

**A Witness to the Resurrection &
of Thanksgiving for the Life of**
Karen Jean Estes Menke
July 21, 1942—July 11, 2026



Saturday, August 8, 2026

2:00pm

Covenant Presbyterian Church

1065 Gaines School Road

Athens, GA 30605

www.covpresathens.org

**A Witness to the Resurrection &
of Thanksgiving for the life of
*Karen Jean Estes Menke***

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Prelude in E Minor

Frédéric Chopin

SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE

WORDS OF WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN 833 “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go” ST. MARGARET

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8, Micah 6: 6-8

PSALM 23

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me
beside the still waters.
- 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteous-
ness for his name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they
comfort me.
- 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine
enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my
life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

NEW TESTAMENT READINGS I Corinthians 13, I John 4: 7-12

HOMILY

Rev. Tom Buchanan

MUSIC

Andante from Sonata, Op. 120.

Schubert

REMEMBRANCES

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be the 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.

*HYMN 215 "What Wondrous Love Is This" WONDROUS LOVE

*COMMENDATION

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*RECESSIONAL

*Please rise, in body or in spirit.

READER: Sujata Menke

PIANISTS: David Aina, Kartik Menke, Richard Zimdars

PASTOR: Rev. Tom Buchanan

All are invited to gather in the fellowship hall immediately following the service for fellowship and refreshments.

In Memory

Karen Jean Estes Menke, 83, passed away in her home in Athens, Georgia, on July 11, 2026, after several years of living life to its fullest while facing cancer with strength and good humor. Karen was a beloved wife, sister, mother, and grandmother, as well as a steadfast advocate for a more progressive and peaceful America.

Karen was born in Pittsburgh, PA, to Bay Edward Estes and Ruth Elizabeth Stubbs Estes. After graduating from Mount Lebanon High School, she attended Denison University and Penn State University, where she completed a degree in Political Science. She put her degree to work as an administrative staff member in the office of Representative Charles Goodell (NY) in Washington, D.C., until her marriage to Richard Bruce Menke—the boy next door, since their families had been friends and neighbors when they were growing up. She moved with Bruce to Philadelphia, Venezuela, and Miami before settling in Houston, where they raised their three sons. Karen eventually went back to work outside the home, first running a daycare program at her church and later working full-time for an international mutual fund company. Her passions included cats and turtles, and as the “turtle lady,” she regularly brought rescued box turtles on visits to local schools.

After retirement, her political activism amounted virtually to a second (or third) career, first in Houston and later in Athens, GA, where she moved with Bruce to be near two of her sons and her four grandchildren. She was an involved and loving grandmother yet still managed to contribute in innumerable ways to the wider community. In Athens, she was active in UGA’s OLLI program and in her church, as well as with a host of advocacy and political groups, including Indivisible, Moms Demand Action, and the Georgia Climate Change Coalition. She also served as an elected member of the Athens-Clarke County Democratic Committee. She and Bruce frequently hosted fundraisers and candidate meet-and-greets in their home; in fact, a number of successful local political campaigns were launched around their dining table. Her grandchildren fondly remember using the same table to decorate cookies with her every Christmas.

Karen was preceded in death by her parents and her older brother Bay Edward (“Jere”) Estes, Jr. She is survived by her beloved husband Bruce; her son Richard Bruce Menke, Jr. (Sujata Iyengar) and their children, Kavya and Kartik; by her son Douglas Bay Menke (Anna Lau) and their children Kai and Eliza; by her son Matthew Ewald Menke; by her sister Barbara Dreher and brother David Estes (Nancy); as well as by her nieces and nephews, and their children.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in her name to the American Cancer Society or the Colorectal Cancer Alliance.