

## Reflection for Palm Sunday March 29, 2026 - This is the Day Inspired by Psalm 118:19-29 and Matthew 21:1-11

It's always a delight for me to be in conversation about some of the big questions, questions like who is God to you and how do you see Jesus in the world today? My delight is that I have opportunities to take away new perspectives or experience some affirmation of what I now believe to be truth. That was my experience yesterday when I linked up with a young man who would like to do his confirmation this summer here in Peachland. I keep his name anonymous because I don't have his permission to share it. Hereafter he will be known as "My Young Apprentice." That conversation prompted me to do some reflection.

God, I said, can't be contained in a box. Some would like us to define God that way saying God is this or God is that, or that God acts in this way or that way. But to define God specifically I suggested, limits the potential of God's goodness in the world. I commented to "My Young Apprentice" that I have a number of visions of God (and incidentally the United Church encourages this I said). I told him (and I would tell anyone) that I see God as the pronouns he, she and they. I see God as Holy Love and Holy Presence (the spirit of generosity and kindness). I visualize God as healer, compassionate one, and forgiver. I see God as one who created the universe and recreates it to this day. In crisis, discouragement and grief, I see God as accompanier, assurer and comforter. My vision is broad. But I said, never do I see God as cruel, as a source of punishment, as retributive.

My words would not be at all familiar to those experiencing the world in the days of the Psalmists. But I am inclined to think that they thought of God in multiple ways as well. Certainly, they envisioned God as benevolent, generous, nurturing and saving.

Today's Psalm is composed during a festival of some kind, a celebration where the congregation gathered in the temple.

***27 The LORD is God,  
and he has given us light.  
Bind the festal procession with branches,  
up to the horns of the altar.<sup>[c]</sup>***

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

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

For he is good, his steadfast love endures forever. "**This is the day that the LORD has made**" they sang, "**let us rejoice and be glad in it.**"

The praise that rang out must have made the attendees joyful and filled them with hope. I don't know about you, but it lifted me this morning when we sang it, this is the day that Holy love; grace, generosity, empathy, compassion and forgiveness raise their voices.

That same feeling, perhaps euphoric, was present that fateful day Jesus rode into Jerusalem. It was Passover, the time of the great annual festival celebrating the

release of the Jews from Egyptian slavery. Coming into the city rides Jesus, the one the people have been hearing about. Is it true that he is here to redeem us, to take us out of our present slavery, to free us? Hosanna, they cry, Hosanna, save us Jesus. They were happy to see Jesus and in a celebratory mood. Happy because the savior had arrived, the one who would free them from bondage and lead them into a new world.

**This is the day; this is the day that the Lord has made!** If they had known the Psalm, they would likely have sung it.

Is this the day, March 29, 2026? Is this the day where we can begin anew just like those daffodils breaking through the earth? Can we break into hope as did those gathered to greet Jesus? Can we break through the harsh reality of egoism, fearmongering, selfishness and apathy that pervades our days? Hosanna Jesus, save us too. Save us from corruption, abuse of authority and arrogance. Free us from this bondage.

Can Jesus do that?

My young apprentice got me thinking about that yesterday. Are we doomed to failure? Will our societies eventually crumble into dust?

I think that depends on the answer to the second question I raised in the first part of my reflection. "How do you see Jesus in the world today?"

I see only two ways to answer that question.

The first, you don't see Jesus in the world at all. Perhaps you are so disenchanted you can't believe it possible. Perhaps you are beyond believing in hopeful change. Perhaps, and with good reason, you are cynical about the entire "Jesus" message. That's option one.

Option two, you see as I did when meeting with my young apprentice, that Jesus is in the world now, every day, and in many ways.

We saw Jesus amidst the rubble of abandoned homes in Gaza, Ukraine and Iran, determined to find safety for those who have lost everything they owned. We saw Jesus on the back of a trailer truck handing out bottles of water and shuffling bags of rice out to starving refugees. We saw Jesus in makeshift medical shelters under tarps with back up generators and a lack of medical supplies.

We talked about Jesus clearing the neighbour's path after a snow fall or helping an elder taking the garbage out or in doing some housework.

The other day I saw Jesus freeing a Humpback whale from fishing nets in the Baltic.

I just read about Jesus in the news as "Activists and members of the transgender community take part in a demonstration against proposed amendments to India's Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ['We will be fighting': Indian transgender activist says as new bill strips right to self-identify | CBC Radio](#), accessed March 28, 2026

Jesus is with the residents of Tumbler Ridge who are still in shock after the devastating loss of life in the school shooting. And he will be there as long as they need him.

Jesus is in the small acts of kindness we offer, the generosity given to neighbour friend or stranger. Jesus is in our prayers for comfort and healing.

I think Jesus is at the city gates waiting for us now. I pray that is the way we can all envision Jesus today as we wave our Palm branches.

Welcome Jesus, **This is The Day**. This is the Day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Thanks for listening today, Amen