

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, MARCH 29th, 2026**

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Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
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Palm and Passion Sunday
“Laying it Down”

OFFERING PRAYER

Name above all names,
as you emptied yourself for others,
we offer ourselves and these gifts
as a sign of our hope in your reign.
Where there is death, bring life.
Where there is sorrow, bring joy.
Where there is injustice, bring courage for change.
Amen.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

OPENING SCRIPTURES

Zechariah 9:9.... Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 12:12,13....The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!"

OPENING REFLECTION

Today we come to the gates of the city. We come with palm branches and voices ready to shout *Hosanna!* But we do not come empty-handed. All through Lent, we have been carrying things—like a backpack on our shoulders: temptation... doubt... shame... fear... grief. We have named them. We have felt their weight. We have carried them honestly. And today... we bring them with us one last time. Because this is the day we begin to lay them down. As Jesus enters the city, we remember: He is not just entering Jerusalem. He is entering everything we carry. So today, we worship not as perfect people, but as people who are ready, ready to lay it all at the cross.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!
People: Hosanna in the highest!
Leader: We wave our branches and lift our voices,
People: Welcoming the One who brings peace.
Leader: Yet we know this journey leads to the cross,
People: And still, we follow.
Leader: Come with joy, come with honesty, come with all you carry,
People: For Christ receives us as we are.
All: Let us worship God!

OPENING HYMN: #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

Loving God, we gather with joy and trembling, with celebration and truth. We sing *Hosanna*, yet we know how quickly hearts can change. We welcome you, yet we confess how often we turn away. Meet us here, in our praise and in our honesty. Meet us here, with all that we carry. And as we walk this Holy Week journey, help us to trust that nothing we bring is too heavy for your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 19:28-40

- ²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ³⁰ "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" ³² Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. ³³ As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴ They replied, "The Lord needs it." ³⁵ They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus

- on it. ³⁶ As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ³⁸ "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"^[a] "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" ⁴⁰ "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

ANTHEM: Blessed By The Brad, Graced By The Wine by Mary Kay Bell

But remember that the shouting will die out and the time of trial will still lie ahead of us. Soon there will be a deathly quiet on the land. Soon the Saviour will give his life for us. But first Jesus shared one final meal with his disciples.....

COMMUNION REFLECTION

On this Palm Sunday, we begin with celebration, but we know where the story goes. The same voices that shout *Hosanna* will soon fall silent. Friends will turn away. One will betray. Another will deny. And still... Jesus comes to the table. He comes knowing all of itthe cheering, the silence, the betrayal. And He comes knowing us. He knows what we have carried this Lent, every fear, every doubt, every hidden ache. And still, He invites us: "Come. Sit. Eat." Because this table is not for those who have it all together, it is for those who are learning to let go. Today, as we receive this bread and cup, we remember: We have laid down what we carried, and Christ has taken it up. Even betrayal does not stop His love. Even brokenness does not end His grace. This is the table of a love that does not turn away.

HYMN: #469 We Gather Here

- 1 We gather here in Jesus' name,
 his love is burning in our hearts like living flame;
 for through the loving son God fashions us as one:
 Come take the bread, come drink the wine,
 come, share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here, - everyone belongs;
finding our forgiveness here,
we in turn forgive all wrongs.

- 2 He joins us here, he breaks the bread,
the One who pours the cup is risen from the dead;
the One we love the most is now our gracious host:
Come take the bread, come drink the wine,
come, share the Lord.
We are now a family of which Christ is the head;
though unseen he meets us here
in the breaking of the bread.
- 3 We'll gather soon where angels sing;
we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King;
now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:
Come take the bread, come drink the wine,
come, share the Lord.

THE STORY

We are reminded again of the tradition that surrounds this story.
Long ago, on the night of his arrest,
Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it:
'This bread is broken, as my body will be'.

And he handed it to his friends, inviting them to eat:

Long ago, on that same night,
Jesus poured a cup of wine, offered thanks for it,
and gave it to his friends:
'This wine is poured out, as my life will be.
Remember me and give thanks for all I have given'.

THANKSGIVING

Leader: Creating God, Source of Life, we offer our thanks for ...

**People: The smell after rain, The surprise of ducks in flight,
The taste of peach and plum and nectarine, For all gifts simple and
profound, in country and city, or back yard and on lake: We give
thanks. We give thanks.**

Leader: We who hold all such good things in trust
join in the praise of all people:

**People: Holy! Holy! Holy! Heaven and earth are holy and good.
All Holy is peace. All Holy is truth. Holy is love.**

Leader: In this season of transition as the leaves begin to spring forth
and our hearts cling to the warmth as the days lengthen, All once again
we are reminded, that new possibilities can rise from our failures or
disappointments or what has come to an end.

**People: We give thanks for all the influences in our lives that have
helped us to see beyond the present: that teach us to combine labour
and rest, that bring us the cycles of time and season, that sustain us
when we are in need. God loves in us; God cares through us; God
laughs in us; God cries in us, as nowhere else.**

Leader: Especially we give thanks for Jesus of Nazareth, gatherer of
folk, teller of stories, breaker of bread, pourer of wine, weaver of lives.
In his life, wisdom, stories and social vision we recall the words he
spoke to call forth in us love, care and respect for one another: All And
we believe the same Spirit of God that came to visibility in Jesus yearns
for visible expression in us.

PAUSE

So, we take this bread and this wine...
(The bread is broken... the wine poured)

Bread broken... Wine poured out... for the life of the world.

WORDS OF COMMUNION

Come, taste of this same bread and wine...
Gifts of the earth. Work of human hands.

Distribution of bread and wine. Once both elements are received Leader
will share these words, before the bread and wine are eaten and drank...
Quiet words you could say:

- "We lay down our temptation..."
- "We lay down our doubt..."
- "We lay down our fear..."
- "We lay down our shame..."
- "We lay down our grief..."

Now take eat and may the Lord Bless you and keep you...
Now take and drink and may you know you are forgiven.

POST COMMUNION WORDS

After the meal Jesus told His apostles, “I give to you a new commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another”. When the supper was over, they all stood up. Jesus knew that he will have to leave us soon. He knew that there are some very angry leaders who don’t want him around anymore. Jesus knows that God will always be with him. And Jesus is certain that God will always be with us too.

Let us Pray ...

Gracious God, we thank you for this meal of love.
You have met us in our brokenness and fed us with grace.
As we leave this place, help us to walk the road ahead not carrying what we no longer need, but trusting in your presence every step of the way.

FOLLOWED BY LORD’S PRAYER

POST COMMUNION HYMN: #470 For the Bread Which you have Broken

- 1 For the bread which you have broken,
for the wine which you have poured,
for the words which you have spoken,
now we give you thanks, O Lord.
- 2 By this promise that you love us,
by your gift of peace restored,
by your call to heaven above us,
hallow all our lives, O Lord.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Mark 14: 27-42

Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial

²⁷ “You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written:

“I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.”^[d]

²⁸ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

²⁹ Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”

³⁰ “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “today—yes, tonight—before the

rooster crows twice^[e] you yourself will disown me three times.”

³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same.

Gethsemane

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.”

³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ “*Abba,*^[f] Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

Mark 14: 43-50

Jesus Arrested

⁴³ Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷ Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

⁴⁸ “Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled.

VIDEO: Wonderful Beautiful Savior

READING: “The Betrayal”

Love has moved out. The room is silent. The table is left, broken bread still there, wine half finished. In the distance, footsteps move through the olive grove. Whose they are, we do not know. The room hangs in stillness, cushions scattered, crumbs across the floor, a basin and towel by the door. There is a rustle among the trees, the sound of movement, of something unfolding. The room grows cold, full of questions. The air is heavy with betrayal and fear, with unfinished stories. But something deeper is gone: a presence, a hope. Shadows stretch across the table. A breeze slips through the window, stirring what remains. Outside, the silence breaks, a cry in the distance, the clinking of silver coins. A kiss is placed on a cheek. A friend becomes a betrayer. Heavy footsteps approach. Voices rise. Hands bind the one we love. “Crucify him,” they shout. “Crucify him.” And the moment has come.

THE CHRIST CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED

CLOSING HYMN: The Old Rugged Cross #256 from Hymns of the Family of God

1 On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
the emblem of suffering and shame;
and I love that old cross where the dearest and best
for a world of lost sinners was slain.

Refrain:

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
and exchange it some day for a crown.*

2 O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
has a wondrous attraction for me;
for the dear Lamb of God left his glory above
to bear it to dark Calvary. [Refrain]

3 In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
a wondrous beauty I see,
for 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,
to pardon and sanctify me. [Refrain]

4 To that old rugged cross I will ever be true,
its shame and reproach gladly bear;
then he'll call me some day to my home far away,
where his glory forever I'll share. [Refrain]

BENEDICTION

Go now into this Holy Week journey, not carrying what weighs you down, but trusting in the One who carries you. From palms to the cross, from betrayal to grace, from brokenness to love...Christ walks with you.

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 He 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, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen...Amen...Amen.

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Announcements

Tuesday, March 31st: Coffee Tuesday at Springvale beginning at 9:30am. All are welcome!

Friday, April 3rd: Good Friday service at Hagersville beginning at 10:30am. Fellowship & hot cross buns to follow in the C.E. Wing

Monday, April 13th: The Chapelaires in concert for Christian Service Centers 41st Annual Spring Fundraising Banquet at Port Dover Community Centre. Doors open at 6pm, dinner at 6:30pm. For tickets please contact Dorothy Gordon at 519-443-6578

Thursday, April 16th: Unified Board meeting at Springvale at 1pm.

Sunday, April 26th: Jarvis Community Church presents Elvis in Concert! Garry Wesley as Elvis tribute & Donna Brooks performing the hits of Tammy Wynette & Patsy Cline in this gospel extravaganza. Tickets are \$25 or \$30 at the door. For tickets please call 519-420-0392. All proceeds will go to the Jarvis Caring Cupboard.

***Please bring paper products for the
Hagersville Food Bank***