

St. John's
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Full
to the Brim { *Even the
stones cry
out*



**Palm/Passion
Sunday 2022**



Thoughts of Preparation

TWO processions (“triumphal entries”) entered Jerusalem on that day. The same question, the same alternative, faces those who would be faithful to Jesus today.

Which procession are we in? Which procession do we want to be in? Jesus’s procession deliberately countered what was happening on the other side of the city.

Pilate’s procession embodied the power, glory, and violence of the empire that ruled the world. Jesus’s procession embodied an alternative vision, the kingdom of

God. These are the two themes of the week that follows, Holy Week. This contrast—between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Caesar—is central not only to the gospel...Indeed, these are the two themes of Lent and of the Christian life.

– *Marcus Borg, John Dominic Crossan, The Last Week*

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

“Nearer My God to Thee”

(Isabella Thoroughman-Flute Lilyanne Thoroughman-Violin)

Tower Bell

*Responsive Call to Worship

It is holy to gather.

It is holy to sing.

It is holy to be generous, to throw our coats on the road.

It is holy to celebrate justice when we see it.

It is holy to shout, “Hosanna!”

It is holy to remember.

It is holy to gather.

It is holy to sing.

Here and now, let us do all of these things.

Let out “Hosanna’s!” ring out!

***Call to Confession**

The word ‘hosanna’ is often sung with joy and glee on this day. We process in, we wave palm branches, and it feels like a celebration. But the truth is, the word ‘*hosanna*’ actually means, “save us.” The people along that parade route so many years ago were crying out to Jesus for help, because they knew—this world is not as it should be. There is still too much hurt here. They were crying, “Save us!” In the prayer of confession, we have our own hosanna moment, because we cry out to God, admitting the ways in which we have fallen short, and we ask for God’s saving hand. So friends, let us pray together, for there is still too much hurt here.

***Unison Confession**

God of street parades and hosannas, we know that You are counting on us to speak out against oppression, to speak up for love and to speak hope to fear, but so often we are silent. We worry that we’ll say the wrong thing, so we don’t say anything at all. We worry that we’ll offend, so we keep our convictions to ourselves. We worry that we’ll speak up and won’t be heard, so we stay silent. And meanwhile, the parade marches on. Unravel our fears. Spark conviction in us. Give us the courage to yell, “Hosanna!” Gratefully we pray, amen. *[Silence is kept]*

***Words of Assurance**

Friends, even when we are silent, even when we are scared, even when we miss the moment, even when we choose to speak and say the wrong thing—we belong to God. There is nothing said or unsaid, done or undone that can undo that, so rest in this good news:

We are forgiven. We are known.

We belong to God, every day and always. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

(Creatorex)

**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.**

Scripture Lesson: Philippians 2.1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed Me, not only in My presence, but much more now in My absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Gathering Together in Prayer

Silent Prayer—Pastoral Prayer—Lord's 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 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 and ever. Amen.

Offertory Invitation

Hosanna to the God who loves us, Who heals us. Who calls us to give ourselves For the sake of the world, when we were afraid, God became our fortress. When we were lost, God was our way. When we were alone, God was beside us. In God we live, we move, we are made whole—so we offer our gratitude. Hosanna in the highest! Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God.

Offertory

“The Holy City”

(Adams)

Last night I lay a sleeping, There came a dream so fair:
I stood in old Jerusalem, Beside the temple there;
I heard the children singing; And ever as they sang,
Me thought the voice of angels, From heav’n in answer rang;
“Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Lift up your gates and sing,
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to your King!”

And once again the scene was chang’d, New earth there seemed to be,
I saw the Holy City Beside the tideless sea;
The light of God was on its streets, The gates were open wide,
And all who would might enter And no one was denied.
No need of moon or stars by night, Or sun to shine by day,
It was the new Jerusalem That would not pass away.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Sing, for the night is o’er!
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna forever more!

Scripture Lesson: Luke 19.28-40

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’” So those who were sent departed and found it as he had

told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

“Blessed is the King
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

Sermon “WHY The Stones Cry Out” Pastor Barry Bordenkircher

***Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in giving what we have. We believe that actions of generosity change us. We dare to believe that these small acts can change the world.

The whole crowd of disciples began joyfully praising God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen.

We believe in a God who is a miracle-maker. We believe in a God of good news. We believe this good news is so good that we cannot help but sing.

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

We believe there will be forces that try to silence what is just, good, hopeful, and generous. We do not believe those voices will have the last word.

“I tell you,” Jesus replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

We believe, at the end of the day, love will find a way. We believe. Help our unbelief. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

***Hymn #284** “*O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*” (*Passion Chorale*)
(see last page)

***Benediction**

Our Lord is on a journey through opposition and misunderstanding.

Jesus invites us to follow him.

This journey leads through the shadows of betrayal, the night of Gethsemane, the afternoon darkness of Golgotha.

“Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me....’”

Our Lord is on a journey.

May we have the grace to follow this Christ, and to give to him our very lives.

For in giving away our lives, we find them,

and in dying we live. Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

Postlude

“*Rigaudon*”

(*Andre Campra*)

Worship Notes

Today’s *Call to Worship*, *Confession/Assurance*, and *Affirmation of Faith* are from “Words for Worship,” written by: Rev. Sarah Spee, sanctifiedart.org. The *Blessing of the Palms* is from the UCC Book of Worship (UCC Office of Church Life & Leadership, 1986). The *Offertory Invitation* is from “Shout Hosanna: Service Prayers for Palms C,” written by Michael Anthony Howard, Minister of Faith in Action for the Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ. The *Offertory Dedication* is from Discipleship Ministries, (www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning). The *Benediction* is from “A Palm Sunday order of worship,” First Baptist Church, Carrollton, (posted on the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Georgia website).

Today's Worship Leaders:

Preaching Today: Rev. Barry Bordenkircher

Liturgist: Diana Stamm

Organist: Michael Sullivan

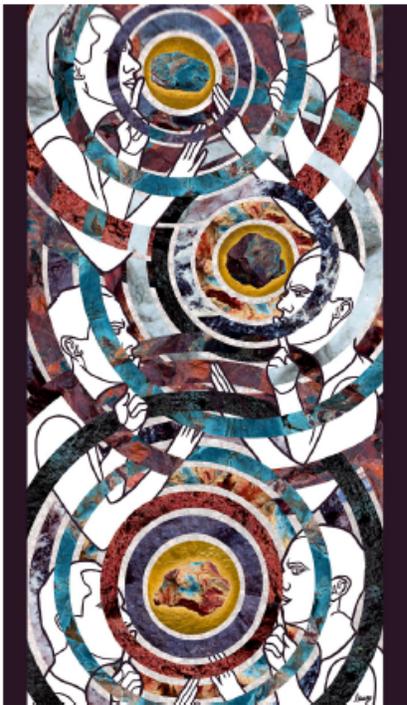
Choral Director: Dobin Park

Thanks to all the musicians and to Michael Sullivan and Dobin Park for assisting with filming and to Dobin Park for film editing.

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PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

Full to the Brim { *Even the stones cry out*



Even the Stones Cry Out

by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 19:28-40

Digital painting with photo collage

When I began this image, I wanted the medium to be the message. Initially I thought I might make a mosaic of stones, however, I was wisely encouraged by my colleagues to try photography and digital collage. I went out into my side yard and picked up rocks to take pictures of them. As I quickly scanned for interesting rocks, I was underwhelmed by what I was seeing. I had already decided that the rocks were going to be dull and boring. My color enthusiast self was annoyed by the prospect of dusty neutral tones and minimal contrast.

This was an interesting place to begin my process, considering the text I was working with. I was definitely underestimating what the rocks would have to offer the piece, and was preemptively disappointed about the mundane color schemes and textures I would have to work with from my photographs. Gosh, was I wrong. As I downloaded the images and began to edit them, a wide spectrum of color came into view. Most of the hues were entirely shocking and unexpected: periwinkle, magenta, turquoise, mauve, rust, orange, gold, and plum,

just to name a few. It was as if God was saying to me, *“See, even if you turn a blind eye, and your assumptions distract you, the stones will cry out.”*

In this piece there are three stones bordered in gold to reference the voice of God, the truth that will not be quelled. Down the sides of the image are the Pharisees or the “silencers” in postures of quieting judgment. My hope was for the silencers to be completely visually enveloped and drowned out by the stones. I left the silencers simplified and unfinished to signify that their attempts at diminishing the truth would ultimately and always be in vain.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

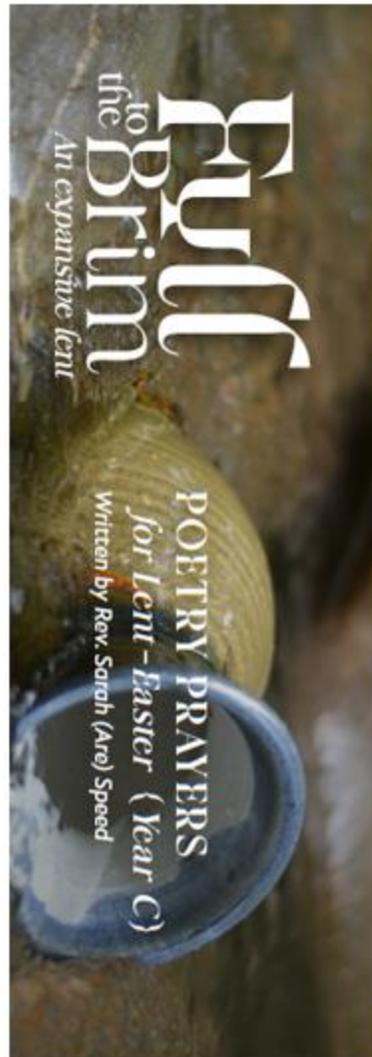
Full to the Brim { *Even the stones cry out*

Even the Stones Will Cry Out

The Pharisees found Jesus;
they said,
"Order your disciples to stop."
It's not the first time
justice was almost
silenced. People stood on the
sidelines shouting hosanna
which means, "Save us,"
"Save me."
It's not the first time we've
heard that cry from the street.
The Pharisees said
stop. They wanted the people
quiet, but some things can't be
silenced.

Justice will bubble up,
hope will raise its head,
love will rise to the surface.
Hate and fear will try to
drown them out,
but you cannot silence
what was here first,
which was love,
and it was good.
It was so good.
So even the stones will cry out.
Remember that
at your parade.

Justice will bubble up,
hope will raise its head,
love will rise to the surface.
Amen.



O Sacred Head, Now Wounded 284

1 O sa - cred head, now wound-ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2 What thou, my Lord, hast suf - fered was all for sin - ners' gain;
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear - est friend,

now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown:
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?

O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine;
Lo, here I fall, my Sav - ior! 'Tis I de - serve thy place;
O make me thine for - ev - er; and should I faint - ing be,

yet, though de - spised and go - ry, I joy to call thee mine.
look on me with thy fa - vor, and grant to me thy grace.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.

WORDS: Attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th c.; tr. James W. Alexander (1804-1859)
MUSIC: Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612); arr. J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

PASSION CHORALE
7.6.7.6.D.