



OUR CHURCH

Lent Reflections

By Hwa-Young Chong

Scripture

Genesis 2:4b-8 (NRSV)

Full Article found at

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/kumc-lent2022>



In my first year as a pastor, I was excited about the idea of making ashes on Ash Wednesday. I loved the liturgical connection of Palm Sunday and Ash Wednesday. Ashes made from the palm leaves of the previous year's Palm Sunday seemed to reflect the spiritual cycle of Christian life so wonderfully. The task of ash-making was equal to meaning-making to me.

Soon, however, I learned that it was not an easy task. First of all, it was a very windy day. I had a hard time keeping the fire going. When I finally burned enough palms for the service, my face and hands were already all covered with ashes. I also smelled like ashes. Then I was disappointed that the ashes looked more like burnt grass, not like the fine dark sand I had anticipated it to be. I decided to use it for our worship anyway. Then I realized that I accidentally added a bit too much oil to the ashes. So, the ashes were kind of coarse and droopy at the same time. It was too late to start making ashes all over again by that time.

We had a messy Ash Wednesday that year. After the service, I told a few people that I was sorry for making such "bad" ashes. One lady responded, with a bright wink, "Well, it was a most memorable Ash Wednesday service!"

Why do we put ashes on our faces? It's messy, dirty, and inconvenient.

Ashes are interpreted as human mortality in the Christian tradition. The words of the Ash Wednesday worship poignantly point to this mortality: Remember that you are dust, and to dust, you shall return. We are imperfect, sinful, and prone to failures. At the same time, ashes tell us that we are God's. The dirt on our faces reminds us that God created us out of dust and breathed life into us. We bear the image of God. We are made to love. There are infinite possibilities of goodness in the world. Life can be beautiful.

Perhaps there is no such a thing as bad or good ashes. Ashes simply remind us that our life can become messy, regardless of our intentions or efforts. We may fail, even though we try our best. We may make a mistake and need to pay a painful price. We may lose something or someone precious without any warning. Yet the grace of God permeates through what seems impermeable, shines in the darkness, and smooths the rough spots. The cross of Jesus is a testimony to such grace.

We are from ashes and shall return to ashes, from God to God, from love to love. In the end, we are but spirits in God. May the messiness of ashes lead you to the amazing grace of God today, this Lent, and beyond.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for giving me life. In this new season of Lent, help me to find your beauty in the messiness of life. May our life be a witness to your love in the world. Amen.

PASTOR

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SERVE

- **Council** February 4 6:30 PM
- **“Singing the Favorites”** February 15th
- **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**
February 17th 5-6:30pm - all men young and old are called to serve.
- **“The Kindness Bucket List” and Random Acts of Kindness** - both acted on intentionally by all who worship with/at Gowrie UMC.

Lent Soup Supper in March - think about what delicious soup you will make to share on March 4th and 18th

GATHER

- **Sundays Together**

9:00 Sunday School

9:30 Coffee and Conversation

10:15 am Worship Service

Facebook live, later on Web-Cal channel 575

- **Ash Wednesday Service at GUMC**
 - February 18 7:00 pm
 - Cookies and Coffee 6:15 pm
- **Lent Soup Suppers and Worship**
 - February 25 @ Zion Lutheran Church
Soup at 6:00 pm - Service 7:00 pm



In Case of Bad Weather please watch Channel 5, Channel 8 or Facebook for updates.

PRAY

Please call in or email your prayer request, changes and updates to the office.

Care Facilities and Assisted Living: Colleen Traster and George Anderson.

Health Concerns: Larry Riblet (Sybil’s husband) Viney Mulder, Gabe & Jess Olson From Paton-Son Otto who was premature continues to be in the hospital, Carol Orness, DJ (Randy & Viney Mulder’s Son-in-law). All those fighting cancer. All those suffering from chronic pain. All those receiving therapy. All those experiencing family distress.

Grief: Those grieving after recent shootings.

Congregational Prayer Focus:

Pray for the city of Minneapolis.

Pray for all people in war zones.

Pray for Gowrie UMC its ministries, its people, and its Pastor.

Pray for all who have yet to know the saving Grace of Jesus.

CELEBRATE



Black History Month
All Month

Valentine’s Day
February 14



Ash Wednesday
February 18

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8



Grace and Peace to You, My word for this year is Rhythm.

From the very beginning God created the earth with natural rhythms. The earth was created in six days: night and day, cycles of the moon and of time, etc. God rested on the 7th. Throughout the bible we learn of rhythms of prayer, rest, worship, giving, bible study, fasting etc. Even the verse from Micah establishes a life rhythm. Healthy rhythms help us grow.

We all have life rhythms and the church has her rhythms. The liturgical year, the order of worship, the Lord's prayer, etc. As our church experiences change, our rhythms change. This can be uncomfortable and create uncertainty. It also can be exciting and invigorating. Let us become aware of our spiritual rhythms as a church and as individuals for the year 2026. How do our spiritual rhythms help us as we follow God's path for 2026?

Pastor Susan



February Worship Series



Glory Revealed: Epiphany is a celebration of the light that was revealed to the world. What does that light do for us and to us and what do we do because that light has been revealed to us? We invite you to embrace the gift of light that is Jesus the Christ, and to do an attitude check as we stand in the promise of glory revealed.

Renewed in Mercy: The Lenten journey encourages us to grow, to go deeper, to reach further than we may have before. Lent is a time of introspection, but also a call to action as we seek to be the pilgrim people of God, seeking and shaping God's kingdom in worship and in service. This Lent, we invite you to experience the renewal that comes from God's never-ending mercy and to walk with our Lord on a journey to new life.

<p>February 1 What is Good Micah 6:1-8 Psalm 15 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12</p>	<p>February 8 Call to Action Isaiah 58:1-12 Psalm 112:1-10 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 Matthew 5:13-20</p>	<p>February 15 Glory Revealed Exodus 24:12-18 Psalm 2 2 Peter 1:16-21 Matthew 17:1-9</p>	<p>February 28 Mercy on the Wilderness Road: Renewed in Mercy Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Psalm 32 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11</p>
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O Mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you?



FEBRUARY SUNDAY SERVICES

9:00 am Sunday School
9:45 am Coffee and Conversation
10:15 am Sunday Worship and Facebook live, later on Web-Cal Channel 575

Worrell Family February 1 & 8
Akins Family February 15 & 22

February 1

Lay Leader: Glenn Rohden
Worship Leader: Anna Cottington
Music: Colleen Palmer & Jeff Patterson
Tech: Owen Nuss & Bergan Dalley
Altar Flowers:
Bulletins/Online:

February 18

Ash Wednesday 7:00 @ GUMC
Music: Nancy Vogt
Tech: Bergan & Carrie Dalley

February 8

Communion: Jeff & Mary Patterson
Worship Leader: John Lizer
Music: Jeff Patterson
Tech: Lincoln & August Akins
Altar Flowers:
Bulletins/Online:

February 22

Worship Leader: August Akins
Music: Jeff Patterson
Tech: Keith & Dena Sytsma
Altar Flowers: Pastor Susan
Bulletins/Online:

February 15

Worship Leader: Choir
Music: Mary Patterson
Tech: Jeff Patterson
Altar Flowers: Bergan & Carrie Dalley
Bulletins/Online:



February 25

Supper Service 6:00 PM
Lent Service @ Zion 7:00 PM



Extravagant Giving



Automatic Payments and E-payments are a great way to give on your schedule. You can set frequency and date of all gifts to fit your budget.

January Offerings

\$5,722.00

Thank you!

Outgoing Automatic Bill Withdrawals Per Month Approximately \$9000

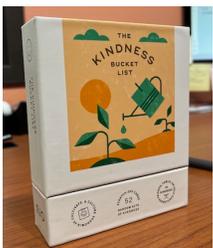
February: It is cold outside! However every week through the winter regardless of the weather, the church is spiritually and physically warm with the light of Christ and Christ's servants.

All this is possible because of your Generosity!

We are God's church!

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Jason Eller 9am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee and Conversation 10:15am Sunday Worship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Happy Birthday! EllaGaneff Pastor's Sabbath</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9am Office Open</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Josh Stewart 9am Office Open</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Tom Hlubek 9am Office Open 9:30am Facebook Devotion 1pm UWF Mtg.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Patricia Vandi Sue Dean Pastor's Prep Day</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee and Conversation 10:15am Sunday Worship</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Pastor's Sabbath</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9am Office Open</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Happy Birthday! AydanFarnham 9am Office Open</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Colleen Palmer Pastor Susan Rohden 9am Office Open 9:30am Facebook Devotion</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Pastor's Prep Day</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Happy Valentine's Day! Happy Birthday! Brenda Brandes</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee and Conversation 10:15am Sunday Worship /Choir</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Winnie Wilks Pastor's Sabbath</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9am Office Open 5pm Shrove Tuesday Supper</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Ash Wednesday 9am Office Open 10am Drive-up Ashes 6:15pm Cookies and Coffee 7pm Ash Wednesday Service at GUMC</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Ruth Stubbs 9am Office Open 9:30am Facebook Devotion</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Bev Bair Pastor's Prep Day</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9am Sunday School 9:45am Coffee and Conversation 10:15am Sunday Worship</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Dennis McCubbin Pastor's Sabbath</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Ardie Shirbroun 9am Office Open</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9am Office Open 6pm Lent Soup Supper at Zion 7pm Lent Service at Zion</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Vern Bauer 9am Office Open 9:30am Facebook Devotion</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Pastor's Prep Day</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Happy Birthday! Jayden Eller</p>



You are invited to participate in a year of intentional “random acts of kindness”. Each week during worship, we will scratch off a card from our “The Kindness Bucket List” We are encouraged to share this act of kindness in our daily life that week. May God bless you as you share his love.

WORSHIP LIVE ON FACEBOOK AND ON LATER CHANNEL 575 AT 11:00 AM

O Mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you?



United Women in Faith

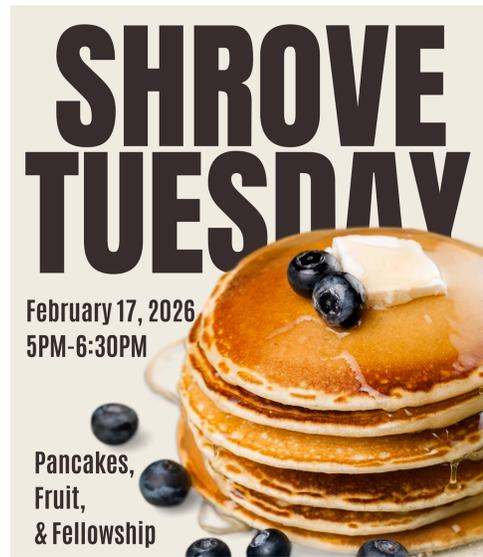
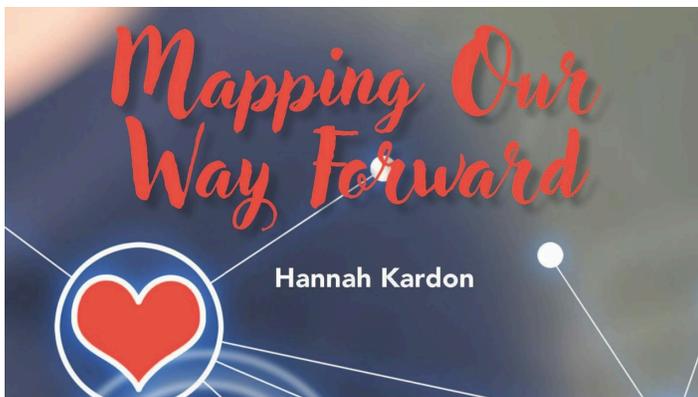
2026: Mapping Our Way Forward

February 5 1:00 pm

Program :

Server: Ardie Shirbroun

Romans 12:12 (RSV) "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."



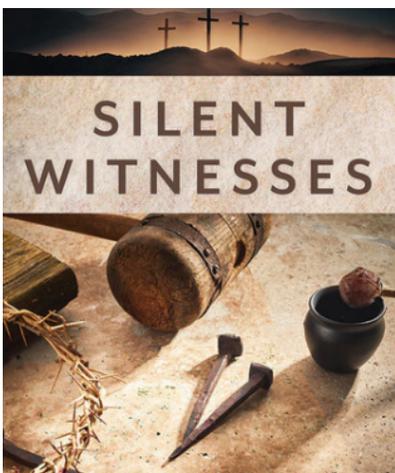
Drive-up Ashes

10am-1pm

Ash Wednesday Services at GUMC

6:15 Coffee and Cookies

7:00 Worship



Silent Witnesses

The thorns, the robe, the nails, the spear, the shroud, the stone—if these things could speak, what might they tell us? Silent Witnesses is a series of six services for Lent in which the chief speaker each week takes the role of one of the things associated with our Lord’s suffering and death, describing and interpreting the events and their meaning from that object’s point of view.

Gowrie Lenten Services: Feb. 18th - March 29th

6:00 Soup Supper, 7:00 Worship

Feb 18th at GUMC, Feb 25th at Zion, March 4th at GUMC, March 11th at Zion, March 18th at GUMC, March 25th at Zion



O Mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you?

Council Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2026

6:30 PM

Attendance: Jeremy Viles, Gary and Kendale Vosberg, Carrie Dalley, Pastor Susan Rohden, Judi Tjepkes, Rita Kail

Loving

Devotion and Prayer for our 2026 church council by Pastor Susan

Learning

Pastor discussed with us the “Heart of Giving” James 2:15-17

- We pondered our actions of giving. How does giving reflect our faith in action? How has God used our church’s generosity to meet real needs? How have you seen your giving make an impact, what are the fruits?

Call to order 6:50 pm Gary Vosberg temporary chair

Leading

Minutes taken by Kendale Vosberg, Timekeeper is Judy Tjepkes, December meeting minutes were approved (Pastor moved, Kendale 2nd)

Old Business

- Council was reminded of our 3 goals for the year for our church that were established at conference.
 - Goal 1: Be intentional in providing active encouragement and support to members of our congregation, and to citizens of Gowrie and the surrounding area.
 - Goal 2: Promote prayer and gratitude.
 - Goal 3: Incorporating music that the children know and enjoy into worship.
- December offerings were \$11,219.86. Thankful for the generosity of our church body.
- Notes of encouragement for Anna and Ryan for their treasury work, get well notes for Viney Mulder, Adam family for their work with outdoor nativity set, note to someone on local fire department or road crews.
- Our church’s 2026 Budget was corrected, as per our discussion in December, and approved. Moved by Jeremy and 2nd by Rita.
- Continued reflection on the input that was given at our congregational gathering.

New Business

- We reviewed the new church directory for corrections that needed to be made.
- We discussed leadership positions that need to be filled:
- Council Chair, Finance Chair, Worship Chair, Missions Chair, Treasurer- Carrie, Finance secretary, At Large Member- Alex Adam
- We reviewed the church bank accounts, we need a name on the accounts

Work Area Reports

- Treasurer Report was reviewed; we will need to consult Joni at conference to find out what to do about salary not fully being paid in 2025.
- Trustees are working on getting new fans installed in sanctuary.
- UWF World Day of Prayer is at our church this year on Friday, March 6.

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm. Motion made by Pastor, 2nd by Kendale

Gary closed us in prayer

Minutes written by Kendale Vosberg

“LOVE IN ACTION” WEEK

AT GOWRIE UMC

FEBRUARY 8TH - 14TH

ISAIAH 58:6-11A

- 6 “No, this is the kind of fasting I want:
Free those who are wrongly imprisoned;
lighten the burden of those who work for you.
Let the oppressed go free,
and remove the chains that bind people.
- 7 Share your food with the hungry,
and give shelter to the homeless.
Give clothes to those who need them, and
do not hide from relatives who need your help.
- 8 “Then your salvation will come like the
dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal.
Your godliness will lead you forward, and the
glory of the Lord will protect you from behind.
- 9 Then when you call, the Lord will answer.
‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply.
“Remove the heavy yoke of oppression.
Stop pointing your finger
and spreading vicious rumors!
- 10 Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble.
Then your light will shine out from
the darkness, and the darkness
around you will be as bright as noon.
- 11 The Lord will guide you continually,
giving you water when you are dry
and restoring your strength.
You will be like a well-watered garden,
like an ever-flowing spring.

JESUS REDEFINED LOVE

Jesus modeled a love that is self-giving,
not self-serving. He touched the leper,
healed crowds into the night, ate with
sinners, defended the outcast and
ultimately gave his life. His love
wasn't convenient or
comfortable - it cost him
everything.

CALL TO ACTION

Valentines day is celebrated as a day of
love, romantic love, yes, but also the
love between family, friends and the
regard we hold for our neighbors and
those in our communities.

Sunday February 8th we at Gowrie UMC
will be called to Christian Action
through Isaiah 58.

There is no better time, to intentionally
practice the love of God and neighbor
and ourselves. As a church body, we
will begin a week of intentional acts of
love and kindness.

Throughout 2026, we will be using “The
Kindness Bucket List” from Reach
International Outfitters. Each Sunday
we scratch off an act of kindness for all
of us who worship with/at Gowrie
UMC to practice that week!

LOVE IN ACTION

Love is action, not just emotion. It's
more than being kind or caring - it's
seeking the highest good of another at
personal cost.

We often hear of random acts of
kindness but instead let us practice
intentional, loving acts of kindness. On
the next page you will find a calendar
with acts of kindness. Each day, do
that act of kindness or an act of care
and love that you choose. The only
requirement is to be intentional!

Let us begin Lent in Love and service.

FEBRUARY 2026



make kindness the norm.
randomactsofkindness.org

SCIENCE SPARK: EXPRESSING GRATITUDE AND LOVE BOOSTS OXYTOCIN (THE "BONDING HORMONE"), WHICH DEEPENS RELATIONSHIPS AND EVEN LOWERS BLOOD PRESSURE.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOUNDATION

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT																																																																																																																
1 Write three things you love about yourself.	2 Give a genuine compliment to three people today.	3 Text or message someone who helped you just to say thanks.	4 Make eye contact and share a genuine smile with at least five people today—at home, at school, or out in the world.	5 Hide notes of appreciation in lunchboxes, desks, or lockers.	6 Pick up litter or plant something green.	7 Take a photo of something beautiful or quirky around you—a cloud shaped like a heart, a stubborn little flower by the sidewalk—and send it to a friend with a simple "This made me think of you."																																																																																																																
8 Do something kind and invite others to "pass it on."	9 Tell a classmate, coworker, or friend something you admire about them.	10 Write a love letter to yourself or someone special (it can even be your future self!).	11 Give your pet extra cuddles—or volunteer at a shelter.	12 Send a message or card to someone who taught you something valuable.	13 Make handmade valentines for neighbors, caregivers, or community helpers.	14 Cut out paper hearts, write kind words on them, and scatter them in shared spaces.																																																																																																																
RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK FEBRUARY 15-21, 2026																																																																																																																						
15 Scroll until you see someone's creative effort—a drawing, a recipe, a photo—and leave a genuine, specific compliment.	16 Ask someone, "What's something good in your world today?" Then listen without rushing in to fix or compare.	17 Random Acts of Kindness Day! Do at least three acts of kindness—one for a friend, one for a family, one for a stranger.	18 We always trade the big news; today share a tiny victory. You'll invite others to celebrate their small joys too.	19 Drop a surprise note in a library book.	20 Let someone merge in traffic, go ahead in line, or take their time when they're flustered.	21 Make a playlist of songs that make you feel loved and send it to a friend.																																																																																																																
22 Before bed, name one loving thing that happened today.	23 Shout out someone else's accomplishment on social media.	24 Leave a kind chalk message on a sidewalk or driveway.	25 Bring a treat to share with coworkers, classmates, or neighbors.	26 Start a message thread where everyone adds something kind about someone else.	27 Write a loving reminder on your mirror ("You're doing great," "You are loved").	28 Look back on your month of love—what act meant the most?																																																																																																																
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Gowrie United Methodist Church
1306 Market Street, PO Box 479
Gowrie, IA 50543

Worship Schedule

Sunday School 9:00 am
Coffee and Conversation 9:45 am
Worship 10:15 am
Facebook Live
Later on Channel 575 at 11:00 am

Office Schedule

Tuesday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Wednesday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously

IOWA CONFERENCE
The United Methodist Church

You are invited to Bishop Kennetha's Lenten Study—
Building Beloved Community: The Courage to Love in the Face of Tyranny

Let us walk together through Lent, discovering how God calls us into a community rooted not in fear, but in love, joy, and courage.

- When: Tuesday, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, and 3/31 at 7:00 p.m.
- Where: Zoom
- How to Join: Please RSVP to receive the Zoom link and study schedule.

RSVP and purchase book at <https://www.iaumc.org/newsdetail/19573540>