



# Jacob's Ladder



A NEWSLETTER OF OXFORD FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Quennel Alexander Anderson, Pastor

Volume 26, Number 3, March 2026



## FROM PASTOR'S DESK



# Lent 2026

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As we enter this sacred season of Lent, we are reminded that this is a time of reflection, repentance, renewal, and recommitment. Lent invites us to walk intentionally with Christ on His journey toward the cross. It is a solemn yet hopeful season—a time to draw closer to God and to deepen our devotion.

The Word of God reminds us in JOEL 2:12, *“Return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”* Lent calls us to return; not halfway, not casually, but with our whole hearts. It is an opportunity to examine our lives, lay aside distractions, and refocus our attention on the One who gave everything for us.

Jesus teaches us in MATTHEW 6:16-18 that our fasting, praying, and giving should be done with sincerity and humility before God.

During this season, I encourage each of you to remain steadfast in prayer, faithful in worship, committed to spiritual discipline, and generous in love. Whether you are fasting from certain habits, dedicating more time to prayer, or engaging more deeply in Scripture, do it all as an offering unto the Lord.

Let us also remember GALATIANS 6:9: *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”* Stay committed. Stay prayerful. Stay encouraged. The discipline of Lent is not about ritual alone—it is about transformation.

As a church family, we must also lift one another in prayer. I ask that you intentionally pray for our congregation—pray for unity, spiritual growth, and renewed strength. Let us especially remember our sick and shut-in members, those facing medical challenges, those grieving, and those who may feel

isolated during this season. JAMES 5:16 reminds us, *“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”* Your prayers matter. Your intercession makes a difference.

Let us be mindful that while Lent leads us through reflection and sacrifice, it also leads us toward resurrection hope. Because of Christ’s sacrifice, we have forgiveness. Because of His obedience, we have redemption. Because of His love, we have eternal life.

May this Lenten season strengthen your faith, deepen your commitment, and renew your joy in the Lord. Let us walk this journey together—with humility, with gratitude, and with unwavering hope.

I am praying for each of you, and I thank God continually for the faithful spirit that lives within Oxford First United Methodist Church.

**Faithfully Yours, Rev. Quennel Anderson**

## Black History Month Program



### Symbols of Freedom

On February 22, 2026, Oxford First UMC held its Annual Black History Month Program coordinated by Youth Minister Tressie Johnson. The program opened with a solo-Praise Dance by Little Miss Carlee Manning (left), followed by a “Symbols of Freedom” presentation showing historical and present day icons of Black History and the Civil Rights Movement from Harriet Tubman to Barack Obama.





On March 29, 2026, all roads will lead to  
Oxford First UMC for the  
**50th Anniversary Celebration of  
Clarence H. & Niler P. Franklin**  
where they will renew their vows as part of  
the regular 9:00A.M. Worship Services



There will be Light Refreshments  
immediately after church service.  
Come out and join the celebration  
and fun.

## Black History Month Conversation



**Panel Discussion on Education, Access, and Local Legacy:** (l. to r.) Seated—Clarence Franklin, Valerie Morgan, Dorothy Fitts, Rev. Lee Earl Robinson, LaVera Hodges, and Preston Taylor; Standing—Dr. M. Cade Smith, Dr. Jenay Willis, Dr. Karen Voncille Davidson Smith, and Kourtney Mia Barfield. At U.M. Jackson Avenue Center on Friday, February 27th.

# CHURCH CLEAN UP Day

**Saturday, March 7, 2026**  
8:30A.M.

*Jacob's Ladder* is a monthly publication of Oxford First United Methodist Church. EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Clarence H. Franklin. ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Niler P. Franklin. All rights reserved. Announcements or articles should be submitted to Rev. Quennel Anderson or submitted by e-mail directly to Franklin at [chfrank@panola.com](mailto:chfrank@panola.com). Visit our website at [www.OxfordFirst.org](http://www.OxfordFirst.org) and click on the *Jacob's Ladder* link to view previous month's issues.

Page 4

**Jacob's Ladder**  
P.O. Box 277  
Oxford, MS 38655

## The Word for the Month

Finally, brethren,  
whatsoever things are true,  
whatsoever things *are* honest,  
whatsoever things *are* just,  
whatsoever things *are* pure,  
whatsoever things *are* lovely,  
whatsoever things *are* of good report;  
if *there be* any virtue,  
and if *there be* any praise,  
think on these things.

Those things, which ye have both learned,  
and received, and heard, and seen in me,  
do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

—PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9 KJV

**Jacob's Ladder**

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE