



## **BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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### **Sunday, March 29, 2026**

### **Palm Sunday**

**Worship Leader: Rev. Randall Koppenhaver**

**Musician: Polly Jeanty**

The white peace candle on the altar is lit in solidarity with all peoples of the world affected by armed conflict, civil war, oppression, tyranny, exploitation and discrimination. God, bring them peace.

**\*= Please rise in body or spirit**

### **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**Please gather in the fellowship hall prior to worship. Following the opening liturgy we will sing and process in while waving our palm branches. (Use caution when waving branches)**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP:**

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Jesus humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Therefore, God has exalted him and given him the name above every name.

**Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Let us worship God in the name of Jesus Christ, our Servant Lord.

**\*OPENING PRAYER:**

**L: Christ is with us**

**P: Christ is in our midst**

**L: Let us pray,**

**All: Merciful God, as we enter Holy Week and gather at your house of prayer, turn our hearts again to Jerusalem, to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that united with Christ and all the faithful, we may one day enter in triumph - not the city made by human hands, but the new Jerusalem, eternal in the heavens, where with you and the Holy Spirit, Christ reigns in glory forever. Amen.**

#### **BLESSING OF THE PALMS**

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to God most high.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Let us pray: **O God, who in Jesus Christ triumphantly entered Jerusalem, heralding a week of pain and sorrow, be with us now as we follow the way of the cross. In these events of defeat and victory, you have sealed the closeness of death and destruction, of humiliation and exultation. We thank you for these branches that promise to become for us symbols of martyrdom and majesty. Bless them and us that their use this day may announce in our time that Christ has come, and that Christ will come again Amen! Come, Christ Jesus!**

L: Let us go forth in peace!

**P: In the name of Christ, Amen!**

#### **PROCESSIONAL HYMN:**

**"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"**

1. All glory, laud, and honor  
To thee, Redeemer, King,  
To Whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring.

The people of the Hebrews  
With palms before Thee went;  
Our praise and prayer and  
anthems  
Before You we present.

2. Thou art the King of Israel  
Thou David's royal Son,  
Now in the Lord's name comest,  
The King and Blessed One.

To thee before thy passion  
They sang their hymns of  
praise;  
To Thee, now high exalted,  
Our melody we raise.

3. Thou didst their praises,  
Accept the prayers we bring,  
Who all in good delightest,  
Thou good and gracious King!

All glory, laud, and honor  
To Thee, Redeemer, King,  
To Whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN #185 all "Ride on, Ride on in Majesty" (wave branches)

## PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:

**God of mystery and mercy,  
your mercy and forgiveness are a mystery to us.  
We fail to show mercy to others when they fall short of our expectations.  
We keep silent rather than speak up when others are in trouble.  
We prefer what is easy to what is right,  
even though your Spirit draws our attention.  
We seek your forgiveness, O God, and ask that you make us more forgiving.  
Inspire us with the costly choices Jesus made as he moved toward the  
Cross, and give us the courage to follow him.**  
(time of silent reflection)

## ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Who is in a position to condemn us?

**Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in  
power for us, Christ prays for us.**

Believe the good news of the gospel.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God's generous grace.**

\*RESPONSE #564 refrain

"All Will be Well"

**All will be well, and all will be well, all manner of things will be well**

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS

**Psalm 118 vs 1-2; 19-29**

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his steadfast love endures for ever!

**Let Israel say,**

**'His steadfast love endures for ever.'**

Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.

**This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.**

I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.

**The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.**

This is the LORD's doing;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.

**This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!  
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.**

The LORD is God,  
and he has given us light.

**Bind the festal procession with branches,  
up to the horns of the altar.**

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God, I will extol you.

**O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.**

### **Matthew 21:1-11 (NIV)**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> *"Say to Daughter Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

<sup>11</sup> The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

## CHILDREN'S TIME

## SERMON

\*HYMN #187 all "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" (wave branches)

## PRAYER CONCERNS

## PASTORAL PRAYER...THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with:

**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.**

## SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE

**O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call, answer me.  
O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and listen to me.**

## INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

OFFERTORY At Bethlehem United Church of Christ, we collect TWO offerings each Sunday. Our regular operational offering is collected in the wooden plate. In the metal cans, we collect loose change and small bills for a monthly designated benevolent collection. March's Jingle Change supports Bethlehem's pledge to OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE: #438 v. 1 "We Give Thee but Thine Own"

**We give thee but thine own, Whate'er the gift may be:  
All that we have is thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from thee. Amen.**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Gracious God, when we remember Jesus gave his life for us, our offering seems so small. Yet Jesus shows us that five loaves and two fish can feed a multitude; a man dying on a cross becomes Living Bread for a hungry world.**

**Bless these small gifts with your goodness so that the miracle of Jesus' love continues to amaze the world. Amen.**

## BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING

\*DEPARTING SONG            184 vs 1-5            “Were you There?”

*During this hymn, to signify the path from palms to cross, the congregation is invited to process forward and add their palm branch to the cross. Please move to the middle aisle and process to the front, via the side aisle, you may return to your spot or exit the sanctuary.*

## POSTLUDE

*\*\*liturgies and prayers for this morning were used with permission from: [presbyterian.ca/worship/](http://presbyterian.ca/worship/) and from the UCC book of Worship.*

## **Bethlehem Announcements:**

- **Wellness Mini retreat at Bethlehem UCC**  
On Saturday, April 25, all are invited to participate in a mini retreat featuring psychologist and author, Dr. Cary Knier-Johannes at Bethlehem. Dr. Johannes' seminar will lead participants to improved spiritual wellness through centering, guided meditation, journaling, and more. The retreat will run from 9am-12pm. The cost is \$10 and includes a copy of Dr. Johannes' book, *The Missing Peace*. RSVP's are encouraged.
  
- **Holy Week Worship:**
  - Friday, April 4 - Ecumenical Good Friday worship at Bethlehem – Fellowship 5:30p, Worship @ 6pm
  - Saturday, April 5 – Ecumenical Easter Vigil @ St. John's UCC-NH - @ 6pm
  
- The Sunday School will be purchasing Easter lilies for the Easter season. We will decorate the sanctuary with the flowers. There will be no sign-up sheet to purchase additional flowers. However, after the service on Easter, you can take one of the flowers home. This will be on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to reserve one before the service, see Kathy Bowe. Any flowers left over will be given to a congregation member that is home bound or needs some sunshine in their life.
  
- The **annual meeting for the WI conference of the UCC**, will be held April 10 & 11 at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake. Bethlehem is allotted two delegates from the membership. It's a time of worship, business meetings, seminars and more. There

are funds allocated in the budget to cover your costs. Please contact Pastor Randy if you're interested in attending - even if just for ONE of the days!

### **Community Announcements:**

- Tuesday, April 7 – 11:45a-12:45pm – “An Introduction to Zen Buddhism” Lakeland University
- Saturday, April 11 – Auction supporting Divine Savior Catholic School @ Millhome Supper Club – Raffle tickets available for \$5000 Dream vacation - see flyers
- Thursday, April 16 – 3:30-6:00pm – Smoked Pork Chop Dinner @ Saron UCC – Reservations are required – see flyer in fellowship Hall
- Sat. April 18 – 9a-1pm – “Stewardship of the Body” – A workshop for women – Zion Lutheran Church, New Holstein – see flyer



#### **Those grieving**

The family of Jim Markelz

The family of Richard (Rick) Broetzmann

#### **Those dealing with health concerns:**

Judy Brockway	Davin Horneck
Dayton Horneck	Jackie Volland
Louie Bowe	Dawson Horneck
Heidi Konen	Darlene Horneck
Jessica Horneck	Margaret
Sofia	Willow
Hubert	Larry
Chase Goekes	Tyler Smith
Molly	Linda Skinkis (sister of Judy Brockway)

#### **Those unable to worship with us:**

Merlin Ninmer      Helen Henning

## **This Week at Bethlehem:**

**Today, Sunday 3/29:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Palm Sunday worship

**Monday 3/30:** *Happy Anniversary Joe & Doreen Schmidt!*

**Tuesday 3/31:**

**Wednesday 4/1:**

**Thursday 4/2:** 6:00pm Maundy Thursday Worship @ Immanuel UCC

**Friday 4/3:** 6:00pm Ecumenical Good Friday Worship at Bethlehem (Fellowship at 5:30); *Happy Birthday Tyler Hanson, Ann Moore, and Nicole Watson!*

**Saturday 4/4:** 6:00pm Ecumenical Easter Vigil service at St. John's, New Holstein; *Happy Birthday Greg Schultz!*

**Sunday 4/5:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Easter Sunday worship w/ Communion

**Mar/Apr Panty Item: Pasta, Rice or Crackers**

