

**A SERVICE OF THE WORD
PALM SUNDAY – APRIL 13, 2025
10:00 A.M.**

**The United Church of Santa Fe
A United Church of Christ**



For Reflection on Palm Sunday

Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could, they would still be destroyed—chased and hunted down as long as fun or a dollar could be got out of their bark hides, branching horns, or magnificent bole backbones. . . . It took more than three thousand years to make some of the trees of these Western woods—trees that are still standing in perfect strength and beauty—waving and singing in the mighty forests of the Sierra. Through all the wonderful eventful centuries since Christ’s time—and long before that—God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand straining, leveling tempests and floods, but (God) cannot save them from sawmill and fools.

Environmentalist John Muir in *Our National Parks, 1901*



WE GATHER OUTSIDE THE SANCTUARY

Words of Welcome and Breathing God’s Gifts

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'"

They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it.

Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

**"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"**

Procession into Sanctuary

"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna!"

Jennette Threfall/Ellacombe

1 "Ho - san - na, loud ho - san - na," the lit - tle chil - dren sang;
2 From Ol - i - vet they fol - lowed a - mid a cheer - ing crowd,
3 "Ho - san - na in the high - est!" That an - cient song is ours.

through pil - lared court and tem - ple the love - ly an - them rang;
the vic - tor palm branch wav - ing, and chant - ing clear and loud.
We hail our great Re - deem - er and sing with all our powers:

To Je - sus, who had blessed them close fold - ed to his breast,
The one whom an - gels wor - ship rode on in low - ly state,
"Ho - san - na, Christ, we praise you with heart and life and voice.

the chil - dren sang their prais - es, the sim - plest and the best.
and glad to see the chil - dren, slowed down the don - key's gait.
Ho - san - na! In your pres - ence for - ev - er we'll re - joice!"

WE PREPARE

Sharing our Life and Welcoming Poet Charles Anthony (Tony) Silvestri

Breathing in God's Gifts Again

Musical Call

O Clap Your Hands

Ralph Vaughan Williams

A Psalm of Ascents

Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"Peace be within your walls,
and security within your towers!"

For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, "Peace be within you."
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek your good.

*Hymn

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All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Theodulph of Orleans, 9th c.

(Children go to meet Dana Bender, new Director of Family, Youth and Children's Ministry and get ready for Easter.)

Prayer for Palm Sunday (unison)

Eternal God, whose whisper silences the shouts of the mighty, quiet within us every voice but your own. Speak to us now through the passion and death of Jesus Christ that by the power of your Holy Spirit we may receive the grace to show forth Christ's love in lives committed to your service. Amen.

A Time of Silent Reflection

*Our Hymn of Praise 222

My Song Is Love Unknown (st. 1)

Rhosymedre

WE GO DEEPER INTO THE STORY

Five Days Later (cong. bold)

Mark 15:1-21 (cond.)

As soon as it was morning, the religious leaders held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to the Roman Governor Pilate. . . . The religious leaders accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the religious leaders had handed him over. But the leaders stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call your king?" They shouted back, "**Crucify him!**" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "**Crucify him!**" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, O King!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

Hymn 222

My Song Is Love Unknown (st. 3)

Rhosymedre

Sermon

From Tree to Tree

Silence

Musical Response

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree from *Song of Songs*

Mark Patterson

*Jesus Christ the Apple Tree
The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green.
The tree of life my soul hath seen*

*Laden with fruit and always green.
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.*

They gather in the crowded city
To catch a glimpse of the Teacher
As he passes by.

They have heard the stories,
Seen the signs; could this one be
The promised king?

They wave their palms
As they did for the kings of old;
But no such king is he.

For the Essenes (John's desert hippies) he is too worldly.
For Judas' Zealots he is too mystical.
Not at all the general they'd hoped for.

For the Religious Leaders, for the Elders,
For the Bible teachers and the so-called righteous,
He is simply trouble.

But for his stalwart followers
He stands at the axis of the age,
Both the Shepherd and the Lamb.

He rides into the city now
On the back of a donkey
As one lowly.

How soon will their joyful Hosannas
Turn to sneering shouts
Of scorn and death?

He comes to take up his crown,
To turn the cross of death into the Tree of Life,
To die and rise again.

Silence

Musical Response 222

My Song Is Love Unknown (st. 5)

Rhosymedre

WE RESPOND

Offering Our Gifts for God's World

Offertory

Go to Dark Gethsemane

Richard Redhead

Prayer of Dedication (**unison**)

Bless our tithes and offerings, O God, returned to you. Multiply and use them for the sake of our neighbors, kindred, and all creation. Amen.

Offering Ourselves in Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

O God, the ruler of ages eternal,
you are without beginning or end:
Yet you chose to be born an infant in time.

O God, the invisible,
you are the One whom nobody has seen or can see:
Yet you assumed the face of the Child of Mary, the One of Sorrows.
Hear our prayers that we might see you in all your children.

O God, the perfect joy,
you are the source of the happiness of heaven and earth:
Yet you chose the path of suffering and even death for the sake of this world.
Hear our prayers for those who suffer and those who live in the shadow of death.

O God, the all-powerful,
you hold the mountains in the palm of your hand:
Yet you emptied yourself of power to offer your life, your hands and your heart for others.

O God, the infinite, heaven and earth cannot contain you:
Yet you took on human flesh and human life.
Hear our prayers that we, too, would offer our human lives in love for your world.

(A time of silent prayer)

Hear all our prayers, Gracious One, spoken and unspoken. Strengthen us to live as we pray. Lead us into this Holy Week, trusting that Christ's way of redeeming love can transform our lives and this world. In the name of the One we seek to follow, we pray with boldness, courage, and trust, saying:

(Please pray any version of the Lord's Prayer.)

WE GO INTO THIS WEEK

*Hymn 224

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (1-2, 4)

Hamburg L.M.

*Benediction

*A Hymn for the Journey

Were You There?

African American Spiritual

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE!

We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. Your presence enriches the experience of us all. We also invite you to join the journey of Holy Week that leads to the new life of Easter. Again, welcome!

TODAY AT UNITED

We are delighted and honored to welcome renowned poet and composer Charles Anthony (“Tony”) Silvestri in worship today. Described as “the preeminent choral lyricist of our time,” Tony has worked with artists around the world to create texts tailor-made for their commissions and specific artistic needs. He is the lyricist for *A Place Called Home*, the “ecocantata” (with music by Bradley Ellingboe) that had its New Mexico premier at The Lensic yesterday. Welcome, Tony!

Also sharing leadership are Rev. Talitha Arnold, Pastor; Bradley Ellingboe, Director of Music; Michelle Schumann, Pianist; Alexander Hardin, Trumpet; Sanctuary Choir; Rebecca Brunette and Yasmeen Lookman, Soloists; Dusty Caruso, Liturgist; and Media Coordinator Elijah Marquez. You were greeted by Blanca Surgeon, Don Duncan, Diane Darby, Pam Hyde, and Sunday Aide Luis Zapata.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children and Youth through the 7th grade begin the service with the adults and then go with our new Director for Family Ministries, Dana Bender, along with Children’s Aides Maria Navarette and Destiny Muñoz, to get ready for Easter worship!

**Adult Forum: *The Power of Poetry in Caring for Creation*
Poet and Lyricist Tony Silvestri
Today (11:15 am)**

“We will not save what we do not love,” said the Senegalese forest scientist Baba Dioum. Poetry can be an expression of that love, especially for creation and the natural world. We welcome renowned poet Tony Silvestri (and lyricist for *A Place Called Home*) as our guest, to share his poetry, faith journey, and deep love for God’s creation.

Easter Flower Remembrances Due Today

To honor or remember a loved one this Easter, please fill out the form in the Community Room, then leave it with your donation in the envelope or offering plate today. Suggested donation is \$20 per lily. The names will be in the Easter bulletins.

HOLY WEEK

WEDNESDAY MID-DAY COMMUNION SERVICE: 12:15 – 12:45

Maundy Thursday – April 17 (7:00 pm)

We share Communion, followed by the account of Jesus’ Passion as he prays in an olive grove, knowing that wooden cross awaits him. The service ends with “Tenebrae”—extinguishing of light—and concludes in darkness.

Good Friday – April 18

Creation Care – 9:00 to 11:30 –We get the church grounds ready for Easter!

Good Friday Worship – 12:00 Noon

As we gather to engage this hard story, we pray for ourselves and this world that God loves. We pray, too, for all God’s people and God’s crucified creation living under the shadow of the cross. The Sanctuary will also be open until 3:00 pm for private prayer.

**EASTER 2025
Sunday, April 20**

6:30 am – Outdoor Sunrise Service

**10:00 am – Easter Celebration
with Choir**

**Easter Piñata Party for Children and Youth after worship.
Easter Cupcakes for everyone after worship.**



COMING UP . . .

Being Christian: What Does It Mean, What Does It Matter? – Sunday, May 4 **Rev. Peter Marty, Publisher of *The Christian Century***

We welcome renowned preacher Rev. Peter Marty as our guest in both the 10:00 service and the 11:15 Sunday Forum. Rev. Marty is publisher of *The Christian Century*, the flagship journal of American progressive Christianity and ecumenical reporting. He also recently retired as the Senior Pastor for St. Paul Lutheran Church, a 3,000-member congregation in Davenport, Iowa. A graduate of Colorado College and Yale Divinity School, he and Talitha Arnold are close friends and colleagues. It is an honor to welcome him to the United Church of Santa Fe.

What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Community in America 2025? **All Church Retreat – Saturday, May 10 (8:30 am to 1:00 pm)**

As United looks to the future (and deals with the present), what does our faith call us to do and be as a community seeking to walk in the ways of Jesus the Christ? Join with United Church council and other leaders to explore this question and look with faith to God's future for United. Please sign up today.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS – SUNDAY, MAY 11

On the 4th Sunday of Eastertide, we welcome new members into the United Church of Santa Fe. If you are interested in “officially” joining United, please speak with Rev. Talitha Arnold or Moderator Sarah Sawtell. Thank you!

LOVE NEIGHBOR

From supporting Santa Fe's Shelters to helping our Diné/Navajo kindred to advocating for immigrants and refugees, United Church of Santa Fe offers multiple ways to love our neighbors near far. **Go online to unitedchurchofsantafe.org to find more information and donate online (or send a check to 1804 Arroyo Chamiso, Santa Fe NM 87505).**

Be the Light—SÉ LA LUZ—One Great Hour of Sharing

This spring (through Memorial Day Sunday, May 25—which is also United's 45th birthday), United invites your support of *One Great Hour of Sharing*, the national United Church of Christ offering to support refugee resettlement, disaster relief, food and small farmer programs around the world and in the U.S. Gifts can also be designated specifically for particular emergencies (e.g., Global food or medical relief, emergency needs for fire/tornado victims or refugees on the U.S./Mexico border). Donate online unitedchurchofsantafe.org, memo: OGHs. Thank you!

LOVE CREATION

United's Carbon Offset Program Addresses Climate Change

Track your car mileage and/or plane flight hours and donate through United to *NM Interfaith Power and Light and Tree New Mexico*. Info: unitedchurchofsantafe.org/creation-care.

Compost Collection – It's a Miracle!

United contracts with Reunity Resources to turn compostable products (food waste, meat scraps, etc.) into rich, life-giving compost. Pick up compostable garbage bags at the church (**NO** standard plastic bags, please), fill them at home, and bring back to put in the green bin by the Children's Garden. More things in compost bins means less in landfills.

