Our Christian Worship of God
February 22, 2026
Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve

1st Sunday in Lent — Liturgical Color: Purple

The Prelude — "How Fair and Pleasant Art Thou" — -Dupre
The Chiming of the Hour
The Call to Worship — "Be Thou My Vision"
The Welcome and Announcements
*The Hymn UMH 269 — "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"
*The Invocation

Leader: As we enter this holy season of Lent, we remember that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness—into a place of testing, silence, and deep trust.

People: Lead us, O God, into the sacred spaces where our faith is refined, and our hearts are made new.

Leader: When temptation whispers promises of easy answers and quick solutions, when we long for shortcuts around hardship and growth--

People: Teach us to stand firm in Your Word, trusting that faithfulness is greater than convenience.

Leader: In the wilderness, Jesus chose obedience over power, humility over pride, and trust over control.

People: Form in us that same courage, that same surrender, that same unwavering devotion.

ALL: Holy God, as we worship today, meet us in our wilderness places. Strengthen us to walk the long road of discipleship with Christ, knowing there are no shortcuts to resurrection. Shape us into a people who trust You fully, follow You faithfully, and worship You alone. Amen.

The Anthem — "God of the Desert Spring" — Chancel Choir

*The Affirmation of Christian Faith — The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.** *universal

*The Gloria Patri "**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen."**

The Offering
Offertory — "Near to the Heart of God" — -Innes
*Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

**"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him,
all creatures here below; praise Him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen"** — **UMH # 95**

*Offertory Prayer

Thew Hymn TFWS 2105 — "Jesus, Tempted In The Desert"
The Pastoral Prayer and 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

*The Scripture Lesson — Matthew 4: 1-11 — see insert

Minister: The Word of God for the people of God
People: Thanks be to God. Amen

The Sermon — "No Shortcuts In The Wilderness" — Rev. Scott Gilmer
Prayer of Christian Discipleship

*The Hymn UMH 415 — "Take Up Thy Cross"
*The Benediction
*The Choral Response and Recessional

**May the road rise to meet you; May the wind blow at your back.
May the sun shine warmly on your face;
May the rain fall softly on your field,
And until we meet again, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand. Amen**

*The Chiming of the Trinity
*The Postlude — "Allegro" — -Mendelssohn

*-indicates worshippers are invited to stand if able.

OUR JOYS AND PRAYER CONCERNS February 20, 2026

Note: please contact Shirley Davis in the church office to add to the joys and prayer concerns. 222-3496 or sdavis@cloverfumc.com.

Recent Concerns: Melva Jones, Denise Bono, Judy Bailes, Albert Wyatt, Steve Pryor, Kathy Collins, Sandy King, Judy Hench & family, Valerie Larsen, Renee Gallien, Jane Turpin, Marie Millen, Our Homebound Angels.

Military: Captain Virginia Stanton, USMC; Petty Officer 3rd Class William Shearer; Petty Officer Andrew Beaty; Lt. Col. Leeann Hidle Chavers, Air Force; Lieutenant Colonel Thad Wilson; Lt. Col. Nicholas S. Hare; Lt. Col. Blair Preston.

The AEDs, with an alarm system, are located downstairs near the nursery and outside the sanctuary. A list of those who are CPR trained is also included in the boxes.

Reverend Scott Gilmer, Senior Pastor – ssgilmer@bellsouth.net
Reverend J. Richard Gibson, Pastor Emeritus
Cheri King, Director of Music Ministries – cking@cloverfumc.com
Jay Oden, Organist – jay.oden@gmail.com
Christine Payseur, Church Business / Technical Coordinator – cpayseur@cloverfumc.com
Shirley M. Davis, Admin. Asst. / Financial Sec. – sdavis@cloverfumc.com
Tracie Kite, Sexton – kitetracie@hotmail.com
Hope Long, Nursery
Anna Livingston – Lay Leader
Renee Gallien, Jason King, Judy Falls
Lay Members to Annual Conference

Reverend Scott Gilmer's telephone number is 864-554-8676. Feel free to call if you have need of him.

Invitation to New Worshippers: Those desiring to unite with our congregation through Baptism, Profession of Faith or Transfer of Membership are encouraged to signify this on the attendance pad, on a visitor card and/or contact our Pastor. We are thankful to have new worshippers. Welcome to the First UMC family.

Weekly Scripture Readings: Genesis 12: 1-4; Psalm121; Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17
John 3: 1-17

Words of Wisdom: Lent begins not in comfort, but in the wilderness. Before Jesus preached, healed, or called disciples, He was led into a lonely place of testing. There were no crowds, no applause—only hunger, temptation, and the quiet resolve to trust God fully. In the wilderness, shortcuts were offered. Power without the cross. Glory without obedience. Bread without trust. Yet Jesus chose faithfulness over convenience. The wilderness is not a detour from God's plan; it is often the very place where our trust is refined, and our identity is clarified. There are no shortcuts to spiritual depth. There are no quick paths to resurrection without the journey of surrender. As we begin this Lenten season at First Clover UMC, may we walk with courage, .resist the easy road, and trust that God is shaping us—even here. Especially here. Faithfulness, not shortcuts, leads us home.

VALENTINE'S DAY LUNCH

The Forever Young & Friends Valentine Day date is being changed to
Thursday, FEBRUARY 26, 2026 at 12:00
Please put your name on the sign-up sheet or
call the church office if you plan to attend.
The meat will be provided so we need to know how much to order.
Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.
There will be a place for donations and/or food for the
Blessing Bags and the Food Project.
Everyone is invited!
Look forward to seeing you then.

The Forever Young & Friends will meet on February 26 at 10:30 in room 104.

CARING MISSION PROJECT@THE VALENTINE LUNCH, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26
Before (about 11:30) and after lunch we will be doing mission projects. Everyone is invited to eat lunch with us. We will make Blessing Bags as well as a table to fix cards with our church information and uplifting messages for the Blessing Bags. Another table will be the Card Ministry so you can sign cards for people in our church and community. There will be a place to donate food to the Food Project and to the Blessing Bags.

Music Ministry:
If you are interested in singing in the choir or ringing with our handbell choir, please contact Cheri King. cking@cloverfumc.com.

The 2026 Flower Calendar is now in place on the bulletin board near the door to the Missions & Fellowship Center. If you would like to provide flowers, please place your name beside the date(s) you would like to reserve.

This Week

Budget Receipts ……	$ 3,992.00	Week …… …….7	
Other ……$	403.00	% of Budget received……..17	
Total Budget for 2026……	$ 484,517	Church School Attendance …….27	
Amount needed weekly……$	9,318	Morning Worship Attendance ……83	
		Youth……	

1/1/26 Bank Balance	$ 57,059.69
Total giving to date	$ 95,974.68
Total spending to date	$ 64,337.81
Current Bank Balance	$ 88,696.56

2/19/26 Local Operating Balance $ 25,052.38

If you want your offering to go to the new Local Operating Fund, please be sure to mark your check clearly.
Stewardship ~ Ways to Give
Regular Tithes and Offerings through the **Sunday Morning Offering.**
Giving On-Line: Giving to FUMC is available online through our website:
www.firstumcclover.org **Thanks for your support of the mission and ministry of FUMC. If you decide to give electronically, please feel free to drop an "Electronic Giver" card in the offering plate on Sundays as an act of worship.**

Wonderful Wednesday Meal, February 25 hosted by Hospitality Committee

Menu: Vegetable Beef Soup, Homemade Sandwiches, Cornbread & Desserts

NAME _____# _____

FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

To better support the ongoing needs of Clover FUMC's facilities and infrastructure, the Finance Committee plans to consolidate the remaining balances of two special-purpose giving accounts – the **Organ Repair & Restoration Fund** and the **Fire Alarm Upgrade Fund** – into the Trustees' **General Building & Facilities Maintenance Fund.** These monies will continue to be used **only** for building and facility needs, **including** but not limited to, organ repair and maintenance and fire alarm system needs.

If you previously contributed to either of these projects and prefer that your donation **not** be transferred, please contact **Shirley Davis,** by **Monday, March 2, 2026.**

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR BLESSING BAGS TO HELP THE HOMELESS & OTHERS.

Blessing Bags are given to people who come to our church for help. They contain individual size items that do not need to be refrigerated, heated or a can opener. Items are packed in 2-gallon Ziplock Bags. Money donations are also welcome to buy needed items. Just write Blessing Bags on your check or envelope. List of the foods needed at this time.

16 oz. bottled water	Individual fruits/ applesauce	Beanie Wienies with pop top
Individually wrapped saltines/ ritz crackers	Individual bags of chips, goldfish, cheezies, etc.	Meat pouches or pop top cans-tuna, chicken, salmon etc.
Pop tarts	Granola or fruit bars	Individual peanut butter
Jelly packets	Juice boxes or bottled	Individual handwipes

Notes on Missons: THANK YOU to everyone who continues to make this ministry possible with your thoughtful donations! This week's suggested donations – peanut butter, dried beans, crackers (These are suggestions. ALL donations are appreciated!)

Nothing But Nurture
Gathering Hour – Please join us for a time of fellowship before the meal on Wednesdays. We will "gather" from 4:30pm to 5:30pm and then enjoy dinner at 5:30pm.
Homebound Angels – Please continue to pray for our Homebound Angels and Friends of Nurture! Our Nurture Bags will be on the table in March with an Easter Theme!

- **"GAME ON FELLOWSHIP EDITION" – This is a NEW Fellowship Opportunity!** Come visit with your church family members and engage in some fun activities! (Drinks and light snacks will be provided.) Everyone is invited!
- It will be held once a month, on a Tuesday, at 3:00pm in the MFC.
- Mark your calendars for the following dates: March 17th, April 28th and May 19th.
- No sign up required. Just show up ready to have a great time!!!

Matthew 4:1-11

Satan Tempts Jesus

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by
the devil. **2** And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights,
afterward He was hungry. **3** Now when the tempter came to Him, he said,
"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."
4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread
alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "**5** Then
the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the
temple, **6** and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself
down. For it is written:

'He shall give His angels charge over you, and,'In *their* hands they shall
bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "**7** Jesus said to
him, "It is written again, 'You shall not [a]tempt the LORD your God.'

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain,
and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. **9** And he
said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and
worship me."**10** Then Jesus said to him, [b]"Away with you, Satan! For it is
written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall
serve.' "**11** Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and
ministered to Him.