

Ocean Heights

Presbyterian Church



A More Light Presbyterian Congregation joyfully welcoming people from all walks of life, acknowledging the differences of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disabilities. We celebrate all people as children of God.

You are invited to rise in body and/or spirit whenever you read an * symbol.

Palm Sunday
March 29, 2026

GOD CALLS US TO GATHER

WELCOME

PRELUDE When I Survey the Wondrous Cross arr. by Shirley Brendlinger

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP(*)

Liturgist: He comes in triumph, to a city where people are gathered in festival.

People: He comes to challenge power and vested interests, to overturn status and wealth.

All: Come, Christ, in triumph and sorrow, Hosanna in the name of the living God.

Liturgist: He comes in celebration with a royal welcome, declaring God's reign of love.

People: He comes to rejection, to the fearful and proud who sacrifice him to preserve their power.

All: Come, Christ, in triumph and sorrow, Hosanna in the name of the living God.

Liturgist: He comes to acclamation, to people waving and shouting praises, a procession of joy.

People: He comes to abuse, to shouts of crucifixion, false trial, and the way of the cross.

All: Come, Christ, in triumph and sorrow, Hosanna in the name of the living God.

HYMN 197(*) Hosanna, Loud Hosanna by Jennette Threfall

JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION AND HEALING

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

Savior, you entered Jerusalem to cheers of 'Hosanna' and left with your cross to cries of 'Crucify.' We remember the times we have made you in our image, the times when we have called our own aspirations yours, the times when we have misunderstood the way of the cross and have deceived ourselves and others. Give us strength to journey with you

Call to Worship: As we gather in worship, we stand to mark the moment and to greet one another in this simple act of unification through body and spirit. Today's call to worship is written by Jan Berry from let justice roll down: A Worship Resource for Lent, Holy Week & Easter, compiled by Geoffrey Duncan, published 2003, pg. 115.

Hymn 197: The opening two stanzas narrate the first Palm Sunday in the past tense, but the third stanza shifts to the present tense to emphasize what current singers do and believe. The repeated elements in this anonymous German tune suggest the repetitive patterns in a crowd's chant.

Prayer of Confession: In the time of confession, we humbly approach God with honesty and growing self-awareness for the ways we've missed the mark. Today's adapted unison prayer is by Annabel Shilson-Thomas, England found in let justice roll down: A Worship Resource for Lent, Holy Week & Easter, compiled by

and grace to discern the way that is yours. Savior of the cross, forgive us and heal us.

Savior, you overturned the tables of the Temple money-changers. You said, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer.' We remember the times when we have failed to make connections between our lives and our faith, the times when we have remained complacent and inert in the face of injustice and have violated your bodily temple by our selfishness and greed. Inspire us to work for justice and fill us with the desire to build an integrated community of faith. Savior of the cross, forgive us and heal us and make us one in heart and mind to serve you in humility.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

SUNG RESPONSE HYMN 422

Create in Me a Clean Heart

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

Hymn 199: Though they have different perspectives, all four gospels give an account of Christ's entry to Jerusalem (Matthew 21:7-9/Mark 11:7-10/Luke 19:35-38/John 12:12-15). This Mexican hymn, appropriate for the beginning of worship on Passion/Palm Sunday, captures the crowd's enthusiasm.

WORDS OF RECONCILIATION

Pastor: Our Savior entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in celebration and fanfare. In just a few short days, everything changes and the hardest gift remains. With this gift, we're refreshed and renewed every day. For those who are in Christ are a new creation, our old lives are gone, new lives have begun. Friends, know that in Jesus Christ you are forgiven and be at peace.

People: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST(*)

HYMN 199(*)

Filled with Excitement

by Rubén Ruíz Ávila

GOD'S WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Matthew 21:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem, entering Beth-Phage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent off two disciples with the instructions, "Go into the village straight ahead of you, and immediately you will find a tethered donkey with her colt standing beside her. Untie them and lead them back to me. If anyone questions you, say, 'The Rabbi needs them.' Then they will let them go at once." This came about to fulfill what was said through the prophet: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Your Sovereign comes to you without display, riding on a donkey, on a colt—the foal of a beast of burden.'"

So the disciples went off and did what Jesus had ordered. They brought the donkey and her colt, and after they laid their cloaks on the animals, Jesus mounted and rode toward the city. Great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while some began to cut branches from the trees and lay them along the path. The crowds—those who went in front of Jesus and those who followed—were all shouting, "Hosanna to the Heir to the House of David! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Most High! Hosanna in the highest!" As Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred to its depths, demanding, "Who is this?" And the crowd kept answering, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee!"

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SMALL TALK

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

I thank you, YHWH, for your goodness! Your love is everlasting! Let Israel say it: "Your love is everlasting!" Open the gates of justice for me, let me come in and thank you, YHWH! This is the gate of YHWH, and only the upright can enter! Thank you for hearing me, for saving me. It was the stone which the builders rejected that became the keystone; this is YHWH's doing, and it is wonderful to see. This is the day YHWH has made— let us celebrate with joy! Please, YHWH, please save us! Please, YHWH, give us prosperity now! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of YHWH! We bless you from YHWH's temple! YHWH is God, and God has enlightened us. Join the festal procession! With palm fronds in hand, go up to the horns of the altar! You are my God, and I thank you; you are my God, and I exalt you. Thank you for hearing me, for saving me. Thank you, YHWH, for your goodness! Your love is everlasting!

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON

Who Doesn't Love A Parade?

Reverend John Scotland

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SPEAKING OUR COMMITMENTS— "I Believe...(2)"

**I believe, O God, that everything good in the world comes from you.
I believe in your great love for all people.
I believe that because you preached love, freedom, and justice you were humiliated, tortured, and killed.
I believe that you continue to suffer in your people, risen in rebellion;
That you are present in the far off wind that carries the weeping of the people, the oppressed to seek their imprisoned freedom.
I believe that you accompany us in waiting for the dawning of a new day.
I believe that you will give us strength so that death does not find us without having done enough and that you will rise in those who have died seeking a better world.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF JESUS

**Our Parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation.
May your reign be a reality here on earth.
May we become more interested in building your kin-dom here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above.
Let us share our bread with those who hunger.
Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness.
Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil.
For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth.
Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

A Lenten Meditation

Thomas B. Pollack

Douglas E. Wagner

DOXOLOGY 607(*)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ, all people here below
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION(*)

HYMN 200(*)

A Cheering, Chanting, Dizzy Crowd

by Thomas H. Troeger

BENEDICTION(*)

POSTLUDE(*)

The Palms

by Jean-Baptiste Faure

Speaking Our

Commitments: *This statement of belief is written by a Peasant Woman from El Salvador. Adapted from let justice roll down: A Worship Resource for Lent, Holy Week & Easter, compiled by Geoffrey Duncan, published 2003, pp. 38-39.*

Prayer of Jesus: *This Christ's prayer was written by J. Manny Santiago in 1999.*

Doxology: *For Lent, we are singing a different doxology that doesn't include the word "Alleluia" which isn't used for this more solemn season.*

Hymn 200: *This Palm Sunday hymn recreates the contrasting sounds of Holy Week, moving from the noisy public acclaim of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to the solitary silence of his body being prepared for burial. It gently reminds us that self-giving is the mark of Christ's true sovereignty.*



The photographs on display in the sanctuary, "An American in Paris: Our Lady in Focus", are from Bonnie Warwick's travels.

Many thanks to those who shared in worship leadership:

Liturgist - Anne Scotland

Greeter - Sandra Farnum

Coffee Hour - Charles W. Orr Jr.

Counters - Brenda Brown & David Prescott

MONTH AT A GLANCE

- 3/29 **Worship 10am - Palm Sunday**
Equal Exchange
- 3/31 **Heart and Soul 10am**
- 4/1 **Preparing the Way - Weekly Bible Study 10am**
- 4/2 **Maundy Thursday -Service at OHPC 7pm**
- 4/3 **Good Friday - Service at APC 7pm**
- 4/5 **Worship 10am - Easter**
Easter Egg Hunt
- 4/7 **Heart and Soul 10am**
- 4/8 **Preparing the Way - Weekly Bible Study 10am**
- 4/9 **PB&J Making 11am**
- 4/10 **Property Committee 10am**
- 4/12 **Worship 10am**
Children's Ministry
Adult Education

Heart and Soul will **DID NOT** meet on **March 24**.
This meeting has been **rescheduled to March 31**.

HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday at OHPC (April 2):
7 PM • Will include communion and
hand/foot washing

**Good Friday at Absecon Presbyterian
Church (April 3):**
7 PM • Tenebrae service



Session

Class of 2026

Brenda Brown
Lorene Gilman
David Prescott

Class of 2027

Diane Falk
Jim Laymon
Carol Petters

Class of 2028

Sue Castellano
Walter East
Mika McNair

Pastor – Rev. Katherine Scott-Kirschner

Clerk of Session – Lorene Gilman

President of the Board of Trustees – Diane Falk

Director of Music – Bob Helsabeck

Pianist – Heera Ghorashi

Office Coordinator – Kayla DeAngelo

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