

First Presbyterian Church Covington, GA



GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 3, 2026

✠ *You are invited to stand in body OR in spirit* ❖

Gathering in Silence

As the service unfolds, candles will be extinguished as we remember the final hours of Jesus' life and the reality of his death. When we extinguish the final candle, the Christ candle, we will experience the utter darkness which fell upon the world with Christ's final breath. At the end of the service, we will depart in silence without a benediction, because until Easter Sunday, there is simply nothing more to say.

Call to Worship

Let us remember how the sky went dark.

Let us remember how his mother was there.

Let us remember how people mocked him.

Let us remember how his friends fled.

Let us remember, how in the midst of all that, Jesus still chose love.

Let us worship holy God.

✠ Hymn 223

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

HAMBURG

Lighting of the Candles

In the beginning, darkness covered the face of the deep. Then God said,

"Let there be light."

And there was light. And every day since, the light has come and gone.

The sun has risen and set.

The moon has waxed and waned.

The light is still with us.

In the beginning was the Word, which brought all things into being.

What has come into being through him is life,

the light of all people.

The light shined in the darkness,

and the darkness did not overtake it.

When God made the light, when the light of all people came into the world,

God did not send away the dark.

The darkness remains.

God created the night for dreams and clarity,
an exhaling of the light.

Let us enter this holy darkness to bear witness
to the light of the world who was extinguished by violence.
Let us worship our Incarnate God.

First Reading

Arrest
Luke 22:47-53

Peter Robinson
Pew Bible page 87

Visio Divina

Revealed through Nonviolence

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Special Music

Were You There
Alisa Castilla, solo

Arr. by Moses Hogan

Second Reading

Sentencing
Luke 23:13-25

Day Kennon
Pew Bible page 88

✠Call to Confession

✠Community Confession

**Holy God, we can easily see ourselves in any number of the people
surrounding Jesus in his final days.**

**We are Judas, betraying what we hold most dear for status, wealth, and
security. We are the soldiers, using our power to maintain the status quo
which serves us. We are the disciples, brandishing our weapons to fight
violence with violence, and we are the high priest's servant, victims of a
world hell-bent on winning.**

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

**We are Herod, finding our entertainment at the expense of other people's
dignity. We are Pilate, excusing ourselves from the blame that is rightfully
ours. We are the crowd, foaming at the mouth and demanding blood,
and we are Barabbas, our lives spared while others are crucified.**

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

**Forgive us, we pray, for the parts we have played. Set us free from the sin
that chokes the world, threatening to extinguish all that is good and**

beautiful. Break the cycles of violence, step into the machinery of a world fueled by division and disrupt us.

Forgive us, Prince of Peace. Kyrie eleison. Have mercy on us. Amen.

✦ Assurance of God's Love & Forgiveness

Family of faith, the impossibly good news is that we are forgiven. No matter what we have or haven't done, our God is always waiting with open arms to receive us. Church, we are forgiven!

We are free to try again.

✦ Hymn 227

Jesus Remember Me

REMEMBER ME

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Third Reading

Crucifixion

Jenn Arndt

Luke 23:33-38

Pew Bible page 89

✦ Hymn 221

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

PASSION CHORALE

Fourth Reading

Death

Neeley Rentz Lane

Luke 23:44-46

Pew Bible page 89

Poetry Meditation

Love and Love and Love Again

by Rev. Sarah A. Speed

Extinguishing the Light

✦ Please Exit in Silence



Serving Today—Jonny Atkins (Tech), Hardy Sideris (Usher Chair) Dan Walden (Tech)

Use—One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online. Lenten Series: "Tell Me Something Good" | Good Friday Liturgy by Rev. Anna Strickland | Poetry: "Love and Love and Love Again" by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | Art: "Revealed through Nonviolence" by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
COVINGTON, GA**

1169 Clark Street SW Covington, GA 30014
fpccov.org 770.786.7321



Revealed through Nonviolence

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 22:47-53; Luke 23:33-38, 44-46
11"x14" Gouache & colored pencils on paper

Creating this image²² was overwhelming. I sought to capture Jesus' nonviolent response to relentless violence. As I considered each moment of his journey to the cross, I felt despondent. I know how hard it is to resist the reactive urge that courses through me even experiencing mild forms of violence. How much more difficult then for Jesus to endure such dehumanizing acts? Was he stripped so completely of his humanity that only divinity remained—and even that restrained from retribution?

Begin at the center with Judas's kiss—intimate, subversively violent. Follow the sword behind Judas²³ to the top left: a disciple fiercely defends Jesus, while to his right, the high priest's slave

screams after his ear is cut. Jesus reproves the violence and heals the servant.

Moving clockwise, a man—representing the chief priests and temple police—points an accusatory finger, wielding the authority to kill an innocent man. To his right, a man crafts Jesus' cross, quietly sustaining the violence of the status quo. Below him, an opportunist casts lots for Jesus' clothes, while a leader laughs at the impossibility that the Messiah will save himself. Finally, in the bottom left, a man offers Jesus sour wine in a moment of deep thirst—physical and spiritual.

At the heart of it all is Jesus, tearful, looking at us. His halo shines, revealing the many faces of violence around him. From the foundation of his steady posture grows an olive tree. Its branches extend beyond his clothing, reaching out to embrace those around him.

Through his nonviolent stance, the truth of a violent world is revealed. And in that truth, the good news of peace finds soil in which to take root, to grow, and to flourish. —Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Look

Allow your eyes to follow the olive tree as it weaves through the composition and touches each figure. What meaning do you glean from the olive tree?

22 This composition is inspired by *Vivir en Comunción* ("Living in Communion") by Maximino Cerezo Barredo (1932-), a mural in La Paz, Granada, Spain. View the art here: [instagram.com/p/DLFqUWgxx-ij/](https://www.instagram.com/p/DLFqUWgxx-ij/)

23 The sword references Judas's backstabbing act of betrayal.

Love & Love & Love Again

If you back a cat into a corner
she'll arch her back,
show her teeth,
hiss in your direction.

If you back a human into a corner,
we'll raise our fists,
raise our voices,
throw words of hate in your direction.

But when we backed Jesus into a corner,
he said, *Forgive them, for they know not what they do.*
He turned and looked at Peter, love in his eyes.
He offered grace to the criminal hanging beside him.
When we backed Jesus into a corner,
he loved and loved and loved again.

In this war-torn world,
we could do the same.
We could ground the bomber planes,
empty the gun cartridges,
unclench our fists, soften our jaws.
They say it can't be done,
but don't believe them.
In this war-torn world, we could try—
love and love and love again.

Good Friday Symbols

You are invited to take home one of each of the symbols provided on the table. Use these Good Friday symbols for a time of prayer, reflection, and remembrance. Place them in your home where you will notice them throughout the next 24 hours.

Nail: *John 20:25-27*

- ◆ Jesus was nailed to the cross. The nail represents suffering and pain.
- ◆ Place the nail in the palm of your hand. Imagine the sound of hammering. How might have you responded when Jesus was pierced in his side? How might you have reacted if you were Thomas?

Stone: *Matthew 27:59-60*

- ◆ In Jesus' time, when people died their body was put inside a tomb. A tomb is like a dark cave. The tomb was a safe resting place for Jesus's body. Joseph gently laid Jesus' body, wrapping in spices and cloth, into the tomb. After that, he rolled a big stone in front of the entrance. The rock was to prevent others from coming in.
- ◆ Hold the rock in your hand. Is it cold or warm? Rough or smooth? As you hold it, think about the large stone that covered Jesus' tomb and remember Jesus and all the miracles he performed in his life.

Candle: *Luke 23:44-46*

- ◆ During his life on earth Jesus became friends with many people. When he died, his friends became sad. In the scripture we hear that the sunlight faded, and the whole earth was in shadow - all the light went away. Sometimes when we are sad after someone has died it feels like we are in a shadow too.
- ◆ Light your candle when you get home. Look at the flame. After you blow it out, say, "God, even when shadows cover the earth and the light is gone, help us to know that your Spirit is with us always. Amen."