

ANTHEM

Who Is This Man (Beal/Carter)

Chancel Choir

OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist: Friends, on Palm Sunday the crowds laid their cloaks and branches along the road before Jesus. It was their way of honoring the One who came among them. Today we offer our gifts in a similar spirit - not out of obligation, but out of gratitude and trust. In a world that often clings to power and security, our giving becomes an act of faith. It is a quiet way of saying that we believe love still leads the way, that mercy still matters, and that the Shepherd who guides us continues to care for the world. Let us offer our gifts to God with a song and a prayer. Please stand as you are able to do so comfortably.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Blue Hymnal #46

OFFERING PRAYER

All people: Faithful Shepherd, You lead us beside still waters and guide us through uncertain paths. Receive these gifts today. May they serve your work of compassion and justice, strengthen your church, and bring hope to those who walk through difficult valleys. Use what we offer to reflect the willing, sacrificial love of Christ in this world. Amen.

HYMN

Ride On, Ride On in Majesty

Blue Hymnal #191

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Go now...
following the One who rides not toward worldly power,
but trusting in the eternal love and power of God.

Follow the Shepherd
who walks ahead of us -
even when the road leads into shadow.

The cross draws near.

Still, Christ, the Lamb of God,
goes on...willingly.

Walk with him.

All people: Amen.

POSTLUDE

Sixth Sunday of Lent

March 29, 2026

The Lamb Reveals a Willing Savior

PREWORSHIP MUSIC

PALM PROCESSION GATHERING

GREETING

Pastor: Grace and peace to you this morning. Today we begin our worship outside the walls of the sanctuary - just as the people once gathered along the road to Jerusalem. They came with palm branches in their hands and hope in their hearts. They came expecting celebration, victory, and change. And Jesus came riding toward them. Today we remember that moment - the joy of the crowd, the waving of branches, the shouts of "Hosanna!" Yet we also remember something the crowd did not yet understand: Jesus knew exactly where this road would lead. Still, he rode forward. Still, he chose the path. Still, he came. Today we welcome the One who comes willingly. Let us pray.

BLESSING OF THE PALM BRANCHES

All people: Holy God, bless these palm branches in our hands today. May they remind us of joy that rises from hope, of courage that walks toward love, and of the One who comes not in domination, but in humility. As we carry these branches, prepare our hearts to walk the road of Holy Week - from celebration, to table, to cross, and finally to resurrection. In the name of Jesus Christ, the willing Lamb who comes among us, Amen.

Pastor: Let us now join the ancient procession of praise. As we walk and around the sanctuary, until we find our pew, while waving our palm branches, let us sing together: "The King of Glory Comes." Let the procession begin.

*All SING: The King of Glory Comes, the nation rejoices.
Open the gates before Him; lift up your voices.*

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Pastor: Friends, we have lifted our voices in praise. We have joined the crowd! We have welcomed the One who comes in the name of the Lord. And yet...we know how quickly voices can change, how easily hope can fade, how often we follow without fully understanding. So let us come before God – with both our praise and honesty.

OPENING HYMN & PRAYER OF CONFESSION

BLUE Hymnal #192

*All SING: All glory, laud and honor, to you, Redeemer King.
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
You are a child of Israel, Great David's greater Son.
You ride in lowly triumph, Messiah! Blessed One!*

Pastor: God of steadfast love, we know the sound of our own hosannas. We know what it is to praise with out lips...and yet hesitate with our lives.

All people: *We confess that we long for celebration without cost. We welcome you as King but struggle to follow you as Lord. We want the parade, but not the road that leads beyond it. Forgive us, O God. When we are quick to praise but slow to love; when we seek glory but resist humility; when we follow the crowds instead of listening to for your voice. Call us back. Restore us. Lead us again. Amen.*

All SING: *The company of angels are praising you on high. And we, with all creation in chorus make reply. The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went. Our prayer and praise and anthems before you we present!*

Pastor: Hear the Good News: The One who enters Jerusalem does not turn away from us. He walks the road before us. He meets us in our sin and weakness. He calls to us still. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

All SING: *To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise. To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise! As you received their praises, now hear us as we pray. Since you delight in goodness, rule in our hearts today.*

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Pastor: Friends, on that day in Jerusalem, the road was filled with people. Strangers stood beside neighbors. Families pressed close together. Voices rose as one. And in the midst of it all, there was a shared hope... a shared longing for peace. Today, we remember that we are part of that same story. So as people once greeted one another along that road with hopeful enthusiasm, let us now share signs of Christ's peace with one another, using the ancient greeting, "The peace of Christ be with you.

All people: *And, also with you."*

JESUS SAID, "LET THE CHILDREN COME"

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 53:2-7

HYMN

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead us

Blue Hymnal #558

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:1-11

DIALOGUE SERMON

Rev. Laura C. Baker and Mr. Gary Knisely

PALM SUNDAY PRAYER (with Psalm 23 responses)

Liturgist: Holy and faithful Shepherd, on this Palm Sunday we gather with branches in our hands and hope in our hearts. Like the crowds in Jerusalem long ago, we welcome the One who comes in your name. Yet we come also carrying the burdens of our world - a world filled with uncertainty, conflict, fear, and longing. And so we pray. For a world where violence still circles, where nations struggle for power and the cries of the vulnerable are often unheard. Lead us, O Shepherd.

All people: *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

Liturgist: For communities where injustice persists - where the poor are overlooked, where dignity is denied, where truth is obscured by noise and power. Guide us in the paths of righteousness.

All People: *He restores my soul.*

Liturgist: For places where war has scarred the land, where families are displaced, where children grow up surrounded by fear instead of peace. Walk with those who pass through the darkest valleys.

All People: *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.*

Liturgist: For those who serve others in dangerous places - peacemakers, aid workers, journalists, medics, missionaries, and soldiers - grant wisdom, courage, and protection. Remind them that they are not alone.

All People: *For you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

Liturgist: For those whose personal valleys feel overwhelming - those grieving loss, facing illness, carrying anxiety, or struggling quietly beneath burdens others cannot see. Shepherd them gently, O God.

All People: *You lead me beside still waters; you restore my soul.*

Liturgist: For your church throughout the world, that we may not follow the loudest voices of fear or anger, but the quiet voice of the One who entered Jerusalem in humility. Teach us again how to follow the Shepherd's way of love.

All People: *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life.*

Liturgist: And as this Holy Week continues, steady our hearts for the journey ahead - from palm branches to table, from table to cross, from cross to resurrection. Until that day, keep us walking in trust.

All People: *And we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

Liturgist: We pray all these things in the name of the One who leads us, Jesus Christ our Shepherd and our King. And now we pray together the prayer he taught us:

All people: *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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*