## April 13, 2025 + 10:30 A.M.

## **Palm Sunday**

## We Join in Worship

If you need extra space for a wheelchair or walker, or if you have young children with you, please feel free to make use of our Prayground, the extra space across the aisle from the sound booth.

Liturgist: Renee Williams

**PRELUDE** 

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

William H. Monk, arr. Cindy Berry

#### **WELCOME**

#### PROCESSION OF PALMS

## Siyahamba (We Are Marching)

Siyahamba, ekukanyen' kwenkos',

Siyahamba, ekukanyen' kwenkos',

Siyahamba, ekukanyen' kwenkos',

Siyahamba, ekukanyen' kwenkos',

Siyahamba, siyahamba, oh,

Siyahamba ekukanyen' kwenkos'.

Siyahamba, siyahamba, oh,

Siyahamba ekukanyen' kwenkos'.

We are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, we are marching, ooh,

We are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, we are marching, ooh,

We are marching in the light of God.

#### **CHORAL INTROIT**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### \*THE PEACE OF CHRIST

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted from *Psalm* 118 and *Matthew* 21)

Leader: Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we may enter through them and give thanks to

the LORD.

ALL: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Leader: This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. We thank you that you

have answered us and have become our salvation.

ALL: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Leader: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD's

doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

ALL: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Leader: 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, who has given us light. Let us bind the festal procession

with branches, up to the horns of the altar!

ALL: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

\*OPENING HYMN: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" (88)

#### **INVITATION TO CONFESSION:**

Leader: Paul write

Paul writes, "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." In humility, let us

confess our sins together.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. We confess that all too often our shouts of "Hosanna!" ring hollow when we have been waiting and watching for you. We welcome you into our lives only when it is convenient for us to do so. Otherwise we actively avoid you as you journey by because we fear the possibility of transformation that you bring. If ever it seems like our faith will put us at risk, we put our faith away. We deny you as Peter did. We accuse you as the crowds did when they changed their tune. Forgive us for being fair weather friends. Help us to make our "Hosannas!" bold and true. In the name of Jesus Christ our liberator we pray. Amen.

**KYRIE:** Glory to God, No. 579 (unison)

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader:

Hear the good news! We do not have a righteousness of our own that comes from the

law. We have a righteousness that comes through faith in Christ!

ALL:

Jesus Christ liberates us! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

#### GLORIA PATRI (577)

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH** (from *The Confession of 1967*)

In Jesus of Nazareth true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows. He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of sinful people. But his complete obedience led him into conflict with his people. His life and teaching judged their goodness, religious aspirations, and national hopes. Many rejected him and demanded his death. In giving himself freely for them he took upon himself the judgment under which all people stand convicted. God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord. The victim of sin became victor, and won the victory over sin and death for all people.

#### We Hear God's Word

#### EMBODIED WORD FOR DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Saving Spirit, as you led Jesus into the wilderness and gave him the courage and Wisdom to survive, gather us around your Word and give us your courage and Wisdom that we might be equipped to follow your Son on this Lenten path. Amen.

**HEBREW BIBLE LESSON:** 

Isaiah 50:4-9a

**SECOND LESSON:** 

Philippians 2:5-11

**GOSPEL LESSON:** 

Luke 19:28-40

**SERMON:** 

Courage to Shout with Joy

**MUSICAL MEDITATION:** 

Hosanna in the Streets

Pepper Choplin

## We Respond in Faith

#### PASTORAL PRAYER

#### 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 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.

#### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

#### **OFFERING INVITATION:**

Leader:

The crowds lay their palms and spread their cloaks on the road to pave the way for the King. Let us give of our tithes and offerings as we seek to pave the way for the Kingdom. If you are worshiping here in person, please place your offering in the plate as it is passed. If you are worshiping from home, please mail in your checks or use our online giving option on the website. Now let us take a moment to reflect on stewardship is we listen to today's offertory.

**OFFERTORY** 

I Will Sing of My Redeemer

James McGranaham, arr. Cindy Berry

#### \* DOXOLOGY:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures high and low; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, in Jesus fully known; Creator, Word, and Spirit one; Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Unison)

O God, we proclaim, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" We dedicate these gifts to our King and his Kingdom. In the name of Jesus Christ our liberator we pray. Amen.

#### We Go into the World

\* CLOSING HYMN: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" (89)

#### BENEDICTION

#### CHORAL BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE** 

Lift High the Cross

Sydney H. Nicholson, arr. Cindy Berry

**PALM PARADE:** 

Reprise Siyahamba

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### Life of the Church

PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 4/13: PALM SUNDAY

Adult Study - 9:00 AM

Worship In Person & Online – 10:30 AM

Fellowship Hosts: Mission

MONDAY 4/14:

GA - 6:30 PM

Al-Anon - 7:00 PM

TUESDAY 4/15:

Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH)

AA - 7:30 PM

WEDNESDAY 4/16:

Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH)

Lenten Study & Practice 7-8 PM (Zoom)

GA - 7:00 PM

THURSDAY 4/17:

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Service - 7:00 PM

SATURDAY 4/19:

Gladys' Table Meal Prep

SUNDAY 4/20:

EASTER SUNDAY

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

• CONGREGATIONAL MEETING APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> AFTER WORSHIP There will be a called congregational meeting after worship on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, for the purpose of hearing about and voting upon revisions to our Endowment Fund guidelines and voting upon a release of funds that we did not use last year for grants. Session, the Endowment Fund Committee, and the Ministry of Stewardship and Finance have been hard at work discerning the best way to steward and access this vital resource in a way that is most helpful for our church's finances. Please attend to be part of this discussion and decision making!

<sup>\*</sup> So that we can properly greet people who come to the building during Sunday morning worship, Door A will be the only unlocked external door during the worship service.

- **HOLY WEEK IS HERE!** Be sure to mark your calendars for our Maundy Thursday service (April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM) and Easter Sunday service (April 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM)!
- LENTEN STUDY AND PRACTICE WITH PASTOR TYLER This year's Lenten Study and Practice is entitled *Unsung Heroines: The Unnamed Women in Luke Who Propelled the Dream Forward.* We will be meeting and learning from women who were brave enough to enter into spaces that would put them in the path of the Messiah as he was on the path to the cross, and thus brave enough to change the course of history. As always, we will also be implementing spiritual practices that will put us in the path of the Messiah. Join us each Wednesday of Lent, March 12 April 16, from 7-8 pm online on Zoom. All are welcome! We will record our sessions and send out materials if the time does not work for you. The Zoom link is sent out via email weekly; if you are not currently receiving this email and would like to, please contact Kristen in the church office.
- PRAYER ACTIVITY STATIONS Instead of having a spirituality center set up in one room, as we have in the past, this year we will have a variety of prayer stations set up around the building for you to engage with (most will be located in the Narthex and Sanctuary). Beginning on March 9, one new prayer station will be added each week of Lent. There will also be a walkable Labyrinth in the Fellowship Room for anyone to use. The prayer stations are appropriate for all ages, so you are encouraged to share this space with children, youth and adults in your life. The prayer stations will be available on Sundays before and after worship, and during regular church office hours (Mon. –Thurs., 8 am to noon). If you cannot come to the church and would like an at -home version of the stations, please contact Heather Casiano at hcasiano@fpchighland.org, or call the church office.
- SHARING CALENDAR FOR LENT This year's Lent devotional is a calendar instead of a booklet. "A Sharing Calendar for Lent 2025" is part of the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering that is associated with Lent each year. Beginning with Ash Wednesday (March 5) and going through Easter Sunday (April 20), there is a suggested prayer, reflection or activity you can do each day except on Saturdays. The reflections and activities are related to the areas of hunger, disaster assistance and self-development of people the three focus areas of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. As you make your way through this calendar devotional, you might find yourself inspired to try something new, or to pray and reflect in a different way. This Lent calendar devotional is available in worship beginning March 2, and mailed to those who don't have email. If you would prefer to have an electronic copy of the calendar emailed to you, contact Heather Casiano (hcasiano@fpchighland.org).
- <u>ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING</u> Participate in the PC(USA)'s annual special offering for Lent to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People. Make use of those trusty fish banks and envelopes!
- <u>"BYOB" (BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE)</u> The Lenten Study and Practice will be taking the place of BYOB throughout Lent.
- <u>THE BIBLE IN TODAY'S WORLD</u> Bible study group meets on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am at the church. We're reading through *A is for Alabaster* by Anna Carter Florence. The book takes us through the alphabet of both the Old and New Testaments, focusing on one Scripture passage per letter. Join us for great conversation and perhaps a new way of reflecting on God's Word. Contact John Toren or Heather Casiano with any questions.
- <u>BUILDING USE FORMS</u> Just a quick reminder that for the safety and security of everyone using our building, we need to have building use request forms filled out by both members and non-members whenever they use any area of the building outside of regular church activity functions.
- FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA! If you don't already follow us on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so @firstpchighland on both Facebook and Instagram.
- <u>INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF FPCH?</u> You are always welcome here, whether a member or not! If you are interested in joining as a member, though, we would love to have you! Please talk to Pastor Tyler if you would like to learn more.

## Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- <u>BLESSING BOX</u> Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates!
- <u>HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!</u> Please pick up a beautifully decorated grocery bag in the narthex and fill it to help the church's food pantry.
- GOT SNEAKERS? We are still participating in the Got Sneakers Fundraiser where there is nothing to buy or sell; all we need is your support and your gently worn, used, or new sneakers! Blue bins are located in the narthex, and inside and outside DOOR D by the office. Every pair counts!

## **Prayer List**

Anthony Brady Vanes

George Griner Guy Hendricks

Bill and Anettia Holmes

Daniel Litwicki David Markley

Pat and David Kingen Diana and Ray Mendoza

Janet Orem

Cindy Waltz and Sister Yvonne Suroviak

Wendy

Georgette Sknerski Jakob Holden Denise Matthys Steve & Melinda

Jan Oprea Florance Cody

Kathy & Chuck Pumnea

Nick

Laura Buono Domsic
The Windstrups
Ruth Dekker
Rick Parker
Gary Everhart

Tim

Caroline Studer Holly Letnich Jaden Mendez Darlene O'Brien

Bonnie Kern

Charles

Doug & Sue Matthews

Janet Terpstra Glen Nahler Tammy Tom

David Hamblin

Jana Tolley

Larry & Bonnie Perryman

Virginia Marshall Delta Rose Winnie Owen Charity Lynn

Judy Breeanne Mom Bechtler

Gloria Victor

Crystal and David Cervantes

Marian Clayton Lou Ann Sulowski

Ella P

Edie Delgano Melissa Katie

Rita Stronczek Bill and Suzanne

Keren, Zuriel, and Gedeon

Sharon Janet

Lois and Tom

OGB
Edna Cruz
Katie
Charlie

Jerry & Rena Martinez

Amaiya George Dustin Noreen Kim

Davies Family

Jessica
Nicole
Greg
Pastor Jane

#### Isaiah 50:4-9a

<sup>4</sup> The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain

the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens wakens my ear

to listen as those who are taught.

<sup>5</sup> The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious. I did not turn backward.

<sup>6</sup> I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face

from insult and spitting.

<sup>7</sup> The Lord GOD helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

<sup>9</sup> It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

## Philippians 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup> Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name

that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

#### Luke 19:28-40

<sup>28</sup> 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, <sup>30</sup> 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. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" <sup>32</sup> So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup> They said, "The Lord needs it." <sup>35</sup> Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> 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, <sup>38</sup> saying,

"Blessed is the king

who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,

and glory in the highest heaven!"

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." <sup>40</sup> He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

## Courage to Shout with Joy

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 19:28-40

What a courageous journey we have been on together, loved ones! We have joined women of courage as they have boldly put themselves into the path of Jesus. We have joined a great teacher, healer, miracle worker, brother, and friend of courage as he boldly made his way towards Jerusalem one last time. Inspired by the magnitude of their courage, we have braved our own wilderness experiences, we have openly grieved, we have honored our Lord at the risk of judgment from others, we have dared to reach out for healing, we have dared to show our emotions to others. Indeed, emotions are at the heart of this courage we have shared, this vulnerability we have practiced. The Widow of Nain wept. The Woman with the Alabaster Jar wept. I am sure that the Woman Who had been Bleeding for Twelve Years wept often out in the public square before her healing. Martha and Mary wept. Jesus wept. Weeping is one of the most courageous acts of all. It risks others' scorn. It risks others' sympathy. It risks our own catharsis. It risks our own healing. It risks allowing others in to be part of that healing. And there will certainly be more weeping to come as we proceed through the week to come—a week in which we will witness betrayal, denial, injustice, violence, and crucifixion. I pray that we will have the courage to weep indeed!

Today, though, is about another courageous expression of vulnerability. Today is about shouting with joy! HOSANNA! HOSANNA! "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" Wow! To celebrate and shout, to make a parade of smiling faces and waving palms, to take off their cloaks and thus to bare their skin as they bared their souls, to lay those cloaks down on the road to make a royal highway for this royal man upon this loyal steed all with raucous joy was courageous indeed! For, this parade of joy was a bold coming out, a daring declaration of a community of people whose loyalty was to royalty beyond the temple leaders and the scribes, beyond the soldiers and centurions, beyond the client king and the regional governor, beyond very emperor himself! They did not submit to this king out of fear or out of a need for self-preservation in the face of violent settler colonialism, as would have been the case for the emperor and his empire. Au contraire, they *chose* to be subjects of this king and his kingdom because of something much, much, much more powerful—LOVE!

This king had shown them a wondrous love so deep, so broad, so high, a love previously unknown. This king had taught them and healed them and redeemed them and welcomed them and spoken up for them and inspired them and empowered them and encouraged them. This king had shown them a different way to live, a way that did not require or even accept systems of power-over, a way that was built upon stones of justice and interdependence and belonging, a way that was shaded by mustard plants and fig trees, a way meandering along the banks of the river of living waters, a way with fish and loaves aplenty, a way upon which none would go thirsty, none would go hungry, and none would go lonely, the way of love. And they loved him for it! They loved him in return. They loved him in reply. They loved him in response. They loved him in reality.

And there was nothing, there *is* nothing more threatening to regimes of violent oppression than a community of people who would choose loyalty to a different leader with such love that it would burst forth in an uproarious exhalation of joy! And there was no one, there *is* no one more threatening to autocratic authoritarians than the author of life, the author of love. And so, this parade of palms, this baring of skin, this preparing of the royal highway, this shout of, "Hosanna!" this claiming and proclaiming of a king, was dangerous. The temple leaders and scribes and soldiers and centurions and client king and regional governor and emperor all would tremble, and in their trembling, they would lash out with unimaginable violence. Oh yes, it took incredible courage to join that crowd and shout with joy that blessed day in Jerusalem! HOSANNA! HOSANNA!

There is so much power in expressing joy. Yes, there is that power to make empires tremble, but that is more of a consequence of joy. The true power of joy is the power of transformation. We have talked before about how joy is a phenomenon much deeper than happiness. Joy can exist in the most difficult of seasons, in the midst of grief, in the face of suffering. Joy is a gift from God created within us, an ever-present wellspring of the recognition that we are created with purpose and loved with abandon. We do not always feel it, but it is always there if we but dare to dive in. And experiences of joy are contagious. When somebody accesses that wellspring within, it shows in a way that causes others to dip themselves in it. Joy is thus a communal phenomenon. Just look at the multitudes upon that royal highway in Jerusalem! Even though the people were constantly suffering under the unbearable weight of an oppressive empire, even though they had so many reasons to weep, on that day they were able to access and express joy. For, suffering does not have the power to banish hope. Oppression does not have the power to extinguish love. Evil does not have the power to take joy away! Joy can transform a group of demoralized, devastated, defeated denizens into a mighty multitude of merrymakers making way for the messiah! So palpable was their joy, so contagious, that it even seeped into the stones, which themselves would cry out if somehow the people were silenced! Oh yes, the true power of joy is the power of transformation! HOSANNA! HOSANNA! HOSANNA!

We have so much to learn from that joyful, courageous crowd upon the royal highway in Jerusalem, a crowd that I am sure was filled with unnamed women who had been preparing that royal highway all along! So many of us feel like demoralized, devastated, defeated denizens today. The world is filled with regimes of violent oppression, and we regularly witness it and suffer from it alike. Genocide is happening before our eyes in the very land that Jesus called home. War is ripping through Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ukraine. Militaries and paramilitaries are tearing Colombia and Haiti apart. Corporations are exploiting land, water, air, and people, and the very earth is trembling. Migrants are desperately trying to reach shelter and safety, only to find hostility, detention, and deportation back into danger. Women, cis and trans alike, are losing the right to control what happens to their own bodies. Lifelong servants to the public good are losing their jobs to careless disregard. The histories and incalculable contributions of people of color are being erased from the public record. Safety nets of food, shelter, education, healthcare, and income are being torn to shreds. Protestors and human rights strugglers and humanitarian workers are being targeted. For many, weeping seems to be the only logical response. And weeping is powerful and important and courageous in its own right. But as we have learned today, it is not the only expression of emotion with power, import, and courage.

There is also joy! Joy comes with the morning. Joy can come in the midst of our mourning. There is incredible power in the collective expression of joy in the face of all that would try to take our joy away. There is incredible power in the multitudes choosing to express their joy about being part of a community, a kingdom

of love. There is incredible power in joyfully coming out and declaring our loyalty to the Lord of love. There is incredible power in defying the powers and principalities of evil by loving each other and our fellow human beings and very creation itself with such force that even the stones would cry out with joy. There is incredible power in following the way of the grand marshal of that palm parade, who rode upon a donkey that stepped upon the hallowed ground of cloaks laid out in honor—the way of seeking out the least and the lost, the way of sharing food and water and shelter, the way of welcoming immigrants, the way of healing bodies and minds and spirits—and doing all of this with joyful spirits.

So let us have the courage to shout with joy! Let us have the courage to declare that we are created with purpose and loved with abandon! Let us have the courage to create communities and systems in which all can know that they are created with purpose and loved with abandon! HOSANNA! HOSANNA! HOSANNA! Amen!

# All Glory, Laud, and Honor

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN 7.6.7.6 D



ELLACOMBE 7.6.7.6 D

