



March 29, 2026

Covenant Presbyterian Church

1065 Gaines School Road

Athens, Georgia 30605

www.coupresathens.org

COVENANT at WORSHIP

Liturgical Color: PURPLE

11:00am Worship

Palm Sunday/Holy Week Begins

GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR STEWARDSHIP

Kathryn Fowler

VOLUNTARY

He Comes!

Michael Bedford

*CALL TO WORSHIP

The city stirs with expectation—
voices rising, people gathering, hope pressing into the streets.
From one side comes the clatter of power—
the machinery of fear, the spectacle of domination.

**From the other comes a different procession—
a teacher on a donkey, a people singing,**

"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

We stand between these two ways—
between fear and courage, between violence and mercy,
between the false "peace" of empire and the true peace of God.

Let us choose again this day whom we will follow –

Let us worship God!

*HYMN 196

"All Glory, Laud and Honor"

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God of peace, we confess that we are shaped by a world that teaches us to trust in fear. We have learned the language of domination — to secure ourselves at the expense of others, to accept harm as inevitable, to call violence necessary and mercy impractical. We confess how quickly we admire Jesus and how slowly we follow him. We wave our branches and sing our hosannas, yet resist the path that leads toward justice and the costly work of peace. Forgive us, O God. Unmask the fear that governs us. Loosen its grip upon our hearts. Teach us again the way of Christ — the way that refuses despair and dares to imagine another world. In your mercy, remake us. In your grace, lead us. In your love, set us free. We pray in the name of the One who comes in the way of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Silent prayers of confession]

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS (*Responsive*)

The One who comes in the name of the Lord
does not come to condemn, but to restore.

**Christ meets us not with force, but with mercy;
not with accusation, but with grace.**

My friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*RESPONSE 423 "Create In Me a Clean Heart, O God" SARADAY
**Create in me a clean heart, O God: create in me a clean O God,
create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit with in me**

LISTEN FOR THE GOOD NEWS

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING (Pew Bible p.554) Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING (Pew Bible p. 900) Matthew 21: 1-11

PROCLAMATION *The Peace of Empire & the Peace of God* Rev.Tom Buchanan

*HYMN 772

"Live Into Hope"

TRURO

RESPOND TO THE GOOD NEWS

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Unison*)

We believe in Jesus Christ, who came not on a warhorse but on a donkey, not in domination but in humility. We believe he revealed a kingdom where the last are welcomed, the wounded are held, and peace is rooted in justice and mercy. We believe God does not abandon the world to fear, violence, or the rule of death, but continues to labor for healing, reconciliation, and new creation. We believe the Holy Spirit loosens fear's grip upon us, expands our moral imagination, and calls us to lives of courage, compassion, and public witness. We believe the church is called to follow Jesus in this difficult, radiant work of peace. And we believe that even now, God is turning what has been fashioned for death toward the tending of life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER (*Unison*)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING

"Ride On King Jesus"

arr., A. Carter-Enyi

*DOXOLOGY 710

"We Lift Our Voices"

OFFERING

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices; Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our lives; they are yours: we are an offering. All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you. We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering; we are an offering.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN (see insert)

"Down By the Riverside"

Traditional Spiritual

*CHARGE & BLESSING

*SENDING HYMN 541 "God Be With You Until We Meet Again" RANDOLPH
**God be with you till we meet again; loving counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you: God be with you till we meet again.**

*POSTLUDE

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MUSIC DIRECTOR/PIANIST: Aaron Carter-Enyi
ADULT CHOIR CHILDREN'S CHOIR PRAISE BAND

* denotes standing as able.
LITURGIST: Claire Bruner