

Welcome to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ
Palm Sunday
March 29, 2026

**** *Some rise to their feet, some rise in their hearts—please rise as you are able.*

GATHERING BELL

At the sound of the bell, please silence yourselves and prepare for worship.

PRELUDE *Prelude on 'Ellacombe' (Hosanna, Loud Hosanna), Alfred V. Fedak* Ellen Bradley

ANNOUNCEMENTS/MOMENT FOR MINISTRY Rev. Paul Ashby

PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION All

Singing: *We are marching in the light of God!*

INVITATION TO WORSHIP **Whoever you are...and wherever you are on
life's journey... you are welcome here!** Paul

OPENING REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP Julie Krueger

What church would welcome Jesus on Palm Sunday?

A radical, brown-skinned Jewish rabbi who takes a stand against church and state could cause trouble.

Would Jesus be called a domestic terrorist by those in power today?

Anyone who upsets moneychangers or stock markets or denounces bitcoin rip-offs would not be accepted in our society.

So, who will welcome Jesus into our city?

Would we have to welcome peaceful undocumented immigrants? Would we have to confront racial burdens placed on African Americans? Would we have to call out churches that preach hate and harm towards LGBTQ neighbors?

Following Jesus is more than waving a palm branch.

Grant us the courage to truly welcome Jesus!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Paul

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Respond to each shared prayer request with "Peace, Shalom, Salaam."

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

SIXTY SECONDS FOR PERSONAL PRAYERS/SILENT CONTEMPLATION

INVITATION TO OFFERING Julie

OFFERTORY *Hosanna! Blessed is He, Wilson* Choir

******DOXOLOGY** (tune: *Old Hundredth*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Julie

Holy One, Source of Life, we join a holy procession of hope, that we may understand the heart of Jesus and see our own sacred heart. Along with ancient pilgrims we offer our branches, our hearts, our hopes to honor the presence of truth and beauty and goodness. Amen.

****HYMN NCH 216, vs. 1 & 3

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

All

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 and anthems we offer you this day.

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!

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 21:1-11

Julie

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

"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."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!"

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

MESSAGE

"Would You Welcome Jesus Into Our City?"

Paul

****HYMN (see insert)

The Stones Cry Out

All

****BENEDICTION

Paul

**** SONG BENEDICTION

World Peace Prayer

All

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace,
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe!

GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

RECESSIONAL

Toccata in d minor, J. S. Bach

Ellen Bradley

Today's Worship Leaders

preacher
liturgist
musician

Rev. Dr. Paul Ashby
Julie Krueger
Ellen Bradley

Acknowledgements

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THE STONES CRY OUT

Hannah C. Brown

DEO GRATIAS
English, 15th century



1. The stones cry out, com - pelled to tell
2. Great tem - ple walls were made for prayer
3. He taught a truth that won't de - cay,
4. Je - ru - sa - lem is where he wept
5. We liv - ing stones in this fraught hour



how Je - sus' fa - vor rose and fell:
but calls of com - merce ech - oed there
the beau - ty of a ser - vant's way,
for peace our world would not ac - cept;
at - test to love and ter - ror's pow'r.



the roar of crowds, the bright pa - rade,
when Je - sus dared with lash and shout
that those ex - ploit - ing high re - nown
these cob - bled streets re - mem - ber hate
Our hearts are formed by all he gave;



the si - lence of a hope be - trayed.
to drive the prof - it - seek - ers out.
like mon - u - ments must tum - ble down.
that shed his blood by act of state.
we sing a hope built from his grave.