

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Robert Malsack, Interim Pastor

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18, 2026

Introduction

Opening Music

Remember Me (D. Krueger/J. Innes)

Boyd Thomas (12:15p.m.)

Choral Anthem (5:15p.m.)

Opening Prayer

Sermon Text: Genesis 3:1-7

Sermon: *Why We Sin*

Prayer of Confession and Preparation:

Gracious Lord, in each of our hearts is a locked place, like a forgotten room or a dark closet,

we would prefer to forget it even exists, but inside it are things that won't stay hidden.

Others would never suspect that we carry such a place; we guard our faces so no evidence appears, and we keep our lips sealed, allowing no escape for the stories of the skeletons in our closet.

But in the quiet moments, the unguarded times of solitude, the doors we struggle to hold shut fly open and the skeletons – these living guilts – come out and dance around us mocking us and reminding us of all our sins.

Forgiving Lord, free us from the power and the prison of the skeletons in our closets.

Teach us that mistakes and brokenness and failure are part of creative and bold living.

Remind us that what is hidden holds us in bondage and cannot be healed.

Lead us through our shame to confident joy in You.

Let us know the touch of Your forgiveness and healing, and teach us to pass this acceptance on to other friends, family, and strangers who, like us, pretend to be whole, while within them, skeletons still dance.

Silence for personal reflection and confession

We recognize, O Lord, that we are simply dust. Remind us through these ashes of our dependence on You, and Your devotion to us. May we embrace the strength of Your Spirit as we seek to follow You; may we hold dear the discipline of Your love as we seek to draw nearer to You; may we desire most the insight of Your wisdom as we seek to learn of You. As we receive the ashes upon our foreheads, may we be filled with the joy of sharing with You in ministry, in suffering, in death, and in life. For Your glory and Your kingdom's sake. Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Renewal of Baptismal Vows:

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?

I renounce them.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying His word and showing His love?

I will with God's help.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

An Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent (Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21)

Teaching about Charity (Matthew 6:1-4)

Teaching about Prayer (Matthew 6:5-6)

Teaching about Fasting (Matthew 6:16-18)

Teaching about Money and Possessions (Matthew 6:19-21)

Teach us to pray with faith and read Your Word with understanding. Teach us to worship with passion and gather together with love. Teach us to give generously, serve compassionately, and use our time mindfully, so that we may reflect Your goodness and that others may discover Your grace through us.

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.

*Hymn: *Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days*

- 1. Lord, who throughout these forty days
for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with Thee to mourn our sins
and close by Thee to stay.**
- 2. As Thou with Satan didst contend,
and didst the vict'ry win,
O give us strength in Thee to fight,
in Thee to conquer sin.**
- 3. As Thou didst hunger bear, and thirst,
so teach us, gracious Lord,
to die to self, and chiefly live
by Thy most holy word.**
- 4. And through these days of penitence,
and through Thy passion-tide,
yes, evermore in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.**
- 5. Abide with us, that so, this life
of suff'ring over past,
an Easter of unending joy
we may attain at last.**

Benediction

Postlude: *Amazing Grace*

*Those who are able, please stand.

(This service was adapted from *A Liturgy for Ash Wednesday*,
written by John van de Laar © Sacredise)

