

Palm / Passion Sunday
WELCOMING THE MESSIAH
March 29, 2026

Gathering Music with Choir

“And on This Path”
(MV # 8)

Welcome



A photograph featuring a cross made of palm fronds on a background of palm fronds. A white card is placed on the right side of the image, containing the word "Announcements" in blue, bold, sans-serif font. A faint watermark "dreamstime." is visible in the center of the image.

Announcements

Light the Christ Candle

We have now experienced the five Sundays of Lent. In that time, we have seen how God hears and accepts our laments, and how tests in the form of temptations can become a time to build resilience.



We have seen a God who offers both forgiveness and abundance when we have the courage to let go and trust. Today, we join a parade of celebration, one that will unfold much differently than we can imagine.

(Extinguish the sixth candle.)



Message

by Rev. Yun-Hee

WELCOMING THE MESSIAH

Cast Members

The Choir

Reader: Wanda

Crowd Voice 1 & 2: Cathy and Kaj

Leader Voice 3 & 4: Greg and Sarah



Introduction

There was a time when Lent was a dangerous time for Jews. There was a time and still is a time when Christians were incited to hatred and violence against Jews. But there was a time before time, indeed the foundation of Christian time, when there were no Christians. At this time, a young, charismatic Jew named Yeshua came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Yeshua, whose name we later changed to Jesus, drew large crowds as he popularised the teachings of the liberal Jewish school of thought. Because of this, the conservative Jewish school was threatened. Jesus and his disciples, as Jews, were following one particular branch of Jewish thought which threatened the more conservative Jewish leaders. There was a time when Palm Sunday told a different story...

Crowd Voice 1: Did you hear ? The Messiah is coming !

Crowd Voice 2: Coming here ?

Crowd Voice 1: Yes - coming to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread !

Crowd Voice 2: Well let's grab some palm branches and wave them high ! Let's give the Messiah the best welcome we know !

Reader: John 12:12-13a

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting:

Hosanna ! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God. Peace in Heaven ! Hosanna in the highest Heaven !

Passing of the Peace

As we are greeting the coming Messiah, let us also greet everyone around you with the peace of Christ. Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Hymn VU # 123

“Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”

- 1 Hosanna, loud hosanna
the happy children sang;
through pillared court and temple
the joyful 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 singing clear and loud;
the Lord of Earth and Heaven
rode on in lowly state,
content that little children
should on his bidding wait.



3 'Hosanna in the highest !'

That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer;

Earth, let your anthems ring.

O may we ever praise him

with heart and life and voice,
and in his humble presence
eternally rejoice !



Opening Prayer

The Messiah, our hope for the future; the one who will set us free.

Come, Messiah, come.

The Messiah, the one who will overturn oppressive rulers and colonial powers.

Come, Messiah, come.

The Messiah, who shares our pain, who understands and comforts.

Come, Messiah, come.

The Messiah, who wipes all tears away and ushers in the peaceable kingdom.

Come, Messiah, come.

Reader:

Matthew 21:1-8, 10-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: “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.’ ”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”



Hymn VU # 366

“like a child”

1 like a child love would send
to reveal and to mend
like a child and a friend
Jesus comes
like a child we may find
claiming heart soul and mind
like a child strong and kind
Jesus comes



2 like a child we will meet
ragged clothes dirty feet
like a child on the street
Jesus comes

like a child we once knew
coming back into view
like a child born anew
Jesus comes



3 like a child born to pray
and to show us the way
like a child here to stay
Jesus comes

like a child we receive
all that love can conceive
like a child we believe
Jesus comes



Time with the Young People

by Rev. Yun-Hee

Children Song

“Rise and Shine”

Refrain:

Rise and Shine, and give God the glory, glory

Rise and shine, and give God the glory, glory

Rise and shine, and give God the glory, glory

Children of our God.

1

God said to Noah, “There’s gon-na be a floddy,
floody (twice)

Get those children out of the muddy, muddy,”

Children of our God.

2

So Noah, he built him, he built him an arky, arky
(twice)

Made it out of gopher barky, barky.

Children of our God.

3

The animals they came in by two-zies, two-zies,
two-zies (twice)

Elephants and kangaroo-zies, roo-zies.

Children of our God.

4

It rained and poured for forty day-zies, day-zies
(twice)

Nearly drove those animals crazies, crazies.
Children of our God.

5

Dove went out, to take a peeky, peeky (twice)
Dove came back with twig in his beaky, beaky.
Children of our God.

6

The animals, they came out in three-zies, three-zies, three-zies (twice)

Must have been those birds and bee-zies, bee-zies.
Children of our God.

7

This is the end, the end of our story, story (twice)
Everything is hunky-dory, dory.

Children of our God.

Musical Offering VU # 540

**Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully**



Offering Prayer

God of Wonder, the drama of this day fills us with awe. We marvel at its intensity. We share these offerings as actors in this lifelong spectacle. May they convey the message of hope to our troubled world. May they tell the timeless story of faithfulness. We give because of the humble Christ. Amen.

Crowd Voice 1: I don't know about this. Something's making me feel a bit uneasy.

Crowd Voice 2: Yeah, I know what you mean. There's too much hype for my liking.

Crowd Voice 1: Something always goes wrong when crowds get too excited.

Crowd Voice 2: And they're definitely excited !

Leader Voice 3: Look at this guy - he's attracting quite a following.

Leader Voice 4: And have you heard about what he's teaching ?

Leader Voice 3: A bit... What have you heard ?

Leader Voice 4: He's shown blatant disregard for the Sabbath. He even encourages his disciples to work on the Sabbath.

Leader Voice 3: He seems to mock the laws - it's like he's making fun of Moses' teachings.

Leader Voice 4: He follows those liberal teachings of Hillel, you know.

Leader Voice 3: Hillel ?

Leader Voice 4: You know - the rabbi who summed up the whole Torah into one sentence.

Leader Voice 3: Ha ! Oh yeah, how did that go ?

Leader Voice 4: Hillel said, “What is hateful to you, do not do unto your neighbour; this is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary.”

Leader Voice 3: I think I heard Jesus say something like that.

Leader Voice 4: Darn right. Jesus is spreading that same liberal crap and attracting hordes of people. And look at how they’re practically worshipping him ! Talk about blasphemy.

Leader Voice 3: It does seem to be getting pretty out of hand.

Leader Voice 4: (*shouting*) Hey, Rabbi, order your disciples to stop.

Reader: Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these people were silent, the stones would shout out.”
(Luke 19:40)

Leader Voice 3: Well, I guess he put you in your place.

Leader Voice 4: No one makes fun of me like that and gets away with it. These people need to know what he’s really like. It’s the only way they’ll understand.

(pause)

1

**Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God our Creator triumphantly raise;
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed
us,
by guiding us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, pure light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night;
'til shadows have vanished and darkness is
banished,
as forward we travel from light into Light.**

2

**By law God enforces, the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and
fountains,
the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise:
'til all things now living unite in thanksgiving,
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.**

Crowd Voice 1: Someone just told me that Jesus said you should hate your family !

Crowd Voice 2: What ?

Crowd Voice 1: Yeah, apparently he said to turn your back on your own family, spit in the dust, and shake your sandals and leave them if they don't give all they have to some beggar walking by.

Crowd Voice 2: I guess there's another side to Jesus that isn't so angelic.



Choir Anthem (VU # 127)

“Ride On !Ride On in Majesty”

Prayer of Confession

In the confusion of voices, wondering who to believe,

Forgive us, God, when we believe the worst in others.

When we are wary and concerned,

Forgive us, God, when we spread mistrust.

When we hear rumours,

Forgive us, God, when we are content with half-truths.

When doubts come crashing down,

Give us peace, even in the confusion of faith.

Give us Grace, even in the confusion of voices.

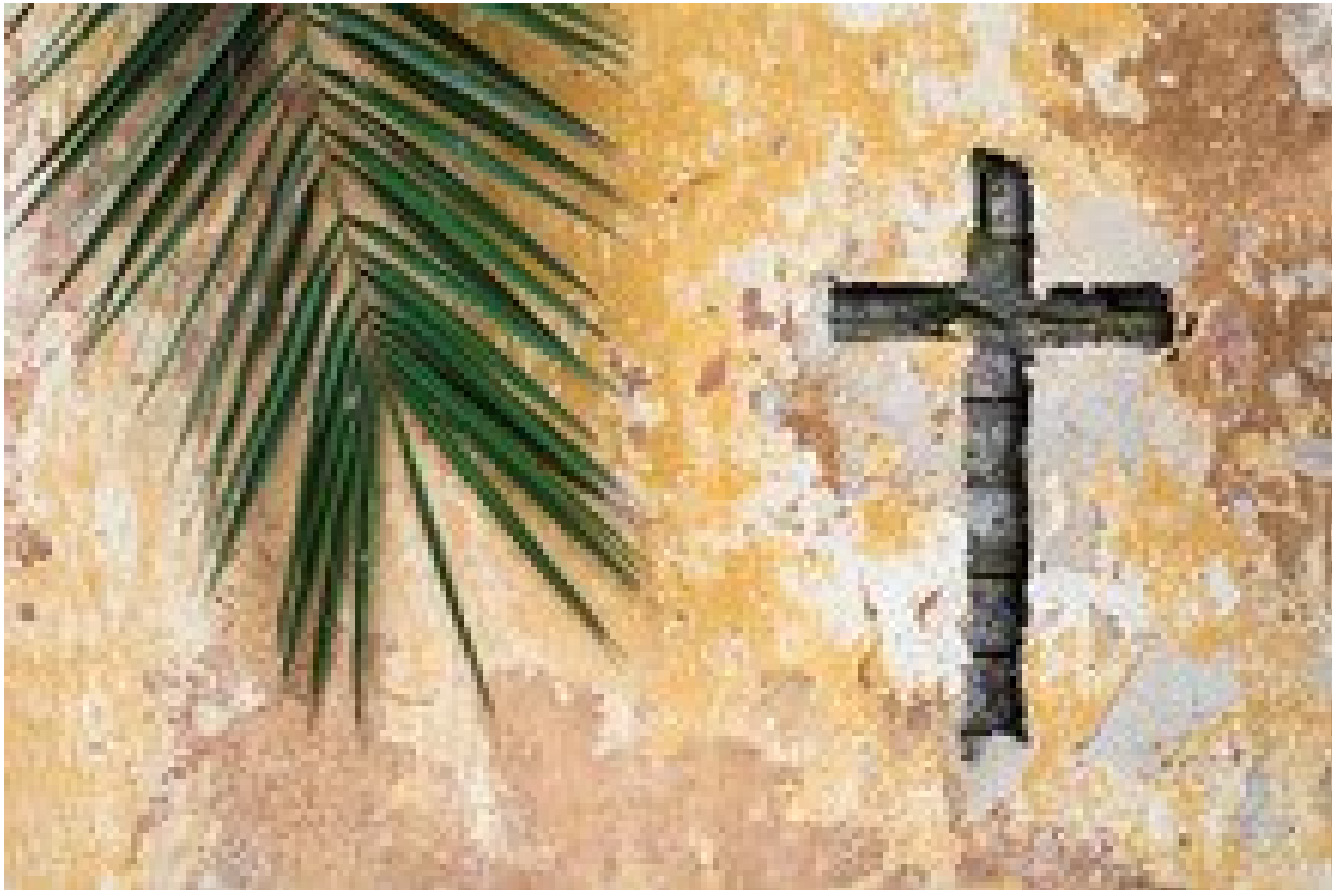
Give us hope, even in the confusion of fear. Amen.



Hymn VU # 22 (sing four times) “Wait for the Lord”

Wait for the Lord, God's day is near.

Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart !



Reader: Matthew 22:34-40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law ?” Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Crowd Voice 1: Jesus is running into some serious trouble. I don't have a good feeling about this. He's being constantly challenged by the scribes who are trying to discredit him, and yet he's giving incredibly wise responses.

Crowd Voice 2: Yeah, today I heard Jesus sum up the Torah by saying, "Love God with your whole being, and love your neighbour as yourself."

Crowd Voice 1: Ha ! As long as that neighbour is not a scribe !

Crowd Voice 2: Maybe that was his point. How do we love someone who we totally disagree with ?

Crowd Voice 1: I dunno, but he sure ticked them off at the Temple yesterday. He actually sat there and watched who put how much into the treasury ! I'm sure glad he didn't watch what I put in. Anyway, all of these highfalutin professionals came up and made it fairly obvious how much money they were putting in. Then, this widow, who had nothing, came up and put a couple of coppers in. Jesus then called a bunch of us over and said, "You see that poor woman ? She just gave more than the rest of them put together because she gave all she had."

Crowd Voice 2: Gee, he's gonna get himself killed. And I think he knows it. Wow. I'd give my life to stop that from happening !

Crowd Voice 1: *(pause)* Honestly *(pause)* I don't know if I can do that.

Prayer

In times of stress, in times of angst, we don't know what to do.

God, give us the courage to stay present with you and with our loved ones.

In times of need within this world and this community, we feel overwhelmed.

God, help us to focus on the little gifts we can give; on the little things we can do.

In times of abundance, in times of poverty,

Guide us, God, in how we can give to this Church, to the wider community, to our family and friends.

Amen.

Reader: Mark 11:12-19

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it. On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple Courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there.

He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the Temple Courts. And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching. When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

Leader Voice 4: He's losing it. He's done for.

Leader Voice 3: Yeah, I can't believe he killed a tree. And just because it didn't have any figs on it. It's not even the season for figs !

Leader Voice 4: And what he did in the Temple ! Whipping people and turning over their tables ! They didn't know what'd hit them.

Leader Voice 3: What side of the bed did he get up on this morning ?

Crowd Voice 1: Jesus definitely had a bad day today.

Crowd Voice 2: You know, I think he's going through huge stress right now. I heard him talking an awful lot about death and the end times. I think he knows that something terrible is about to happen.

Crowd Voice 1: Maybe he's trying to warn us about something.

Crowd Voice 2: I don't like how those Temple leaders are talking. They really feel threatened by him, and I think they're out to get him.

Crowd Voice 1: What can we do ?

Crowd Voice 2: Well, he kept telling us to stay alert, to watch, to pray. Maybe that's all we can do right now.

Hymn VU # 950 (sing twice)

“Stay with me”

**Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.**



Prayers of the People

Prayer was Jesus' solace as He drew near his torturous death. He asked his followers to pray with Him, knowing that in prayer, in communion with God, we open ourselves to the power and courage of the Spirit, who makes all things possible. Let us pray together.

Compassionate God, we lift our voice of praise with those who first sang out, "Hosanna to the Son of David !" Like them, we have a heart that holds a story – a story of pain, of disappointment, of sorrow.

We share those stories with you now. We pray to you, O God, save us.

Prince of Peace, you came in humble obedience and walked the path of enduring love even in the face of violent rejection. We confess that it is difficult to follow your path of peace and the violent road of abuse and war is all too familiar to us. We long for your peace, O God. We pray to you, O God, save us, O God.

Saving God, we trust in your goodness and believe your desire is for all of Creation to be held in your redeeming love. Send us out in your name to bring comfort to those who mourn, healing love to those who are sick, and justice to those who are oppressed. We wait now for your Spirit. We pray to you, O God, save us, O God. We pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.



**Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowéd 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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn VU # 950 (sing three times)

“Stay with me”

**Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.**





Blessings

We watch and we pray in this holiest of weeks.

With open hands, we wait on you, O God.

We receive your incredible blessing of loving presence.

With open hearts, we receive you, O God. Amen.



Commissioning *“Go Now in Peace”*

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of every day.

Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true.

Know God will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there within, around, above.

Go now in peace, in faith and in love.

Amen, amen, amen.

God, we thank you for being with us.
And
thank you Congregation for worshipping
today
in person and by Zoom
and
Special Thanks to the Cast of the Drama !



*(adapted from the United Church of
Canada's Resources, 'Gathering' and
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*Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd,
Augustine U.C., Winnipeg, Man
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