

# LENT 2025 PURVEYORS OF AWE



*Serve & Enrich*  
Zion United Church  
of Christ

## *Palm Sunday: Connection*

**Prelude**

*Processional of the Redeemer*

**Choral Introit**

*Hosanna! Blessed is He*

**Gathering**

*with song "Purveyors of Awe"*

Mystic St. Francis of Assisi said this: "O Divine Master, grant that I may not 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 to eternal life."

*Open my eyes that I may see  
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.  
Place in my hands the wonderful key  
that shall unclasp and set me free.*

*Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my eyes, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!*

As we approach the end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week, we give thanks for a rich season of awe-filled practices. We have explored what it is to be "purveyors of awe"—those who advocate for more Beauty, Wonder, Meaning, Curiosity, Delight, and for this Holy week self-giving connection. Today we discover that all of these elements lead not just to more "happiness," but actually to self-less desire to contribute to making the world a better place.

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord  
Open the eyes of my heart,  
I want to see you  
I want to see you*

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord  
Open the eyes of my heart,  
I want to see you  
I want to see you*

A sense of awe can include witnessing acts of "moral beauty." Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem was such an act as he continued his ministry of lifting up the cause of the lowly and advocating for the power of peace and justice. Research shows that when we witness with awe others' kindness, courage, strength, and overcoming, we are more likely to feel inspired to give ourselves in service of the good. Through that connection to others, we become more self-giving, more ready to lend a helping hand or commit energy to making the world a better place.

*Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.*

*Open my eyes, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!*

**\*\*Gathering Song**

*Hosanna, Loud, Hosanna, 267*

**Prayer of Transformation**

*Our focused time of prayer together this Lenten season will be a bit different. Rather than a more pastoral prayer of joys and concerns, our prayers will be more confessional. We'll seek forgiveness and we'll find grace.*

Awe-inspiring God, we come together this day because we need to be reminded to see through the lens of self-giving connection. Too often, we think that life will be better if we just “get” more, but you show us just the opposite—the awe-filled experience of giving more. Open us to perceive anew. Inspire us to receive the opportunities to give with awe. Forgive us when we turn our back on parades of justice, paths of grace, roads of mercy. Be with us on this journey as we seek again to marvel at your works.

**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.

**Declaration of Grace**—We can give ourselves to the cause at any moment and join the journey of Jesus. God forgives us. Jesus embraces us. The Spirit enlivens us. We are whole. With awe, we accept this belovedness.

**Sung Prayer Response**

*You are a great and awesome God,  
your wonders we proclaim.  
You are our Rock, our Strength, our  
Shield, from age to age the same.*

*You forgive us all our sins,  
you transform us with your love.  
In joyful, grateful, hearts we sing  
you are a great and awesome God.*

**Special Music**

*Holy City, Bob Brown*

**Exploring Together:** Did you experience any delight at all last week? In this holiest of weeks ahead, we seek connection and self-giving acts that remind us we are part of something bigger than just ourselves.

**We Hear God's Word**

*Collin Bennington*

**Psalm 118:24-27**

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!

**Luke 19:28-40**

<sup>28</sup> After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.  
<sup>29</sup> When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.' " <sup>32</sup> So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup> They said, "The Lord needs it." <sup>35</sup> Then they brought it to Jesus, and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> Now as he was approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying,  
"Blessed is the king  
    who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Peace in heaven,  
    and glory in the highest heaven!"  
<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." <sup>40</sup> He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

**Meditation**

*Connection*

**Hymn**

*Hosanna, 266*

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

**Invitation**—God is still at work in this world, and God is at work through our ministry. As we bring our gifts this day, may they strengthen our connection to our neighbors and may they reveal God’s life-giving love.

**April Benevolence**—Global Ministries

**\*\*Doxology**

*Praise God, Creator of us all,  
Praise Christ, by whom we hear our call,  
Praise Spirit, that which sets us free,  
Our awe is yours, the One-in-Three. Amen.*

**We Give Thanks**—God, with grateful hearts we bring our gifts to you, recognizing that again and again you have satisfied our shouts of “Hosanna.” Work through these gifts that others, too, might know your redeeming love. Amen.

**Hymn**

*All Glory, Laud, and Honor, 265*

**Benediction**—I invite you to open your palms in a position of receiving, as we have each week of Lent. Imagine a radiant stream of light from above shining upon you and everything else around you. Take a look around and know that the blessing of Christ’s self-giving is for all people. And this week when you need to be reminded of Jesus’ call to “go and do likewise” in the world, take this stance again. Open your palms to receive, look around to perceive, and be in awe that Christ’s love emerges out of pain, and hope will have the last word.

And now may you go forth remembering St. Francis’ words: “For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

Be a purveyor of awe this week. Look for the pain in the world and offer yourself in the ways you can, and invite Christ to live and breathe new life in you.

May the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of Awe, the Holy One-in-Three, be with you now and throughout these days, Amen.

**Postlude**

*Hosanna*