



MULBERRY STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Sharing the heart of God from the heart of downtown
Macon by fostering healing for the broken places of life.*



The Church at Worship

ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2025 | Six Thirty

Welcome to Mulberry Street UMC!

WELCOME TO THIS SERVICE OF WORSHIP!

We are a church on a mission to share the heart of God from the heart of downtown Macon by fostering healing for the broken places of life. Methodists have been worshipping Father, Son, & Holy Spirit on this corner since 1826.

You are invited to become a living part of this vital congregation. Check out the back of the bulletin to see the news of the church!

CONNECT WITH US

Please fill out a Connection Card found in the back of the pew if you are visiting with us, would like to sign up for upcoming events, have a prayer request, or need to update your contact information.

If you are visiting with us for the first time, please find an usher to receive a welcome gift!

We invite you to visit us at **mulberrymethodist.org**.

Stay updated on the Mulberry community by subscribing to our weekly newsletter!

Visit **bit.ly/mul-news** to sign up.

Our 11:00 a.m. worship service is livestreamed on Facebook. You can download the Sunday bulletin at **mulberrymethodist.org/worship/bulletins**.

GIVING

You can make your offering to God by visiting **mulberrymethodist.org/give** or by scanning the QR code, which will take you directly to our church's secure giving website.



ACCESSIBILITY

Hearing Assistive devices are available and can be found in the narthex by the usher station. Please ask an usher for assistance locating them.

*The artwork on the cover is "Ash" by Mike Moyers.
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57140>*

*Please rise in body and/or in spirit. **Bold Type** indicates congregational participation



Gathering in Silence

*“In returning and rest, you will be saved,” says the Lord.
In quietness and trust, we find strength.*

Welcome & Call to Worship

Rev. Jack Varnell

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

We gather in this place to worship, seeking God’s presence.
God meets us in this holy time and space.

We come, aware of our need for grace.
God welcomes us with steadfast love and mercy.

We come, longing for renewal and peace.
God restores us with joy and salvation.

Opening Prayer

Rev. Payton Stone

O God, maker of everything and judge of all you have made, from the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up. By the redemptive power of the cross, create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

* Hymn No. 390

Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

DETROIT

First Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 (*Pew Bible pg 740*)

Rev. Stone

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations.

“Yet even now,” says the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil. Who knows whether he will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and make not thy heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Anthem

Create In Me

Terre Johnson

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit in me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
And take not thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,
And uphold me with thy free Spirit.

- Psalm 51: 10-12

Second Reading

Psalm 51:1-4a, 7, 10-12, 16-17 (Pew Bible pg 452)

Rev. Varnell

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love; according to thy 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 thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. For thou hast no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

This is the word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Meditation

"A Broken Spirit"

Rev. Varnell

Invitation to Lenten Discipline

Rev. Stone

Dear Brothers and Sisters 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 converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church.

In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the need we all have to renew our faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. To make right a beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now come before our Creator and Redeemer to receive these ashes.

Prayer over the Ashes

Rev. Varnell

Let us pray:

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.

May these ashes be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Imposition of Ashes

You are invited to come to the chancel whenever you are ready to receive the ashes.

The altar rail is open for meditation and prayer as long as you wish.

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Confession and Pardon

Rev. Varnell

The ashes are our pledge to take up the cross of an obedient life of discipleship. We begin this journey by confessing our sins together before God.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty.

We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us.

Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father. For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Brief Silence

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to thee:

Have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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 No. 269

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

LAND OF REST

* Benediction

Rev. Stone

Dismissal in Silence



*Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you will return.*

News of the Church

Weekly Worship & Prayer Service for Lent | Starting March 12

Join us as we continue our monthly Worship and Prayer service with a special weekly Lenten series from March 12 to April 9. This five-week journey will provide an opportunity to deepen our faith through prayer, contemplative practices, and worship. Each week, we will gather for a fellowship dinner at 5:30 pm, followed by a time of scripture, song, and guided prayer at 6:15 pm. Whether you are seeking a new Lenten discipline or simply longing for a space to draw closer to God, we invite you to make the most of this season with us.

Put out your “Easter at Mulberry” Yard Signs!

It’s time to pull out your Easter yard signs and show off your Mulberry spirit! Help advertise our Easter schedule to your neighbors with the reusable yard signs we’ve had for the past few years. If you don’t have one, you can pick up a sign in the church office! Suggested donation \$15.

Easter 2025 Events

- **Easter Egg Hunt on Coleman Hill | April 13 | 4-6 pm**
- **Holy Week Services | April 14-18 | Noon**
Lunch following in the Fellowship Hall
- **Maundy Thursday Service | April 17 | 6:30 pm**
- **Easter Sunday | April 20**
Sunrise Service on Coleman Hill | 7 am
Butterfly Release in the Courtyard | 10 am
Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

Keep up with us online!



Stay updated on the Mulberry community by subscribing to our weekly newsletter!

To sign up, visit bit.ly/mulnews or scan the QR code.

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube at **@MulberryMethodist**

Visit our website at mulberrymethodist.org for our calendar, service recordings, newsletter archives, and more!

REV. JACK VARNELL

Senior Pastor

REV. PAYTON STONE

Associate Pastor

ELISA REECE

Director of Family Ministries

DR. TERRE JOHNSON

Director of Music

DANIEL MCINTOSH

Organist

MILLIE THOMPSON

Director of Communications

THE AINSWORTH CHOIR

About Our Worship

Worship begins with God. When we gather for worship, God meets us and speaks to us, and we listen to God and respond. At Mulberry, our order of worship (liturgy) is divided into four movements.

In our “**Entrance and Praise**,” we come together in response to God’s invitation and prepare ourselves to hear God’s Word.

In our “**Proclamation and Response**” we are addressed by God through Scripture and our musical anthem; in this movement, we listen to readings from the Bible as well as a sermon, wherein God’s word is interpreted for the gathered community.

Once a month, we participate in “**Thanksgiving and Communion**.” In this movement, we come to the Table to celebrate what God has done in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, and we’re nourished by the special outpouring of grace offered in this sacred act.

The fourth and final movement is the “**Sending Forth**,” where we are blessed and sent into the world to share the heart of God with a world in need.

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a time of reflection and penance. Ashes are imposed on worshipers’ foreheads as a symbol of our mortality and the repentance of our sins. This service is a time to come before God, recognizing our humanity and remembering who we are and who we can be.



Mulberry Street

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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mulberrymethodist.org

Office Hours M-Th 8:30am - 5pm