



ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LENT WORSHIP @ HOME**  
**HOLY VESSELS:**  
**A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY**

[www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome](http://www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome)

*Holy Vessels: A Season of Recovery*  
*Palm Sunday – Holy, Wholly*  
March 28, 2021

## THE PARADE

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

“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.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!”

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

## **PRELUDE**

*Processional of the Redeemer, Martha Main*

## **GATHERING**

We have seen that the stories of Jesus’ healing ministry are filled words *and* deeds. When he rides into Jerusalem, the people had hopes he would heal the oppressive system they were living under. We know that his healing was not confined to that moment in history, but offers a new way of life that has made a case for compassion for all, especially “the least,” ever since.

*Lenten Anthem: “Holy Vessels”*

*Vessels, holy and whole  
Broken, needing the One  
Open, body and soul  
Healer, come.*

As we head into the events of Holy Week, we begin to see that our ability to forgive ourselves and others is the foundation that can transform infirmities and allow us to move on. We integrate our beliefs and actions for the health of the whole. The parade of compassionate power we celebrate today is underscored by a another healing story of transformation, symbolizing our ability to fuel our movement of recovery. We glorify God for beautiful words *and* works of wholeness and share that treasured beauty with others. We know there will still be pain, but we also know love will win.

*Vessels, holy and whole  
Broken, needing the One  
Open, body and soul  
Healer, come.*

## **WE CONFESS OUR SINS TO GOD**

We have approached confession each week in Lent in such a way that we lay bare the brokenness in order to begin the process of healing. Along the way we have acknowledged our need to restore our own Holy Vessels while attending to our role

in the healing of the community and the world. The work of healing will continue as we integrate all we have learned with all that we will do moving forward. For now, we remember how hard it is to move from thinking to doing. Let us pray:

Forgiving God, we have opened ourselves to healing and sometimes it is easier to pray nice prayers than to do the hard work of putting into action what needs to happen. Help us remember the sacred nature of the holy vessels that we are, fragile and susceptible to shattering and yet capable of transformation. Help us to see ourselves as you see us. Help us to believe in our ability to change and heal as you believe in us.

Help us, Healer. Show us our strength. Forgive our inertia. Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care. In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness. *Time for silent confession... Amen.*

### **ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Know this: You are never alone in the struggle. No. Matter. What. Jesus is on the journey with us. Life's parade is not passing you by. You are part of this Body of Christ, a community seeking healing. For you, for me, for all. Take a deep breath in to let this truth fill you...and breathe out with the relief of assurance.

### **HYMN**

*Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*

### **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

*Matthew 9:1-8*

And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town. And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." Then some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Stand up, take your bed and go to your home." And he stood up and went to his home. When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

### **HYMN**

*Hosanna, Zion Virtual Choir*

## MEDITATION

*Hosanna, Save Us*

### WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD WITH OUR GIVING

**Invitation** – Jesus gave himself for the healing of the world. With humble hearts bowed in awe, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.~

**March Benevolence** – Our March Benevolence Offering will go to support One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). OGHS, part of Our Church's Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. One Great Hour of Sharing also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. If you'd like to support OGHS, please, clearly indicated on your envelope, check, or PayPal note what portion of your donation you'd like to go to support this ministry.

You can mail your offerings to our office. We check the mail regularly.  
Zion United Church of Christ  
8916 E. Troy Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46239

Or, you can donate through our website through our secure PayPal button at [www.zionuccindy.net/donate](http://www.zionuccindy.net/donate). Please know that PayPal receives a 2.2% processing fee and a \$0.30 transaction charge. You are able to set up reoccurring, monthly payments.

**We Give Thanks** – Holy God, we give thanks for your saving love made known to us in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Bless these gifts that they may bring life on earth as in heaven; in Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## HYMN

*All Glory, Laud and Honor*

## COMMISSION

### We Are Sent Forth with a Blessing

In this series, we have seen that Jesus' healing actions often get "buzz" from onlookers. This day we have seen two different reactions from the crowd: shouts of

adoration and the scoff of judgment from religious officials. His words and actions seemed to get one or the other—praise or accusations of heresy. But he continued his work anyway. He loved those that were deemed unlovable. He proclaimed healing in the midst of despair. He urged people to give their best in the midst of the worst circumstances. To be followers of Jesus is not an easy task. But it is the way that we become whole once again... to participate in the holy endeavor of bringing the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. And as we enter Holy Week, these themes will come into sharp focus. May we follow him, even to the broken places.

## **Postlude**

*Hosanna to the King, Martha Main*

**Go In Peace:** Now go with confidence that God is making us whole and holy, recovering our depth of love for all and our joy of living in this world. May the words of Jesus ring in your ears: “Take heart.” And may the Spirit hover, move, and deliver salve to your soul and a spring in your step. Go in Peace. Amen.

Worship Notes: ~ Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1: Advent through Pentecost (p. 129). Westminster John Knox Press. Kindle Edition. *Worship series design and original music* ©Worship Design Studio, used with permission. [www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels](http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels)