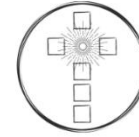




# WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? Palm Sunday



*Serve & Enrich*  
Zion United Church  
of Christ

## *Palm Sunday*

### **Prelude**

*Open the Gates of the Temple*

### **“The Covenant of Peace—A Liberation Prayer”**

*Debi Hamblet, Pastor Sarah*

Who is this riding among us?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed is he who comes in the name of God.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

Who is this riding the animal of peace?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed be the freedom he brings.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

Who is this carrying the palm of peace?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed be our leader, the Prince of peace.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

Who is this that destroys the weapons of war?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed is he who comes in the name of God.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

Who is this that frees the oppressed from prison?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed is he who releases all captives.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

Who is this that makes wars to cease in all the world?

*Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth.*

Blessed is he who restores the Paradise of Eden.

*Hosanna, may his Way be victorious.*

**Gathering**—That first Palm Sunday wasn't just a fun celebration. Make no mistake, the powers-that-be in Jerusalem sat up and took notice at the actions of Jesus and his motley crew of palm-waving followers on that morning. It was a show of the “power” of love and justice for the “least of these,” in stark juxtaposition to the military might of the Roman rulers. It was a non-violent action featuring a man sitting on a donkey — an action that has offered hope throughout the ages. Will we sit up and take notice of the injustice of this world and work to eradicate it in ways that honor that first Palm Sunday parade?

*Lenten Chorus: “You Raise Me Up”*

**When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary  
When troubles come and my heart burdened be  
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence  
Until You come and sit awhile with me**

**CHORUS: You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas  
I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders  
You raise me up to more than I can be**

**There is no life, no life without its hunger.  
Each restless heart beats so imperfectly.  
But when you come, and I am filled with wonder,  
Sometimes I think I glimpse eternity. (CHORUS)**

**Prayer**—Peace-loving God, our first instinct in fighting oppression is often to take up weapons, utter fighting words, and lash out with vitriol. But Jesus demonstrated humility and patience, even against his mortal enemies.

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)—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.

**Special Music**

*The Holy City*, Bob Brown

**Exploring God's Word for All Ages**

*Lessons from Up*

**\*\*Hymn**

*All Glory, Laud and Honor*, 265

**We Hear God's Word—*John 12:12-19 (NRSV)***

*Debi Hamblet*

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

‘Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—  
the King of Israel!’

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

‘Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look, your king is coming,  
sitting on a donkey's colt!’

His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. The Pharisees then said to one another, ‘You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!’

**Meditation**

*Sit Up*

**Hymn**

*Hosanna*, 266

**We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving**

**Invitation**—The laying down of palm branches in the street is an expression of the hope of God among a desperate people [and peace rising up in an empire of violence]. Today we are invited to lay down our treasure as an outpouring of our gratitude for God's act of salvation in Jesus Christ. Let us give with shouts of hosanna on our lips.+

**An Uplifting Gift**—Hot Air Balloon Messages: You’re invited throughout the season of Lent, to share uplifting messages with our church family by writing them on the hot air balloons that you’ll find on the side table. The messages could be scriptures you’ve found inspiring, quotes that nurture your spirit, or just a simple message like “you are not alone.” We’ll add those messages to our sky each week.

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others.” Nelson Mandela

“Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen.” Brené Brown

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Let your light shine so brightly that others can see their way out of the dark.” Katrina Mayer

**March Benevolence**—One Great Hour of Sharing

**\*\*Doxology**

**We Give Thanks**—Spirit of Gentleness, we offer up not only the gifts we share today but the whole of our lives as we join the procession of all those who have toiled for justice through non-violence. Bless these gifts for your work in creating a more peaceful world. Amen.

**Hymn**

*Hosanna, Loud Hosanna, 267*

**Benediction**— And so now go into the world, committed to peaceful acts of resistance, sitting up and paying attention to the quiet symbols of God’s uplifting presence, knowing that even in the midst of crushing oppression, you have all you need to be up to something.

When someone asks you, “What are you up to?” you can respond, “**With God’s help, I’m up to something good!**” Let the people say, Amen! **Amen!**

**Postlude**

*Hosanna to the King*