

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH
PALM SUNDAY / ALL AGES SERVICE **April 2, 2023 – 10 am**

Theme: “A Jesus Parade in Jerusalem”

** The live service will be broadcasted and recorded on YouTube, check your email for the link.*

Gathering Music: Holy Lord – Steve Bell, You Are Holy – Imboden/Rhoten Band
Acknowledgement of Territory: Rev. Lorrie Lowes

As we begin our worship service, we acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded lands of the Algonquin-Anishinaabe peoples. For thousands of years, they have cared for the land even as the land cared for them. Guided by the wisdom of their traditions and their ancestors, they have been taught that the circle of life is embraced and embracing. Let us carry on this wisdom. Let us live into right relations with love and respect. (Jamie Miller, Gathering, ACE 2022/2023 Year A. Used with permission.)

*** Hymn: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna - Voices United #123**

1 Hosanna, loud hosanna the happy children sang;
through pillared court and temple the lovely 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.

Words 1873 Jennette Threlfall; Music trad 18th century German

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Lighting of Christ Candle: Acolytes: Wightman Family

We light this Christ candle to remind us of the light of truth.
May this light enflame our hearts with God's grace;
keep us in the radiance of Christ's presence;
and fill our hearts with the Spirit of hope.

Song Response: Don't Be Afraid – More Voices #90

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.
Don't be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised, promised to be always near.

Welcome & Centering for Worship: Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! I welcome and greet you in the name of Jesus Christ on this All-Ages Palm Sunday worship. Today marks the entrance of Jesus in Jerusalem with the crowd waving palm fronds and leafy branches and spreading their cloaks on the ground. Welcome to guests and visitors. We are glad that you have joined us in our worship service today. Join us for coffee and conversation after the service in the main hall. As we enter the Holy Week in the coming days, please note:

- Good Friday: April 7 at 10 am & Easter Sunday: April 9 with Communion
- Memorial Flower Donations

Friends, on this Palm Sunday, let us wave palms, as we welcome Jesus, our movement leader.
Let us gather in worship.

Call to Gather: (Responsively) Rev. Lorrie Lowes

Jesus, a light of the world, bringing hope for the future; one who will set us free.

Welcome Jesus! Hosanna!

Jesus, a bearer of justice, one who will overturn oppressive rulers and colonial powers.

Welcome Jesus! Hosanna!

Jesus, a compassionate healer, who shares our pains, who understands and comforts.

Welcome Jesus! Hosanna!

Jesus, a movement leader, who wipes all tears away and ushers in a peaceful kin-dom.

Hosanna to Jesus! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of God!

Hosanna in the highest!

Prayer of Approach: (Unison) (Ken Witherspoon, Gathering, LEP, 1987. Used with permission)

**As the gates of the city swung open to welcome Jesus,
so may our hearts be opened to God's Spirit among us.**

**As Jesus wept for the people, so may we weep for those
who suffer at the hands of those who have forgotten how to love.**

**Let our worship today express the joy and sorrow,
the laughter and weeping of that first Palm Sunday. Amen.**

Special Music: Little Grey Donkey – Sleeth **Bell Canto/CGS director: Erin Berard**

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison) Reader: Ross Mutton

**God of the journey, whose word silences the shouts of the mighty,
speak to us through your Word of hope and courage.**

**By the power of your Holy Spirit,
may we welcome Jesus' entrance into our hearts. Amen.**

The Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:1-11 (NRSV Updated Edition)

Jesus's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

21 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately."⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their

cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

May these words renew us and give us assurance of hope in this time and in this place.
Thanks be to God!

Opening Words: **Rev. Kim Vidal**

Parades! Processions!

Two parades enter Jerusalem.

One from the west, from Caesarea by the Sea.

One from the east, from the Mount of Olives.

In one procession, the leader is surrounded by Centurions, soldiers hefting spears.

Columns of defeated enemies chained together trudge behind.

In the other, the central figure is surrounded by an unruly assembly of shouting people, paving the dusty route with their cloaks and tree branches.

Columns of children dance, or so the story goes.

In one procession, trumpets blare, and flags fly.

In the other, shouts of “Hosanna!”, “Save us!” rise from the crowd.

The man entering Jerusalem from the west, is met with fearful, downcast eyes.

He proudly rides a great steed, a war horse.

This is the feared Roman governor of the place called Judea.

Remember who the Roman governor was?

Pontius...[waits for the congregation to respond] Pilate.

The man entering Jerusalem from the east, from the Mount of Olives, is met with waving palm branches, singing and dancing. He rides a donkey.

Hang on a moment! Anybody here ever ridden a donkey?

I haven't ridden a donkey but when I look at someone riding a donkey, that person looks a little foolish, a little out of place.

But here comes a so-called King of the Jews from a place called Nazareth, humbly riding a donkey. Isn't this Jesus, the son of Mary and Joseph?

Two men. Two leaders. But, oh so different, one from the other.

Pontius Pilate - Proud, dangerous, frightful—entering Jerusalem from the west.

And Jesus – Humble, hopeful, joyful — entering from the east.

Scene 1 – Katrina and Heidi TeGrotenhuis

1: Did you hear? Jesus of Nazareth is coming!

2: Coming here?

1: Yes – coming to Jerusalem, to celebrate the Festival of the Unleavened Bread!

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

Hymn: And On This Path - More Voices #8

1. And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide, (3X)

Open wide! (3X) The gates are open wide!

2. So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide, (3X)

Open wide! (3X) The gates are open wide!

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Scene 2 - Katrina and Heidi TeGrotenhuis

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

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

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

2: And they're definitely too excited!

Scene 3 – Berard Family

Jordan: Look at this guy – he's attracting quite a following.

Erin: And have you heard about what he's teaching?

Jordan: A bit. What have you heard?

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

Nicholas: I heard that he seems to mock the laws –it's like making fun of Moses' teachings.

Noah: He follows those liberal teachings of Hillel, you know.

Nicholas: Hillel?

Noah: You know – the Rabbi who summed up the whole Torah into one sentence.

Nicholas: Ha! Oh yeah – how did that go?

Noah: Hillel said, "What is hateful to you, do not do unto your neighbour. This is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary."

Jordan: I think I heard this Jesus say something like that.

Erin: Darn right. Jesus is spreading the same liberal garbage and attracting hordes of people. And look at how they practically worship him. Talk about blasphemy!

Jordan: It does seem to be getting pretty out of hand.

Erin: (Shouting) Hey, Rabbi! Order your disciples to stop!

Noah: Jesus said, "I tell you, if these people were silent, the stones would shout out."

(Luke 19:40)

Jordan: Well, I guess he put you in your place.

Erin: 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.

Hymn: Sanna Sannanina - Voices United #128 (An African Version of Hosanna)

Sanna, sannanina, sanna, sanna, sanna, (2x)

Sanna, sanna, sanna, sannanina, sanna, sanna, sanna (2x)

Words & Music: traditional South African, arranged © 1993 Nicholas Williams

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Scene 4 – Lorrie & Neil Lowes

1 – Lorrie: Someone just told me that Jesus said you should hate your family?

2 –Neil: What?

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

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

Ministry of Music: Blessed be the Name - Redmann

Scene 5 – Lorrie & Neil

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 incredible wise responses.

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

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

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

1: I don't know, 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.”

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.

1: Honestly, I don't know if I can do that!

Prayers of the People:

Rev. Kim

God of Promise,

we are taken by surprise at each Palm Sunday parade.

We so want Jesus to be powerful, a ruler who will smite the world of all evil, and make all things good and easy for us.

Rather, he comes in humility to serve,

and calls us to have the strength to be humble servants.

Hosanna, save us from ourselves, that we might be the best we can be.

In the words of St. Francis of Assisi, let us gather our voices together in this prayer:

“Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

**where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.**

**O grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.”
Show us the Way this Holy Week, Eternal One. Amen.**

Let us gather our voices in singing the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer (Sung) - Voices United #959 - BCUC Choir

Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name.
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil,
for the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever.

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Musical Offering: Thy Word - Grant

The Offering Invitation: Rev. Lorrie

I now invite you to offer your time, talents and treasures as a sign of our gratefulness to God's blessings. you will find the offering plates on the narthex table. There are many additional ways you can financially support the work of the church – through PAR, by dropping into the office or by e-transfer. Thank you for your continued love and support of Bells Corners United Church.

Offertory Hymn: What Can I Do? - More Voices #191

What can I do? What can I bring? What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer. I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

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*** *Offertory Prayer: (Unison)* Kate Crawford, Gathering Lent-Easter 2014.**

**Like palms of rejoicing, like cloaks on the ground,
we bring these gifts and offer them here.
Let both gifts and the givers be lifted up,
blessed, and sent forth to do your will. Amen.**

Scene 6 – Berard Family

1 - Jordan: He's losing it! He's done for.

2 - Erin: Yeah – I can't believe he killed a fig tree. And just because it didn't have any figs on it. It's not even the season for figs!

1: And what he did in the temple! Whipping people and turning over their tables! They didn't know what hit them!

2: What side of the bed did he get up on this morning?

Scene 7 – Katrina & Heidi TeGrotenhuis

1: Jesus definitely had a bad day today.

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.

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

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.

1: What can we do? I thought this is going to be a happy parade!

2: Well, Jesus made his point. He told us to stay alert, to watch, to pray. Maybe that's all we can do right now.

Closing Words: Rev. Kim Vidal

Jesus — humble, hopeful, joyful, — entering Jerusalem from the east.

Jesus will change people's lives.

Indeed, he will change our world, he IS changing our world,
but not in ways or with means that we expect.

Jesus beckons to his followers, then and now, to follow his ways:

to bring good news to the poor, to bring sight to the blind,

to bring liberty to the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of God's favour.

Jesus, riding humbly on a donkey.

May he enter our hearts and our lives today.

Hosanna! Amen.

***Hymn: I Danced in the Morning - Voices United #352**

1 I danced in the morning when the world
was begun, and I danced in the moon and
the stars and the sun, and I came from
heaven and I danced on the earth;
at Bethlehem I had my birth.

3 I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the
lame; the holy people said it was a shame;
they whipped and they stripped
and they hung me high,
and left me there on a cross to die. R

Refrain: Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

4 I danced on a Friday when the sky turned
black; it's hard to dance with the devil on
your back; they buried my body
and they thought I'd gone,
but I am the dance and I still go on. R

2 I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
but they would not dance and they would
not follow me; I danced for the fishermen,
for James and John; they came with me
and the dance went on. R

5 They cut me down and I leap up high;
I am the life that will never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;
I am the Lord of the dance, said he. R

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***Sending Forth: (Responsively) Rev. Kim Vidal**

(Bill Steadman, Gathering, LE 2017, Year A. Used with permission.)

Now we depart, leaving from this place
and we head into a world where we are invited into the holy week.

**Wherever we go, we are able to sense
the presence of God.**

Go forward in faith, this day and always. **Amen.**

Sung Blessing: Depart in Peace words: Ruth Duck, music: Ron Klusmeier

Depart in peace to do God's will; Walk ever in the light;
For Christ is with you ever more, To guide you day and night.
A-men, A-men, A-men, A-men.