



WORSHIP AT NINE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 25, 2018

Palm/Passion Sunday

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! For more than 165 years our Covenant has been: *We covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ and one another, and bind ourselves in the presence of God to live together in all God's ways as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture. The church acknowledges that all members have the right of individual interpretation of the principles of the Christian faith and respects them in their honest convictions. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, the church recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.*

PRELUDE

Nancy Livingston

THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS

* THE PALM SUNDAY GOSPEL Matthew 21:1-11

The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

* ENTER TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: On this day Jesus entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of Kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life.

All lift and wave palm branches until the Invocation.

L: Hosanna to the Son of David!

P: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

* HYMN 216

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Valet will ich dir geben

* INVOCATION

Rev. Ahrens

L: Let us pray. Jesus, when you rode into Jerusalem the people waved palms with shouts of acclamation.

P: Grant that when the shouting dies we may still walk beside you even to a cross.

*WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Ahrens

L: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

P: And also with you.

During the passing of the Peace, you are invited to lay your palms on the rug in the shape of a cross.

THE EPISTLE

Philippians 2:5–11

Rev. Corzine

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Corzine

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts and debtors*)

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Rev. Ahrens

MISSION INVITATION

Marty Worth

Cash and designated checks go to **The Good Samaritan Fund**. The Good Samaritan Fund provides help every month to those who come to the door of First Church in need. The next Good Sam Day is Monday, April 9. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN 218

Ah, Holy Jesus (*Stanzas 1 & 2*)

Herzliebster Jesu

During the singing of the hymn, a wooden cross is brought forward and placed on the palms.

MEDITATION

“The Beginning of Forgiveness: Reconciled and Restored”

Rev. Ahrens

(Part seven of the eight-part Lenten sermon series, *Forgiveness*)

A time of reflection follows.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD ACCORDING TO MARK

Please stand at the verse that mentions “Golgotha, which means place of a skull.” The congregation speaks the parts printed in bold type.

Mark 14:43—15:47

. . . Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, **“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”** . . .

. . . All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, **“Prophecy!”** The guards also took him over and beat him.

. . . But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "**Crucify him!**" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "**Crucify him!**" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**"

... Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means "The Place of a skull.")...

Please stand and remain standing through the remainder of the Passion.

. . . It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "**Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!**" In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "**He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.**" Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

. . . "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "**Listen, he is calling for Elijah.**" . . .

. . . He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body was laid.

All may sit. A period of silence is kept.

CLOSING PRAYER

Rev. Corzine

L: Everliving God, in your tender love us, you sent your Son to take our nature, and to suffer death on the cross, giving us the example of great humility:

All: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* HYMN 226

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Herzlich tut mich verlangen

There is no Postlude on this Holy Day.

PASSION READERS: Joe Baszynski—*Narrator*; Benjamin Rowley—*Judas*;
Scott Jones—*Jesus*; Nicole Moss—*High Priest/Servant Girl/Peter*; Alejandro Rodriguez—*Pilate*;
Donna Vogt—*Centurion/Voice*.

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First Church is a faith community:

- Called together by God, the Creator and Sustainer of life, to worship, pray and serve;
- Led by Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior, to learn the faith and welcome all God's children;
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness to God's love and justice between ourselves, and throughout the world.

Our Open and Affirming Statement

We the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, believe the following represents our commitment and desire to reach out and welcome all those in need of and searching for God's love: We believe that we are all created in God's image, female and male, and we are called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us on our common journey. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels and political and theological backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)
(adopted September 8, 2002)



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