

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

Rev. Kenneth D. Peterkin, Pastor
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Amy Kwon, Music Director

February 18, 2026

7 pm

Ash Wednesday

Bold invites congregation to participate. An asterisk (*) indicates "stand as you are able."

PRELUDE

Via Dolorosa
Amy Kwon

Gregg Sewell

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Gather the people. Prepare a holy meeting.

Today, we acknowledge the fragility and preciousness of life.

Gather the people. Return to God with our whole selves—mind, body, and spirit.

We rend our hearts not our clothes. We open ourselves to the pain of the world with compassion and grace in the way of Jesus.

Gather the people. Seek the Holy One gathered with us.

We offer a sacrifice of praise. Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, we are here to worship!

SCRIPTURE READING

Peg Moulton

Psalm 51:1-17 – Cleansing & Pardon

*HYMN #188 ***Give Me a Clean Heart*** (sing twice)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Peg Moulton

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 – God Desires our Whole Heart

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 – Now Is the Time

MESSAGE

Rev. Ken Peterkin

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Our response to each confession is in bold, to be followed by moments of silence

INVITATION

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, study, works of love, prayer help us return to that love. In the name of God, I invite you to commit yourselves to love God, neighbor and self by facing your sin in confession with each other, and by asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline; whatever you have chosen to mark your journey to the cross and Easter.

We have not loved you with all our heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved all our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven always as we have been forgiven.

Forgive us O God.

You come to us every day, and have come to us especially in Jesus of Nazareth, and yet we turn from your love, fearing the comfort *and* challenge of being your people.

Forgive us O God.

We have hurt you, each other and ourselves by our past unfaithfulness, as we cling to the envy of others more fortunate than ourselves, as we succumb to impatience, pride and hypocrisy.

Forgive us O God.

We tolerate hatred, violence and injustice in the world you love so well. We participate by our actions or accept by turning our heads, the exploitation of others.

Forgive us O God.

We are your own, yet we refuse you, clinging to the security of familiar ways rather than accepting the new life you offer.

Forgive us O God.

Accept our repentance, dear God, for our neglect of human need, our indifference to injustice, our false judgments, prejudice and contempt of others. Restore us dear God to the abundant life which you intend for all your creation.

Hear us O God, for your mercy is great and your love everlasting. Amen.

HYMN #185 ***Savior, When in Tears and Dust***

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Teach us your ways; accomplish in us the work of your salvation, O God.

That our lives shall show forth the glory of your Love, we pray. Amen.

At this time, take time to consider coming forward and receiving the mark of ash, either on your forehead or on your wrist. (Rev. Ken will know to place the ash on your wrist if you simply offer your wrist to us when you come forward.) You are not required to receive the ashes; come forward or do not come forward, whatever is right for you.

God does not desire our death, but that we turn from ways which lead us to death of body and soul. We ask God to grant us true change of heart and the companionship of the Holy Spirit. May our journey be faithful, so that at last we may see God face to face.

Thanks be to God!

As we each leave, please do so in silence.

• ANNOUNCEMENTS •

• In the absence of an Offertory, you may make an offering in the baskets at the entrances.

