

CHUM NEWS

February 2026 Newsletter



Are We Living Our Prayers—or Just Saying Them?

Pastor Samuel Mohn

Most of us learned to pray early in life. We learned the words. We learned when to bow our heads, when to close our eyes, when to say “Amen.” Prayer became something we do—a habit, a discipline, a comfort. And that is a good and holy thing.

But every now and then, a harder question presses in on us: **Are we living our prayers, or are we only saying them?**

We pray for peace, yet sometimes speak with impatience. We pray for justice, yet can be slow to act. We pray for the hungry, the lonely, the hurting—and still move quickly past need.

And very often, we pray for our families.

We pray for our children and grandchildren, for their safety, their faith, their futures. We pray for spouses, parents, siblings, and loved ones who are struggling, grieving, or drifting. We ask God to protect them, guide them, and surround them with love.

Those prayers matter deeply. But they also ask something of us. If we pray for our families, are we living with patience and grace at home? If we pray for our children’s faith, are we modeling faith they can see? If we pray for healing in our families, are we willing to listen, forgive, and begin again?

Prayer is not meant to be an escape from real life—it is meant to shape how we live in it.

One of our beloved hymns, **Sweet Hour of Prayer**, reminds us that prayer is a place of refuge and

strength. It speaks of cares being lifted, fears eased, and burdens carried to God. But that “sweet hour” does not end when the song is over. What happens in prayer is meant to follow us into our kitchens, our workplaces, our conversations, and our homes. When Jesus taught us to pray, he didn’t give us magic words. He gave us a way of life: “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” That prayer only becomes real when heaven starts showing up in how we love, forgive, welcome, and serve—especially with the people closest to us.

The danger is not that our prayers are too small. The danger is that we expect God to do what God is already calling us to do. Prayer does not replace action; prayer *fuels* it. True prayer changes the person praying.

The good news is this: we don’t have to get it perfect. God meets us where we are. But prayer always invites us to move—toward compassion, toward courage, toward faith lived out loud.

So this week, as you pray—for the world, for our church, and especially for your family—ask one more question: **“Lord, how are you calling me to live what I am praying?”**

May our prayers rise like incense before God, and may our lives—at home and beyond—be the living answer.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Sam

Hymn History: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross is one of the most enduring and theologically rich hymns in Christian worship, cherished especially during Lent and Holy Week for its deep meditation on Christ's sacrifice.

The text was written in 1707 by **Isaac Watts**, often called the father of English hymnody. At a time when congregational singing was largely limited to metrical psalms, Watts broke new ground by writing hymns that expressed personal faith, emotion, and devotion rooted in Scripture. This hymn first appeared in his collection *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, marking a turning point in Protestant worship.

Watts based the hymn on **Galatians 6:14**: "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rather than offering a doctrinal explanation of the crucifixion, Watts invites worshipers into contemplation. The word survey is key—it means to look carefully, thoughtfully, and reverently. The hymn asks singers not to rush past the cross, but to stand before it in awe.

Originally, the hymn was sung to several different tunes. Today it is most commonly paired with **Rockingham**, a stately English melody attributed to Edward Miller in the late 18th century. The pairing of Watts's text with this tune helped cement the hymn's lasting place in English-speaking worship traditions.

The hymn's final stanza—"Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all"—has made it especially meaningful across centuries. It moves the singer from reflection to response, from beholding Christ's love to offering one's whole self in return. Because of this, the hymn has been widely used not only during Lent but also at communion services, Good Friday worship, and moments of deep spiritual reflection.

More than 300 years after it was written, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* continues to shape Christian devotion. Its enduring power lies in its simplicity, biblical depth, and its ability to lead worshipers—generation after generation—to the foot of the cross, where humility, gratitude, and faithful commitment are born.



February Birthdays



2/1 Brady Smith
 2/2 Scott Taylor
 2/3 Paul Harvey
 2/4 Janice Moliterno
 2/5 Larry Slimmer
 2/8 Dreylin Pekalla
 2/11 Leila Stefanek
 2/12 Margaret Raupach
 2/15 Leslie Thomas
 2/16 Donald Bloom,
 George Gulgas , David
 Hill, Christopher Kuhn
 2/17 Sue Cerny, Hazel
 Nicholas
 2/19 David Moyers
 2/21 Carter Denning
 2/25 Corey Hale
 2/26 Laura Yoder
 2/27 Taylor Tomlinson

Baked Spaghetti

Ingredients

- Kosher salt
- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef chuck
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large onion, diced (about 2 cups)
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and diced (about 1 cup)
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- One 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- One 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 8 ounces thin spaghetti
- 8 ounces sharp Cheddar, grated (about 2 cups)
- 1/4 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, finely chopped

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Heat a second large pot over medium-high heat. Add the beef, 1/2 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of pepper and cook, stirring to break the meat up, until browned, about 4 minutes. Add the onions, bell peppers, garlic and a generous pinch of salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in the crushed and diced tomatoes, sugar and oregano and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 30 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti for 2 minutes less than the time indicated in the package directions. Strain well. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
4. Cover the bottom of a 13-by-9-by-2- inch pan with a third of the sauce. Add half the pasta and a third of the Cheddar; repeat the layers and add the last of the sauce; reserve the last of the Cheddar.
5. Bake for 30 minutes. Top with the remaining Cheddar and continue baking until it melts and the sauce bubbles, about 5 more minutes. Let cool in the dish for at least 10 minutes. Garnish with the parsley before cutting into squares.



**What's
 Cookin With
 Pastor Sam**



**Friday, February 6, 2026
10am - Noon**

Needed:



Toilet Paper Canned Soups Canned Tuna Sturdy Boxes

Please Donate!

ASH WEDNESDAY

ASH ON THE DASH

7:30 - 8:30 AM

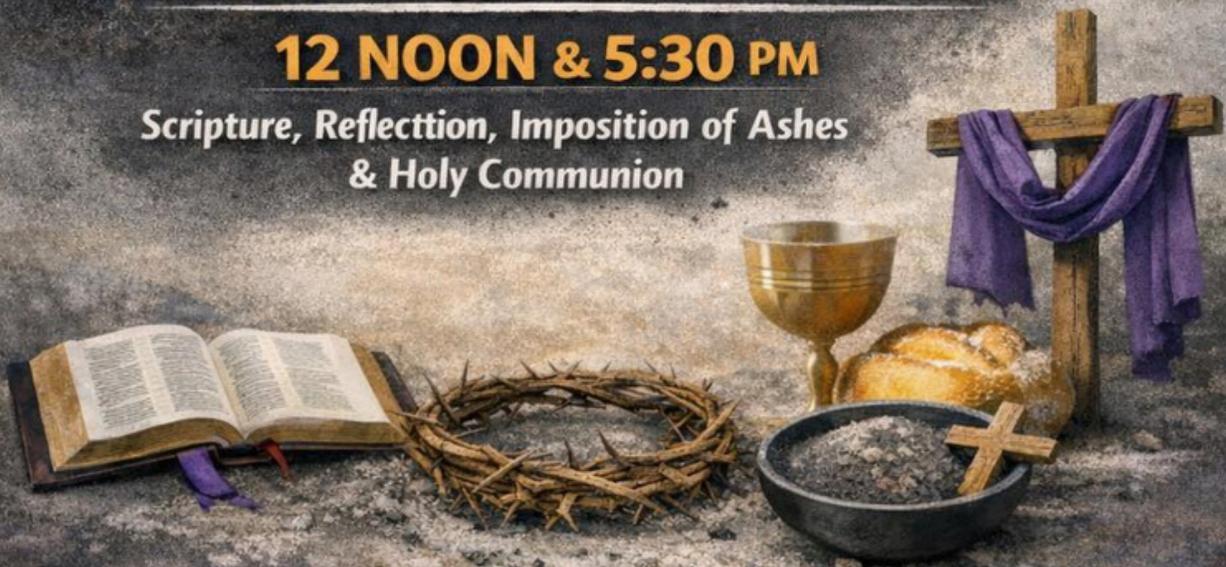
Drive-Thru Ashes & Blessings



SERVICE OF WORD WITH ASHES

12 NOON & 5:30 PM

*Scripture, Reflection, Imposition of Ashes
& Holy Communion*





Church Hill UMC Leadership Team Meeting

Monday February 9th @ 6:00PM
All are welcome.

Children's Corner



Welcome to Children's Corner!!

I would like to thank my church family for remembering me at Christmas. It was a nice surprise, and I appreciated it very much.

It's time for our second semester of King's Kids to start and we are looking forward to welcoming back all of our King's Kids and hopefully welcoming some new ones too. Our fundraiser is a soup sale which will be held on Super Bowl Sunday right after church. We will be collecting soup the day before between 1-2pm and you may purchase soup from 2-3pm if you would like to do so. We will have a variety of soup available which includes chicken noodle, wedding soup, ham and navy bean, broccoli cheddar, potato, vegetable and chicken vegetable. There will also be chocolate covered Oreos, Nutter Butter cookies which will be decorated for Valentine's Day and for Super Bowl in Super Bowl colors and possibly some football shaped suckers. If you can spare just two hours on two Wednesdays a month, we really need your help in the kitchen. We have two cooking teams which meet on the first and third Wednesdays or the second and fourth Wednesdays. We need cooks, dishwashers, and someone to help clean up the tables after dinner. If you can help in any way please let me know.

Youth group will return also and is continuing to group which is very exciting!

We still have K.R.E.W on Sunday mornings during worship and I am happy that we have 4 teaching teams. The children remain with their family on the 1st Sunday of the month so that they can experience worship and receive Holy Communion as a family.

Thank you for all of your help and support!

Miss Terri

Walking the Way of Lent

Each year, the season of Lent invites us to slow down and walk with Jesus on the road that leads to the cross—and ultimately to the empty tomb. Lent is not a season of gloom for its own sake, nor is it about proving our spiritual discipline. Instead, Lent is a gift: forty days set aside to help us remember who we are, whose we are, and where God is leading us.

Lent begins with ashes, a quiet and honest reminder of our humanity: “*You are dust, and to dust you shall return.*” These words are not meant to frighten us, but to free us. When we remember our limits, we also remember our dependence on God. In a world that constantly urges us to be more, do more, and achieve more, Lent gently calls us back to humility, prayer, and trust.

Traditionally, Lent is marked by three practices: **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving**. These are not religious hoops to jump through, but pathways that help re-center our hearts. Prayer draws us closer to God. Fasting—whether from food, habits, or distractions—creates space for God to work. Almsgiving turns our attention outward, reminding us that love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable.

Lent is also a season of honest self-examination. It asks us difficult but life-giving questions:

Where do I need healing?
What needs to be let go?

How is God calling me to deeper faithfulness?

The good news is that Lent does not end in despair. The journey through wilderness and repentance leads us toward hope. Every step of Lent is taken in the shadow of resurrection. Even as we acknowledge brokenness—within ourselves and within the world—we do so trusting in God’s grace, mercy, and power to make all things new.

As we walk through this holy season together, may we do so with open hearts. May we listen more closely for God’s voice, love more boldly, and live more intentionally. And when Easter morning comes, may we discover that we are not the same people who first received the ashes—but people renewed by grace, ready to proclaim that Christ is risen.

Grace and peace to you in this Lenten journey.

— Pastor Sam



Connect with us!

Website:

www.churchhillumc.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/
ChurchHillUMC](https://facebook.com/ChurchHillUMC)

Worship with us Sundays at 10am!

**Church Hill United
Methodist Church**

189 Churchill-Hubbard Rd.
Youngstown, OH 44505

Livestream available at:

[www.youtube.com/@churc
hhillumc6144](http://www.youtube.com/@churchhillumc6144)



SCAN HERE

Our Team

Sam Mohn, Pastor

Jane Page, Director of
Worship

Carla Jenkins, Pianist

Terri West, Children's
Director

Deanna Slifka, Youth
Director

Joe Seifert, Sound Room
Tech

Charity Washington,
Custodian

Prayer Requests

Rodeny & Kay Toth, Haylee (friend of the Pekalla family), Lee Elmo, Dora and Ron Baker, Nancy and Carol Smith, Helen Hess, David Moyers, Eileen and Jeff Hawkins, Darlene Capitola, Andre Williams and Dianne, his mother, Jimmy Quinlan, Joette Sondheimer (Viv Seifert's sister), Jane Doughton, Lori and Kevin Vara, Ron Miller (Ken Miller's cousin), Burce MacLellan (Ken Miller's friend), Jimmy Weller, DeeAnn (Carl Jenkins' sister), Samuel M, Margie Ryan, John Baksa, Bella, Mike (Nancy Smith's brother), Stacie - (Jan Ferry's niece) Tiffany Orwig, Lori Furlong, Carla Jenkins, Mrs. Pirlozzi (Felicia Brown's mother), Jean Dutko, John (Clara Jones' nephew), Natalie D'orzio (friend of the Ahlswede family), Roger Bartlett (Helen Hess's son-in-law), Frank Zedek (Kathy Zedek's son, from Bible study), Bev Clinton, Irene O'Hara, Linda Baker (Neighbor of Catchpoles), Angelina Vince (Christian Denning), Family of Christine Sweitzer, Felicia Brown, Jaxson (Toepfer's grandson), Craig Ruggles, Marjie Hrabe, Family of Phyllis Simon (Friend of Audrey Williams), Family of Samantha Nemcik Prayers for teachers and military members and their families

Contact Linda Toepfer at 330-718-2361 for the current prayer list and to request prayers.





FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 Communion 9:30 Bible Brew 10a Worship</p>	2	3	<p>4 KK/YG 4:45-7 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>5 Pantry Set up 9:30 Bible Study 10:30</p>	<p>6 Community Food Pantry 10-Noon</p>	<p>7 Soup Drop off 1-2pm</p>
<p>8 9:30 Bible Brew 10a Worship Soup Sale after Church</p>	<p>9 NAVIM 6:00 parlor Leadership 6pm YH</p>	10	<p>11 KK/YG 4:45-7 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>12 Bible Study 10:30</p>	13	<p>14 Pastor Sam Course of Study</p>
<p>15 9:30 Bible Brew 10a Worship  Transfiguration SUNDAY</p>	<p>16 Lenten Study Noon / 6:00  PRESIDENTS DAY</p>	17	<p>18 KK/YG 4:45-7 Choir 7:30  Ash Wednesday</p>	<p>19 Bible Study 10:30</p>	20	21
<p>22 9:30 Bible Brew 10a Worship FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT</p>	<p>23 Lenten Study Noon / 6:00</p>	24	<p>25 KK/YG 4:45-7 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>26 Bible Study 10:30</p>	27	28



Church Hill United Methodist Church

189 Church Hill Hubbard Road

Youngstown, Ohio 44505