confession*

## RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION from Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.**

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

**Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

**You desire truth in the inward being; therefore, teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

**Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

**Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.**

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

**For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

**Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.**

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES AND SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*(This is our Lord's table, and all are welcome. If able, you are invited to come forward, pause at the font to dip your hand in the baptismal water remembering you are saved by grace through faith, receive the imposition of ashes either on your forehead or on your hand, partake in Communion, and return to your seats by the side aisle. If you are unable to come forward, please remain in your seats and someone will come to you.)*

## INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

### GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Leader continues the prayer...* who forever sings your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*Leader continues the prayer...* Great is the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

*Leader continues the prayer...* now and forever. **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 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.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### SHARING OF THE BREAD OF LIFE AND THE CUP OF SALVATION

*All bread is gluten-free. The wine is non-alcoholic grape juice.*

## COMMUNION MUSICAL MEDITATION

### ASH WEDNESDAY LITANY

Jesus invites us to a way of celebration  
meeting and feasting with all God's children.

**Let us walk his way with joy.**

Jesus beckons us to a way of risk,  
letting go of our security.

**Let us walk his way with joy.**

Jesus points us to a way of self-giving,  
where humility and generosity abound.

**Let us walk his way with joy.**

Jesus reveals to us the grace of God,  
which reconciles us to God and one another.

**Let us walk his way with joy.**

Jesus calls us to follow the way of the cross,  
where despair is transformed by the promise of new life.

**Let us walk his way with joy.**

### GO IN GOD'S NAME

\*HYMN 269

*Lead On, O King Eternal!*

LANCASHIRE

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

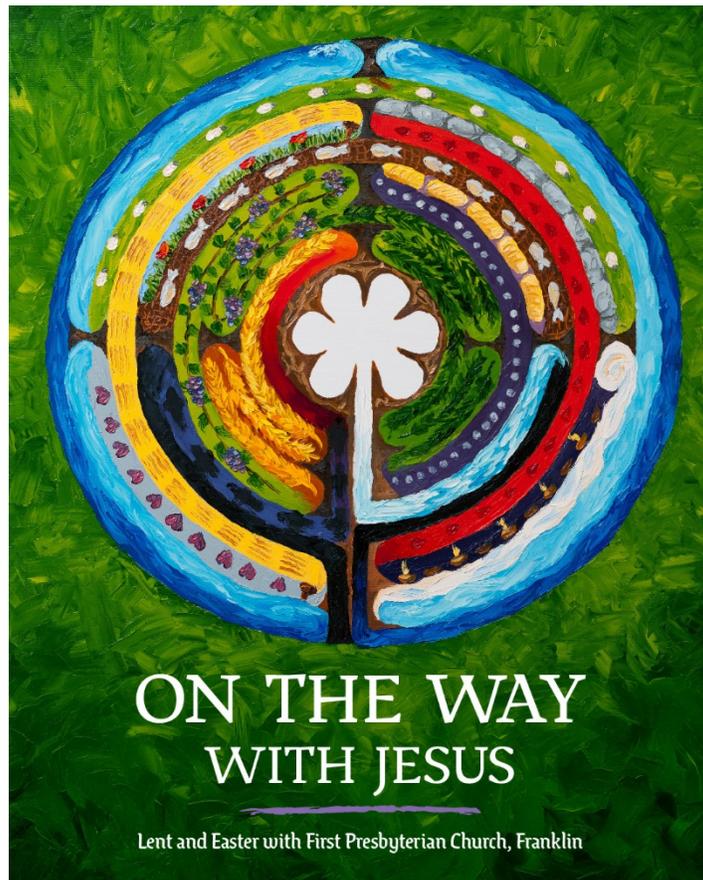
### LEADING IN WORSHIP

Anne Keener, Commissioned Pastor

Eddie Bellis, Interim Pastor

Michael Snoddy, Director of Music & Organist

Mike Moyers, Artwork



## A GUIDE TO VISIO DIVINA

Visio Divina means “Divine Seeing.” It is a practice of praying through images. Here are some suggestions on how to practice Visio Divina with the Lenten Labyrinth:

- As you begin, take a moment to center yourself. Take a few deep, cleansing breaths. Invite the Holy Spirit to remove distractions and guide your heart and mind.
- Have your eyes follow the pathway of the labyrinth. Make every effort to look slowly, focus only on the image before you in the pathway. Try not to jump ahead. Stay focused on where you are in the pathway.
- Contemplate the symbols in the pathway.
  - + What significance do they have?
  - + What do the symbols communicate about God?
  - + What bible stories or passages come to mind? Think about those memories from scripture and their meaning in your life.
- The center is left blank for you. What thoughts do you add to the story? What is your role in the story?
- Then move your eyes slowly in reverse back to the start. Allow the symbolic significance to change as you go.
- At anytime during the experience, you may hear a word from God or feel called to dialogue with God. If that happens, by all means, pause to listen and pray.
- Upon exiting, take a moment to thank God for the gift of this time together. Keep the insights you gained close in your heart for further reflection.



### Viewing the Lenten Labyrinth

Labyrinths are ancient prayer and meditation tools. Unlike mazes, labyrinths are not puzzles to solve. They have the same entrance and exit point. One merely travels to the center and back. The purpose is to journey into prayer and contemplation while traveling through the labyrinth’s twists and turns. The imagery in this painted labyrinth is open to many interpretations. Here is a guide to some of the symbols and themes that can be explored in this Lenten Labyrinth:

1. **Black, Purple, & The Cross** - Ash Wednesday. Colors for penitence and mortality. Crosses (painted with the thumb) to simulate the imposition of ashes.
2. **Red** - Passion
3. **Wheat** - Elemental representation of “I AM the Bread of Life” and the Eucharistic “Body of Christ.”
4. **Grape Vine** - Elemental representation of “I AM the Vine” and the Eucharistic “Blood of Christ.”
5. **Palms** - Palms waived at Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem
6. **30 Pieces of Silver** - The price paid to Judas for betraying Jesus.
7. **Five Loaves & Fish** - Miracle of feeding the 5,000.
8. **Fish & Net** - The Disciples & discipleship. Peter was a fisherman who was called to be a “Fisher of Men.”
9. **Four Roses** - The Four Gospels.
10. **Scroll** - The Old Testament.
11. **Ten Hearts** - The Ten Commandments—set on hearts, not stone. Also alludes to Jesus’ teaching the love of God and neighbor as the greatest commandment.
12. **Water** - Baptism and grace. Water surrounds the entire labyrinth.
13. **Sheep** - Jesus’ claim, “I AM the Good Shepherd.”
14. **Gate** - Jesus’ claim, “I AM the Gate.”
15. **Stones** - Jesus’ statement in Jerusalem, “The very stones will cry out.”
16. **Blood** - Passion of Christ. Gethsemane. Tears of blood.
17. **Lamps** - Lit and extinguished lamps allude to Jesus’ parables—specifically, the parable of the Ten Bridesmaids.
18. **Towel** - Jesus washed His disciple’s feet.
19. **Waterfall** - “Christ emptied himself...” -Philippians 2
20. **Thorns** - Crown of thorns
21. **Empty Space** - For your own reflection.
22. **Green** - Life.

*The path reverses itself back to the start. You may find new and other meanings in the images as you journey back. Some images bring new significance like the cross and the darkness relating to Good Friday.*