

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawai`i

Palm Sunday
Online Worship, April 5, 2020

Rev. Eric S. Anderson, Pastor

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Welcome

Rev. Eric Anderson

Call to Worship

It is the day for palms, it is the day for processions, it is the day for shouting, “Hosannah!” It is the day for all of these, for this is the day we remember the festive parade that welcomed Jesus. Open the gates of your hearts so that Jesus the Savior may come in. Lay a palm upon the road of your heart to honor the One who offered everything. Open the mouth of your heart to sing a joyous Hosannah! Welcome Jesus the Messiah on this day.

Opening Prayer

We wave the palms of our hearts, O God. We raise the voices of our souls. We open the gates of our lives, O God, to admit the One who has come in your name. Bring us together in your Holy Spirit, O God, to form a great parade of celebration. Jesus our Messiah has come in wondrous humility, tender power, and overwhelming love. Hear our praise and worship today in his name, Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

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.”

Sermon: A Journey into New Territory

Rev. Dr. Jonathan B. Lee

Prayer

Rev. Eric Anderson

Offering Call and Dedication

We are not sending ushers through the neighborhoods of Hilo to collect your gifts this morning, or any morning. We invite you to send your offering to support the spiritual, emotional, and physical ministries of this church in this time. Please mail your gifts to us at Church of the Holy Cross, 440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720.

And we pray: This is the day you have made, O God, and we rejoice in it. Bless the gifts we lay before you as you blessed the cloaks and branches on the road. Bless the humble hearts as open to you as the gates of the City of God. Bless you on this day, O God, and bless our gifts in return. Amen.

Music: Tell Me the Stories of Jesus--William H. Parker & Frederick A. Challinor

Rev. Eric Anderson &
Doug Albertson

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation

For Holy Communion this morning,
I invite you to lend Christ your table.

On the first day of Holy Week long ago,
people throughout Judea arrived
at the dusty gates of Jerusalem,

primed with “Hosanna” in their hearts
and Jesus asked to borrow a donkey.

A week later, the risen Jesus sat at a table
with two of his followers.

They did not recognize their Teacher
until he took the bread in his hands to break it.

As Jesus came to that table,
let Christ come to all tables,
in life and in love, to bless the bread and cup.

Lend Christ your table, your bread, your cup and your heart,
for, as the disciples told the person who loaned the donkey,
“The Lord has need of it.”

Prayer of Consecration

Leader: We are one bread, one body, one cup of blessing. Though we are many throughout the earth and this church community is scattered, we are one in Christ. In your many kitchens, and living rooms, rest your hands lightly upon these elements which we set aside today to be a sacrament. Let us ask God’s blessing upon them.

Unison: Gentle Redeemer, there is no lockdown on your blessing and no quarantine on grace. Send your Spirit of life and love, power and blessing upon every table where your child shelters in place, that this Bread may be broken and gathered in love and this Cup poured out to give hope to all. Risen Christ, live in us, that we may live in you. Breathe in us, that we may breathe in you.

Words of Remembering

Leader: We remember that Paul the apostle wrote letters to congregations throughout places we now call Greece, Turkey and Macedonia, and they were the first “remote” worship resources. Our online service has a long heritage. The Communion words sent to the church at Corinth were these:

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of

me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Sharing of the Elements

Leader: Let us in our many places receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

Unison: We are one in Christ in the bread we share.

Leader: Let us in our many places receive the gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

Unison: We are one in Christ in the cup we share.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: Let us pray in thanksgiving for this meal of grace, rejoicing that, by the very method of our worship, we have embodied the truth that Christ’s love is not limited by buildings made with human hands, nor contained in human ceremonies, but blows as free as the Spirit in all places.

Unison: Spirit of Christ, you have blessed our tables and our lives. May the eating of this Bread give us courage to speak faith and act love, not only in church sanctuaries, but in your precious world, and may the drinking of this Cup renew our hope even in the midst of pandemic. Wrap your hopeful presence around all whose bodies, spirits and hearts need healing, and let us become your compassion and safe refuge. Amen

Benediction:

Rev. Jonathan Lee

The Rev. Dr. Jonathan B. Lee is currently the Philanthropy Officer for the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ in New York City. He served previously as Director of Advancement at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, and before that as pastor to UCC congregations in Connecticut for 21 years. He was baptized, confirmed and ordained at the First Congregational Church of Stratford, Connecticut and educated at Bates College in Maine, Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts, and Hartford Seminary.

The communion liturgy is adapted from [“Communion for Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020”](#) by Maren Tirabassi, published at Giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com.