

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 29, 2026 – 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM



PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

217 Opequon Church Lane
Winchester, VA 22602

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<i>Pastor</i>	David R. Witt
<i>Parish Associate</i>	Tracie Martin
<i>Church Office Administrator</i>	Rachel Lesink
<i>Church Finance Administrator</i>	Ken Smiy
<i>Director of Christian Education</i>	Carole Witt
<i>Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries</i>	Rebekah Witt
<i>Director of Music</i>	Susan Homan
<i>Organist/Pianist</i>	Garrett Jones
<i>Facilities Coordinator</i>	Robert Sydnor
<i>Nursery Supervisor</i>	Laurie Carver
<i>Faith Community Nurses</i>	Bill Martin, Mike Nutry, Pat Williams

To reach a staff member or if a pastoral concern arises, contact the church office or note who is out of the office and email one of the pastors directly and we will respond in a timely manner.

INFORMATION FOR OUR GUESTS

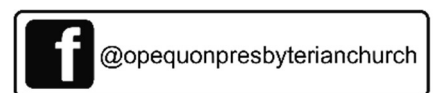
To get the most out of your visit, may we recommend you familiarize yourself with the following:

- **We encourage you to share requests for prayer.** You may do so by completing the pink form found in the pew rack and placing it in the offering.
- **Trust your children to the care of our dedicated, loving workers!** The nursery rooms are located through the Gathering Area, down the Gallery and through the Dell Room. An usher will be happy to escort you. Our nursery ministry cares for infants and children under the age of 5.
- **Worship Bags are available for children ages 3 – kindergarten.** These bags are in the back of the Sanctuary. Please return the bag and supplies to the basket when you are leaving.
- **Restrooms and a coat rack** are located off the Gathering Area, just outside the Sanctuary.
- **Large-print hymnals, Bibles and bulletins** are available from an usher.
- **Personal hearing assistance devices** are available from an usher if you would like to use one.
- **Transportation can be provided to worship.** Call the church office before 12:00 PM on Friday.

Access our Online Giving at
www.opequonchurch.org/giving
or scan the QR code here:



Follow us on Facebook:



A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Parade of the Palms; Habitat for Humanity Paint Can Offering

- ☞ **Thank you for silencing your phones before we begin the Worship Service.**
- ☞ **As the music of the Prelude begins, we invite you to take a moment to quietly focus your heart and prepare your inward spirit for the worship of God.**
- ☞ Please complete the Friendship Folder and pass it along during the greeting.
- ☞ PRAYER REQUEST forms are inside the pew holders – please place in the offering plate.

† = All who are able, please stand.

Bold print = All in unison.

☞ WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME ☞

PRELUDE..... *The Color Purple*
By: Brenda Russel, Allee Willis, & Stephen Bray

THE CHURCH BELL RINGS
GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT *Hosanna, Hosanna!*
By: J. Paul Williams, Joseph M. Martin

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to the King. Hosanna, hosanna, rang through the crowded streets. Thousands came to see Him, to cheer as He rode by. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna was their cry. Jesus entered into Jerusalem, people spread their garments on the road. Blessed is the seed of Abraham. Blessed is the King foretold. The multitudes all praised Him, they waved the palms in praise. They welcomed the Messiah as He came through the gates. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to the King. Hosanna, hosanna, rang through the crowded streets. Thousands came to see Him, to cheer as He rode by. Hosanna, hosanna, was their cry. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to the King. Hosanna, hosanna, rang through the crowded streets. Thousands came to see Him, to raise their voice and sing. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to the King. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

ENTRANCE OF THE WORD & THE LIGHT

†CALL TO WORSHIP

What will we lay down in obedience as Christ passes by?

We have no cloaks today, but we will lay down our hearts, our hopes, and our lives.

As the crowds in Jerusalem cried out long ago, we echo,

Hosanna! Save us! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

†OPENING HYMN No. 196 *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

[refrain] **All glory, laud, and honor to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!**

**Thou art the King of Israel, thou David's royal Son,
who in the Lord's name comest, the King and blessed One.** [refrain]

**The people of the Hebrews with palms before thee went;
our praise and prayers and anthems before thee we present.**

[refrain] **All glory, laud, and honor to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!**

**To thee, before thy passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
to thee, now high exalted, our melody we raise.** [refrain]

**Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring,
who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King!** [refrain]

(Please be seated for prayer.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Christ comes to the center of our busy, conflicted lives. He comes in triumph and humility. He comes in glory and in mercy. He comes knowing the best of who we are, and he comes knowing our worst. Trusting in God's grace, let us make our confession, first in unison prayer, then in personal silence.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Christ our Redeemer, try as we might, we do not follow your example. We do not empty ourselves. We do not humble ourselves. We are not obedient. You simply ask us to care about this world you created, to care for the relationships you have gifted, but we fail to do even that. Forgive us. You have given us the greatest, clearest example of love. Heal us, give us courage, and help us to follow.

(Moments of Silent Prayer)

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Even in the face of hatred and violence, we know that Christ loves us. Even when enduring death, Christ cares for us; Christ forgives us. Thanks be to the God of mercy.

LITANY OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

†RESPONSE OF PRAISE..... *Hosanna*

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

Lord, we lift up your name, with hearts full of praise;

Be exalted, oh Lord, my God! Hosanna in the highest!

**Glory! Glory! Glory to the King of kings!
Glory! Glory! Glory to the King of kings!
Lord, we lift up your name, with hearts full of praise;
Be exalted, oh Lord, my God! Glory to the King of kings!
Be exalted, oh Lord, my God! Hosanna in the highest!**

†PASSING OF THE PEACE (Please share this prayer with those near you.)
May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

✎ WE HEAR GOD'S WORD ✎

ANTHEM..... *Triumphal Entry*
Music by: Patti Drennan; Words by: J Paul Williams
Will Schwantes, violin

Jesus came to Jerusalem riding on a donkey's colt. Thousands rushed to greet him, their joy was uncontrolled. "Hosanna, hosanna," rang through the crowded streets. "Hosanna, hosanna!" As palm branches were laid at his feet. Jesus came to Jerusalem, people shouting ev'rywhere, "Glory in the highest." Their praises filled the air. "Hosanna, hosanna," rang through the crowded streets. "Hosanna, hosanna!" as palm branches were laid at his feet. They thought he was the Messiah and that he would set them free. Many had seen his miracles and they wanted him to be their King, their King! Jesus came to Jerusalem riding on a donkey's colt. Thousands rushed to greet him, their joy was uncontrolled. "Hosanna, hosanna," rang through the crowded streets. "Hosanna, hosanna! Hosanna to our King. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna!"

THE READING OF GOD'S WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Zechariah 9:9-12 Pew Bible p. 773
NEW TESTAMENT READING: Matthew 21:1-11 Pew Bible p. 802

HYMN No. 197 *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*
Rich Smith, trumpet

**Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;
through pillared court and temple the joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.
From Olivet they followed 'mid an exultant crowd,
the victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud;
the Lord of earth and heaven rose on in lowly state,
nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.
"Hosanna in the highest!" That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer; the Lord of heaven, our King.
O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
and in his blissful presence eternally rejoice.**

CONVERSATION WITH ALL AGES..... "Waiting for the Promise"
Nursery (Infants – Age 4)

†HYMN No. 200 *A Cheering, Chanting, Dizzy Crowd*

**A cheering, chanting, dizzy crowd had stripped the green trees bare,
and hailing Christ as king aloud, waved branches in the air.**

**They laid their garments in the road and spread his path with palms
and vows of lasting love bestowed with royal hymns and palms.**

**When day dimmed down to deepening dark the crowd began to fade
till only trampled leaves and bark were left from the parade.**

**Lest we be fooled because our
hearts have surged with passing praise,
remind us, God, as this week starts where Christ has fixed his gaze.**

**Instead of palms, a winding sheet will have to be unrolled,
a carpet much more fit to greet the king a cross will hold.**

SERMON..... "The Risk of Obedience"
Pastor David Witt

✧ WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD ✧

OFFERING OF TITHES & GIFTS

OFFERTORY MUSIC..... *Where the Light Begins*
By: Susan LaBarr

†THE DOXOLOGY (Hymnal No. 606) & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**God of all good gifts, we thank you for showing us how to care for
each other. May these gifts lead to great feasting for those who
have no banquets set before them. May these gifts build shelters
and places of prayers for those who are experiencing homelessness.
May these gifts proclaim your desire that all your creation live in
peace. Give us grateful hearts, O God, in the name of the one who
came to draw all people to himself, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Adapted from the Confession of 1967, 9.09)

**God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery
which the Scriptures describe in various ways.
It is called the sacrifice of a lamb,
a shepherd's life given for his sheep,
atonement by a priest;
again it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt,
vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty,
and victory over the powers of evil.**

**These are expressions of a truth
which remains beyond the reach of all theory
in the depths of God's love for humankind.
They reveal the gravity, cost,
and sure achievement of God's reconciling work.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Hymnal p. 35, we say "debts" and "debtors" in the prayer)

✎ WE GO OUT IN GOD'S NAME ✎

†CLOSING HYMN No. 198..... *Ride On! Ride On in Majesty!*

**Ride on! ride on in majesty! Hark! all the tribes hosanna cry;
thy humble beast pursues its road
with palms and scattered garments strowed.**

**Ride on! ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.**

**Ride on! ride on in majesty! The hosts of angels in the sky
look down with sad and wondering eyes
to see the approaching sacrifice.**

**Ride on! ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow thy meek head to mortal pain;
then take, O God, thy power, and reign.**

†CHARGE & BLESSING

†CLOSING RESPONSE No. 601..... *Amen*
Amen. Amen. Amen.

†POSTLUDE

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PALM CROSSES



On Palm Sunday, we wave palm leaves and shout "Hosanna" as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. For years, churches used palm buds which were separated into long strips. Then, on Good Friday, the dry palm strips were often scattered on the sanctuary floor, where they would crunch loudly as people walked to their pews.

Those of us who remember palms on the floor are aware that the strips are very tough. They crunch, but they do not shatter. To call them a tripping hazard is a gross understatement. There had to be another way to tie the triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the cross.

Palm crosses fill the bill. They are easily crafted, and very easy to tuck into a mirror, niche, or book to remind us of the events of Holy Week. A palm cross is a symbolic connection to how the last week of Jesus' life started and how it ended.

The custom of covering the path of a king with palm branches dates to ancient Jewish culture. Roads then were dusty and dirty. Covering them with palms, and sometimes even articles of clothing, provided a clean path for visiting royalty. The Biblical narrative tells us clearly that the people recognized Jesus as Messiah and king, and they covered the road with palm branches to give him a royal welcome. The people's cries of "Hosanna," which means "save, please, now," emphasizes their belief that he would deliver them from oppression.

The phrase, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," is a quote from Psalm 118:26. The irony cannot be missed. The same people who would have crowned Jesus king would soon shout, "Crucify him!"

It's a lot of significance put into a small scrap of leaf, but Christians have placed palms in clear view for generations to remind them what leads to resurrection morning.



PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Joel Witt
Luke Strukoff
Strukoff & DeCeault
Families
Lemmerman &
Schollenberger
Families
Darlene Kent
Susan Arthur
Krista Hartenbach &
Family
Tammy Mowery Earhart
Sandi Crabill
Hunter Alexander
Harry Brooks
Tyler Johnson
Ray Klinefelter
Krista Bowen
Mary Bremer
Jason Rubio
David Emery
Old Dominion University
Benjamin Fernandez
Cheri Norris
Dan Cammer
Rick Friedrichsen
Middle East War
Our Soldiers
Bud Proctor
Harry Newman
Nathan Smith & Tracy

Roger Murphy
George & Carole
Schwantes
Gary McDowell
Marge & Tim Higgins
Robin Eddy
Phil Sommer
Rick Ours
Jean Smith Family
Jolissa Matthews
Riley Fitzgerald
Sara Frey
Max Riley
Michael Callahan
Shawn Flaugh
Donald Elson
Debbie Manuel
Nancy Guthrie
David Goode
Murray Shantz
Michelle Hall
Caroline Hastreiter
Lori Jones & Stephen
Armstrong
Jill Crocket
Mike & Trish Crawford
Pastor Kristin Whitesides
Scarlett Kibler
David Cohen
June & Nathan Windle
Al & May Schollenberger

Judy Gaines
Tim Loftis
Ken Johansen
Bonnie Pitzer
Lynne Rosamilia
Cor & Agnes Kamerman
JoAnne Farrell
Michelle Whiteman-
McKee
Paulette Fazio
Katie Happel
Judy Camper
Candi Gardner
David Lewis
David DesMarias
Megan Tschappat
Charlotte Rosamilia
Susan Arthur
Bill Gesell
All Struggling with
Mental Illness
Mike Shade
Jewish & Muslim Victims
Worldwide
Cindy Corell
Nancy Kerns
Kennedy Ransom
Ukraine
Ethiopia Church Mekane
Yesus

✠PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY & THEIR FAMILIES✠

Robert Littman, Cameron Lloyd, Cameron Andrew Veach, Kayleen Paquette,
Kelly Klimek, Jacob & Tiffani Peoples, Sawyer Phillips, Joshua Blake, Max Crane,
Andrew Crane, Thomas Crane, Jacob Heavner, Samuel & Julia Phillips,
Michael White, Ben Jensen, Gavin Eanes, Eli Keaton

SCHEDULE & ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS WEEK

TODAY – March 29 (Palm / Passion Sunday)

Parade of the Palms; Habitat for Humanity Paint Can Offering

- 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM Car Vacuuming Fundraiser – Parking Lot & Curb
8:30 AM Worship – Sanctuary
9:45 AM Faith Formation – Bageant Room
11:00 AM Worship – Sanctuary & Livestream

THIS WEEK

- Monday: 2:00 PM Newsletter Crew – Bageant Room
6:00 PM Windsong – Sanctuary
Wednesday: 9:30 AM Staff Meeting – Bageant Room
6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary
Thursday: 10:30 AM Tai Chi – Memorial Sanctuary
6:30 PM Sherando Food Pantry
7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service – Memorial Sanctuary
Friday: 7:00 PM Good Friday Service – Sanctuary & Livestream

NEXT SUNDAY – April 5 (Day of Resurrection, Easter Sunday)

Communion; One Great Hour of Sharing

Scriptures: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 28:1-10 Sermon: "Continuing Down the Road"

- 6:00 AM Easter Sunrise Worship Service – Pitcock Picnic Shelter
7:00 AM Easter Breakfast – Fellowship Hall
8:30 AM Easter Sunday Worship Service – Sanctuary
9:45 AM Family Easter Event – Fellowship Hall
11:00 AM Easter Sunday Worship Service – Sanctuary & Livestream

CAR VACUUMING FUNDRAISER – TODAY!

Gravel, dirt, and other debris quickly make their way into cars over the winter, and we all want our vehicles to be clean once again! Pull up to the church parking lot curb **today, 8:00 AM—1:00 PM**. The Youth will have shop vacs, and you'll see the satisfaction that comes from a freshly vacuumed carpet. Please remove small objects from the floor of your vehicle. Donations support Youth Mission Trips and Camps/Conferences. Thank you!

THESE DAYS DAILY DEVOTIONALS

The April – June issue of These Days Devotional is available. Some of the highlighted topics include "Living the Resurrection", "What Not to Do", and "Embodying the Joy of Living". Help yourself to a copy while supplies last. These devotionals are in the Gathering Area.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

We encourage everyone to give to One Great Hour of Sharing and bring your offering to be received and dedicated on **Easter Sunday**. Special envelopes are available in the bulletins and Gathering Area.

FRESH FLOWERS FOR EASTER CROSSES

One of our traditions here at OPC is to add fresh flowers to the mesh covered crosses on **Easter Morning**. There will be one standing near the picnic shelter and the other will be in the center of the traffic circle, just outside the front entrance. You are invited to bring fresh flowers to tuck into the mesh. Covering these symbols of our risen Lord with flowers, they become another joyous reminder of the miracle of Easter.

FAMILY EASTER EVENT

You can look forward to the annual Family Easter Event which will be held next **Sunday, April 5, at 9:45 AM** in the Fellowship Hall. Children and families are invited to come enjoy a breakfast of hard-boiled eggs, a variety of breads, fruit cups, and cereals followed by the telling of the Easter Story through Tangram pictures. You can use your own set of Tangram block shapes to form the pictures for the story. And of course, there is the COLORFUL EGG HUNT for children of all ages to collect eggs. Children are asked to bring a basket or bag to collect their eggs. A goodie bag will be given to each child as we end this fun event.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE

MAUNDY THURSDAY – Thursday, April 2

7:00 PM **Maundy Thursday Communion Service** (Memorial Sanctuary)
Scripture: Matthew 26:17-30
Meditation: "On the Road to the Upper Room"
☞ Communion in the Round; Special Music

GOOD FRIDAY – Friday, April 3

7:00 PM **Good Friday Tenebrae Service** (Sanctuary & Livestream)
Scripture: Matthew 26-27
Meditation: "On the Road to the Cross"
☞ Recessional with the Cross

THE DAY OF RESURRECTION, EASTER SUNDAY – Sunday, April 5

6:00 AM **Easter Sunrise Service** (Pitcock Memorial Picnic Shelter)
Scripture: John 20:1-18
Meditation: "On the Road to the Empty Tomb"
☞ Sharing Worship with Our Neighbors from Kernstown UMC
☞ Special Music; Flowering Cross
☞ Sunrise Breakfast (7:00 AM)

8:30 AM **Easter Sunday Worship Service** (Sanctuary)

11:00 AM **Easter Sunday Worship Service** (Sanctuary & Livestream)
Scriptures: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 28:1-10
Sermon: "Continuing Down the Road"
☞ Communion; Special Music; One Great Hour of Sharing

9:45 AM **Family Easter Event & Breakfast** (starts in the Fellowship Hall)

CHURCH LIBRARY DISPLAY

Starting **today**, a special selection of "God Says You Are..." Opequon library books will be on display in the Gathering Area. You are welcome to look through and borrow the books so you can enjoy the wonderful messages the authors bring your way!

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR TODAY

8:30 AM Worship

Liturgist: Ellen Cunningham

Beadle: Betty Chicklo

Door Greeters: Joan & Bob Aylor

Hospitality Greeters: Ben Brooks

Ushers: Terry Hartman, Jordan & Carolyn Hartman, Hunter Frey, Hailey Frey

Acolyte: Hunter Frey

Building Steward: Mike Wygant

11:00 AM Worship

Liturgist: Austin Jenkins

Beadle: Bill Thomasson

Door Greeters: Pat Heavner, Sven Thulin

Hospitality Greeters: Ben Brooks

Ushers: Dennis Boyd, Travis Morgan, Vern Gamble, Dakota Davis, Grace Eberle, Connor Eberle

Acolyte: Dakota Davis

Livestream: Susan Ritter, Ethan Schwantes

WORSHIP NOTES & REFLECTIONS

Notes on Today's Music

✂ How did today's music speak to us about both the meaning of Palm Sunday and the last week of Jesus' life?

Notes on Today's Prayers

✂ Where and for whom do I need to focus my prayers this week?

Notes on Today's Conversation with All Ages

✂ What promise were the people waiting for on Palm Sunday?

Notes on Today's Scripture & Sermon

✂ What does the word "obedience" mean to you?

✂ What are the risks of obedience?

✂ How was Jesus obedient and live into these risks?

✂ What did the crowds mean when they shouted "Hosanna!" and how did their perception of Jesus as a prophet and king contrast with the city's broader reaction?

✂ What is the significance of the people spreading their garments and branches on the road?

✂ Why does Matthew characterize the entire city of Jerusalem as being in a "stir?"

✂ When have you seen "turmoil" lead to evil? When have you seen "turmoil" lead to good?

✂ How can we reconcile the cheering crowds of Palm Sunday with the same crowds demanding crucifixion just days later?

✂ How will you approach the unfolding events of this week?