



# Jacob's Ladder



A NEWSLETTER OF OXFORD FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Quennel Alexander Anderson, Pastor

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## FROM PASTOR'S DESK



### Moving Forward in 2026

Dear Oxford First United Methodist Church Family, as we move forward with the new year, my heart is filled with joy, gratitude, and great expectation as I look forward to continuing this season. I am truly excited about what God has already done among us and what He is preparing to do as we journey together into the year 2026!

Church family to celebrate the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for sustaining us throughout the past year, scripture reminds us, *“Thus far the Lord has helped us”* (1 SAMUEL 7:12). Through every challenge and every triumph, the Lord has proven Himself to be faithful. We give thanks for His grace, His mercy, and His abiding presence in our lives and in our church. *“This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes”* (PSALM 118:23).

As we move forward, let us do so with confidence, joy and hope, trusting that God has greater things ahead. Scripture declares, *“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”* (ISAIAH 43:19). I encourage each of us to remain steadfast in

faith, open to new opportunities for divine guidance, fresh revelation, and a renewed willingness to embrace all that God has for us in this coming season. *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart... and He will direct your paths”* (PROVERBS 3:5–6).

Let us also continue to celebrate new life in Christ. We lift and give thanks to God for Trinity Herron, Zamari Price, Malachi Henderson, Kaylee Robinson, and Xavier Robinson, who have come to the faith. What a powerful reminder that God is still saving, still calling, and still transforming lives. *“If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation”* (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17). I ask that you continue to keep them lifted in prayer as they grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a church family, we remain mindful of those who are grieving the loss of loved ones. We pray the comfort of God upon every bereaved family, holding fast to His promise: *“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit”* (PSALM

34:18). We also lift our sick and shut-in members, trusting the Lord who declares, *“I am the Lord who heals you”* (EXODUS 15:26), and believing that His strength is made perfect in weakness (2 CORINTHIANS 12:9).

Family, let us continue to keep the faith, encourage one another, and walk boldly into the future God has prepared for us. *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful”* (HEBREWS 10:23). I am confident

that as we remain united in Christ, the best is yet to come.

I thank God for you, and I look forward with great anticipation to all that the Lord will accomplish in and through Oxford First United Methodist Church in 2026.

To God be the glory for the great things He has done and the greater things He is about to do!

## Wortham Named Interim Director of Oxford Learning Center

Our very own Barbara Wortham has been chosen to serve as the Interim Director of the Oxford Learning Center. Wortham has been employed as a teacher in the Oxford School District for 23 years. She earned her Bachelors, Masters, and Specialists degrees from the University of Mississippi. The purpose of Oxford Learning Center (OLC) is to accommodate 6th-12th grade students who cannot yet meet the behavioral/academic requirements of the traditional school setting. OLC helps them gain the social, emotional, and behavior management skills they need to return to a traditional school environment as quickly as possible. The school’s services include:

- Social/Emotional Learning
- Behavioral Supports
- Community Partnerships
- Family Engagement
- Transition Services



The core values of the center are: Communication, Conflict Resolution, Self-Discipline. And Respect.

Ms. Wortham looks forward to working with students, parents, school leaders, and our community partners in order to make a positive impact in our community.

# A Black History Month Moment

## Who was Fannie Lou Hamer?



Fannie Lou Hamer’s life stands as one of the most powerful examples of grassroots courage in American history. Born in 1917 in Montgomery County, Mississippi, she grew up as the youngest of twenty children in a sharecropping family, experiencing firsthand the poverty and exploitation that defined life for many Black families in the Delta. By age six she was already working in the fields, and by adulthood she had become not only a skilled laborer but a natural community leader whose strength came from lived experience rather than formal education.

Her transformation into a national civil-rights figure began in 1962, when she attempted to register to vote in Indianola. That simple act—one many Americans took for granted—cost her her job, her home, and nearly her life. Instead of retreating, Hamer stepped forward. She joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and traveled across Mississippi encouraging Black citizens to register despite the constant threat of violence. Her activism made her a target; she survived a

brutal beating in a Winona jail that left her with permanent injuries. Yet she refused to be silenced.

Hamer’s national breakthrough came during the 1964 Democratic National Convention, where she testified on behalf of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, a racially integrated delegation formed to challenge the state’s all-white Democratic establishment. Her televised speech—plainspoken, emotional, and unflinchingly honest—forced the nation to confront the terror Black Mississippians faced when trying to vote. Her words echoed far beyond the convention hall and helped shift public opinion toward stronger federal voting-rights protections.

In the years that followed, Hamer expanded her fight beyond the ballot box. She founded the Freedom Farm Cooperative in the Delta, an ambitious effort to give poor families access to land, food security, and economic independence. She also helped establish the National Women’s Political Caucus, advocating for women—especially Black women—to take their rightful place in political life.

Fannie Lou Hamer died in 1977, but her legacy endures in every struggle for voting rights, economic justice, and human dignity. She proved that ordinary people, armed with conviction and courage, can change the course of history. Her voice—rooted in Mississippi soil and strengthened by hardship—remains one of the most enduring moral forces of the civil-rights movement.



# February: The Month of Love



4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

—1 CORINTHIANS 13: 4-8, 13, NIV

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STAMP  
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