

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

March 29, 2026
Palm Sunday



WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP! You are special, because God brought you here today. Together we celebrate and rejoice in God's blessings in our lives!

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Matthew 26:17-27

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

GATHERING HYMN 403

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Unser Herrscher

**Open now thy gates of beauty; Zion, let me enter there,
where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer;
O how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace.**

THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive, from Psalm 118)

Minister: Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good.

Congregants: God's steadfast love endures forever!

Minister: The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

**Congregants: This is the day the Lord has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Minister: Hosanna, save us, we beseech You, O Lord!

**Congregants: Hosanna! Blessed is the one
who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Minister: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

Congregants: His steadfast love endures forever!

Minister: Come, let us worship God.

*HYMN OF PRAISE 196 *All Glory, Laud and Honor*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

We cannot escape the sinfulness and brokenness
in our world, or in our hearts. But in Jesus Christ,
God comes and meets us in our brokenness,
and makes us whole again. Trusting in God's grace,

let us confess our sin together.

***CONFESSION OF SIN (unison)**

**Have mercy on us, O God, for we are broken vessels.
You call us to follow You, but we deny, abandon, and betray.
You call us to follow Your path, but we get tempted, and stray.
You invite us into the hope of Your Holy Spirit,
but we make despair and anxiety our daily bread.
You lead us to the cross, but in our discomfort
we try to avoid Your sacrifice, and jump ahead to the empty tomb.
Transform us, O God, and wash us clean of sinfulness.
Pour out Your Spirit upon all our brokenness,
so that Your grace may fill in the cracks of our broken places,
and make us whole as You intend. Hear these our private prayers.**

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

(from hymn #215)

***What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul?***

What wondrous love is this!

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Praise be to God!

***RESPONSE HYMN 581 *Glory Be to the Father* Gloria Patri**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.**

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Philippians 2:5-11

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name

that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE PASTORAL PRAYER / THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

ANTHEM

A Cheering, Chanting, Dizzy Crowd

Christian Love

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 psalms.

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.

MESSAGE FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Mark 8:31-38

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." ³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return

for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)
**Illuminating God, revealing God, ever-present God,
shine Your light of wisdom and understanding
through the darkness of this world
into every corner of our hearts, our souls, our lives.
As we consider Your Word, draw us closer
to the Living Word, Jesus Christ,
who bears Your love into the world. Amen.**

SERMON

THE CROSS

Dr. Merritt

HYMN OF COMMITMENT 197

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Ellacombe

* PRESENTATION AND DEDICATION OF GIFTS (unison)
Jesus tells us it is more blessed to give than to receive.
May we who have received so much from the Lord
give back as we dedicate our offerings and gifts.
**Gracious God, Giver of all good gifts, we thank You
for all that You have poured out on us.
As we begin Holy Week and walk the final steps to the cross,
we give You thanks for the greatest of all gifts--
the gift of Yourself to Your people, through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (based on Philippians 2:5-11)
**We trust in God, the Source of all hope and assurance.
We commit to being disciples of Jesus Christ,
who, though he was of God, and was God incarnate in flesh,
did not regard being of God as something to be exploited,
but instead emptied himself and became obedient to the point of death,
even a horrible death on the cross. From the tomb,
God has exalted him, and given him the name above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
and every tongue profess, in heaven and on earth,
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

GO FAITHFULLY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION 198 *Ride On! Ride On in Majesty!*

*CHARGE

*THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

YOUR SERVICE

*Indicates the People Standing

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We welcome and thank Judy Snyder, who is providing the music today.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP will be held this Thursday evening at 7:00, and will include the celebration of Holy Communion as we remember our Lord's last supper with his disciples, and as we prepare for Good Friday.

OUR EASTER WORSHIP will include the celebration of Holy Communion, as well as special music, and a message on the meaning of Easter for us all. Make your plans to join us Easter morning, and bring friends, family, and others with you for this important gathering!

The Presbyterian Women will be collecting items for Sunnyside March 22-May 2. Useful items for their residents are shampoo, lotion, toothpaste and toothbrushes, mouth wash, combs, brushes, shaving cream, deodorant (for men and women), bath soap, tissues, puzzles, books: crossword, search, daily devotionals and anything that the residents can use.

Hunger Busters will be collected over the next four weeks. If you would like to participate, please pick up a bag in the narthex, fill it, and return it to the church. The food goes to support the Presbyterian Community Center pantry.

Calendar

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|-------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Today | 8:30-10:00am | Pancake Breakfast |
| | 10:00 am | Seekers Class |
| | 11:00 am | Worship Service |
| Thursday | 7:00 pm | Maundy Thursday Service |
| Next Sunday | 10:00 am | Seekers Class |
| | 11:00 am | Easter Service / Communion |

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Russ Merritt, Pastor Melissa Hudson, Music Director
Susie Tallmage, Secretary
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Pastor. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Pastor know.

Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.

Members

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Bill Bailey | Joyce Barker | Rob Barker |
| Di Brammer | Pam Claterbaugh | Karen Gwitt |
| Maggie Hambrick | Marie Haines | Jake Hayes |
| Mary Anne Huff | Dennis Kincer | Skylar Kirby |
| Ann Pace | Mac Pace | Sandy Smith |
| Dora Slee | Karen Smith | Denise Schuh |
| Jackie Critzer | | |

Friends and Family

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Nancy Assaid | Joaquin Bielawski |
| Shirley Basham | Donna Betters |
| Lucy Collier | Terry Foss |
| Dan Cone | Kathy Pankavich |
| Glenna Myers | Jack Argobast Jr. |
| Connie Watkins | Tom Kirby |
| Rene Speese | Harry Speese |
| Vicki Widener | Charlie Wilkerson |

*THE SESSION *

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson
Elders: Emily Allen, Frankie Bielawski, Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Dana Esworthy, Matt Graybill, Joe Gwitt, Karen Gwitt, Maggie Hambrick, Gary Harris, Lynn Kirby, Sherry Moses, Dave Snider, Ron Staton, Greg Theimer

