

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

April 2, 2023



Photo by Norbu GYACHUNG

## Palm Sunday

Ministers: All who are a part of this church

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Naomi Hegg

Choir Director: Ann Russ

Peace Candle Lighter: KathyAnn Travis

Liturgist: Carol Winter

**Gathering Music**

**Words of Welcome**

**Prelude**

## Words to Enter Worship (Based on Psalm 118)

**People who:** O give thanks to the LORD, for they are good; their steadfast love endures forever. Let Israel say, “Their steadfast love endures forever.”

**People who:** Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

**People who:** The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing, it is marvelous in our eyes.

**People who:** This is the day that the LORD has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

## Opening Hymn #216 All Glory, Laud, and Honor

- 1 All glory, laud, and honor  
to you, O Christ we sing,  
to whom the lips of children  
made sweet hosannas ring.  
The people of the Hebrews  
with palms adorned your way;  
Our praise and prayer anthems  
We offer you this day.
- 2 O Promised One of Israel  
Of David’s royal line  
The one called “God’s beloved, “  
Of flesh and dyet divine,  
To you, before your passion,  
They sang their hymns of praise;  
Our praise and prayer and anthems  
We offer you this day.
3. As you received their praises  
Receive our prayers today,  
Whose justice and whose mercy  
And sovereignty hold sway.  
All glory, laud, and honor to you,  
O Christ we sing.  
To whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring!

## Words of Lament

**Merciful God, how long must our school children live in fear? How long will our society worship the idol of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment? How many deaths will it take until we know that too many people have died? Rise up, O God, for it seems nothing else can convict our false idols and lead us back to life. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

## Time of Silence

### Words for Blessing the Earth (Written by Pastor Enno Limvere)

**One:** We thank God for the sugar bush and the time of tapping into the maple trees.

**Many:** We thank the Earth for the many ways we are fed, healed, and sustained.

**All:** We thank all life that works together for good and the kin-dom of God.

**One:** We bless the Earth and all that is in it, for we are all related.

**Many:** From the largest trees, fish, animals, and birds; to the smallest microbe, flower, insect, and ecosystem, all of these proclaim life, we bless them and care for them.

**All:** Bless our feet, may we walk softly upon the ground. Bless our hands, may we hold gently all life we encounter. Bless our eyes, may we see the connection between us. Bless our ears, may we listen to the wind, the birds, and the world itself. Bless our noses, may we smell the goodness of life. Bless our skin, may we feel nature in its fullest glory. Bless our minds, may we think about the future and how to share the gifts we have. Bless our hearts, may we open them widely to all of God's creation, all creatures great and small, and the land and water that surround and nurture us.

### Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peace-makers as a Just Peace Church.

#### *Ode to a Donkey and Palms (English Keatsian Ode)*

*On Mount of Olives Bethphage Village dwelt  
where Jesus spent just one essential night.*

*Disciples to adjacent towns they went,  
a donkey with her colt would come into sight.*

*The foal was never ridden up to now  
fulfilling bible prophecies of old,  
all through a Savior riding on a colt.*

*One ponders meaning into this, and how.  
From Zachariah, God's domain revealed  
for this event was up to now concealed.*

*The crowds, they cover grounds with cloaks and palms  
alluding to enthronement – David's line.*

*The Jews all gather praising – singing psalms,  
as Jesus rides into Jerusalem.*

*They're waving palm leaves, playing harps along,  
the hour has come, Messiah Christ is here!  
"Hosanna! Lord, our True Redeemer dear!"*

*The Light extinguished soon it won't be long --  
He brings His body back from death's cold maze,  
the temple ravaged – on the third day raised.*

*Some wanted Him a warrior on a steed,  
His destiny instead a humble foal –  
this part to be fulfilled was prophecy  
to come in love and peace, thus meek, the goal.  
The donkey symbolized a boundless range,  
they see and know what people often don't  
and carry much, for giving up they won't,  
with Jesus from the manger to the grave.  
The shading palms meant triumph, victory –  
rejoice for being freed from slavery!*

## **Passing of the Peace**

### **Hymn #223 What Wondrous Love Is This**

- 1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that Christ should come in bliss  
to bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,  
to bear the heavy cross for my soul!
- 2 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;  
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;  
to God and to the Lamb, who is the great I AM,  
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,  
while millions join the theme, I will sing.
- 3 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;  
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.  
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,  
and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
and through eternity I'll sing on.

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## **Scripture Readings**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Scripture Matthew 21:1-11**

**21** When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

<sup>5</sup> "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; <sup>7</sup> they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

<sup>10</sup> When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" <sup>11</sup> The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

## **Children's Message** What a Parade!

## **Choir Anthem**

**Message** "Hosanna!"

## **Musical Reflections**

**Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**  
Our Father, Mother God, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

## **News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community**

## **Our Time of Giving**

## **Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Alleluia, alleluia  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*

## **Closing Hymn #213** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

1 Hosanna, loud hosanna  
the little children sang;  
through pillared court and temple  
the lovely anthem rang.  
To Jesus, who had blessed them,  
close folded to his breast,  
the children sang their praises,  
the simplest and the best.

2 From Olivet they followed  
mid an exultant crowd,  
the victory palm branch waving,  
and chanting clear and loud.  
The one whom angels worship  
rode on in lowly state,  
And glad to see the children,  
Slowed down the donkey's gait

3 "Hosanna in the highest!"  
That ancient song is ours,  
We hail our Redeemer,  
and sing with all our powers;  
"Hosanna, Chris, we praise you  
with heart and life and voice  
Hosanna! In your presence  
For ever we'll rejoice!"  
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## **Benediction**

## **Sending Music**