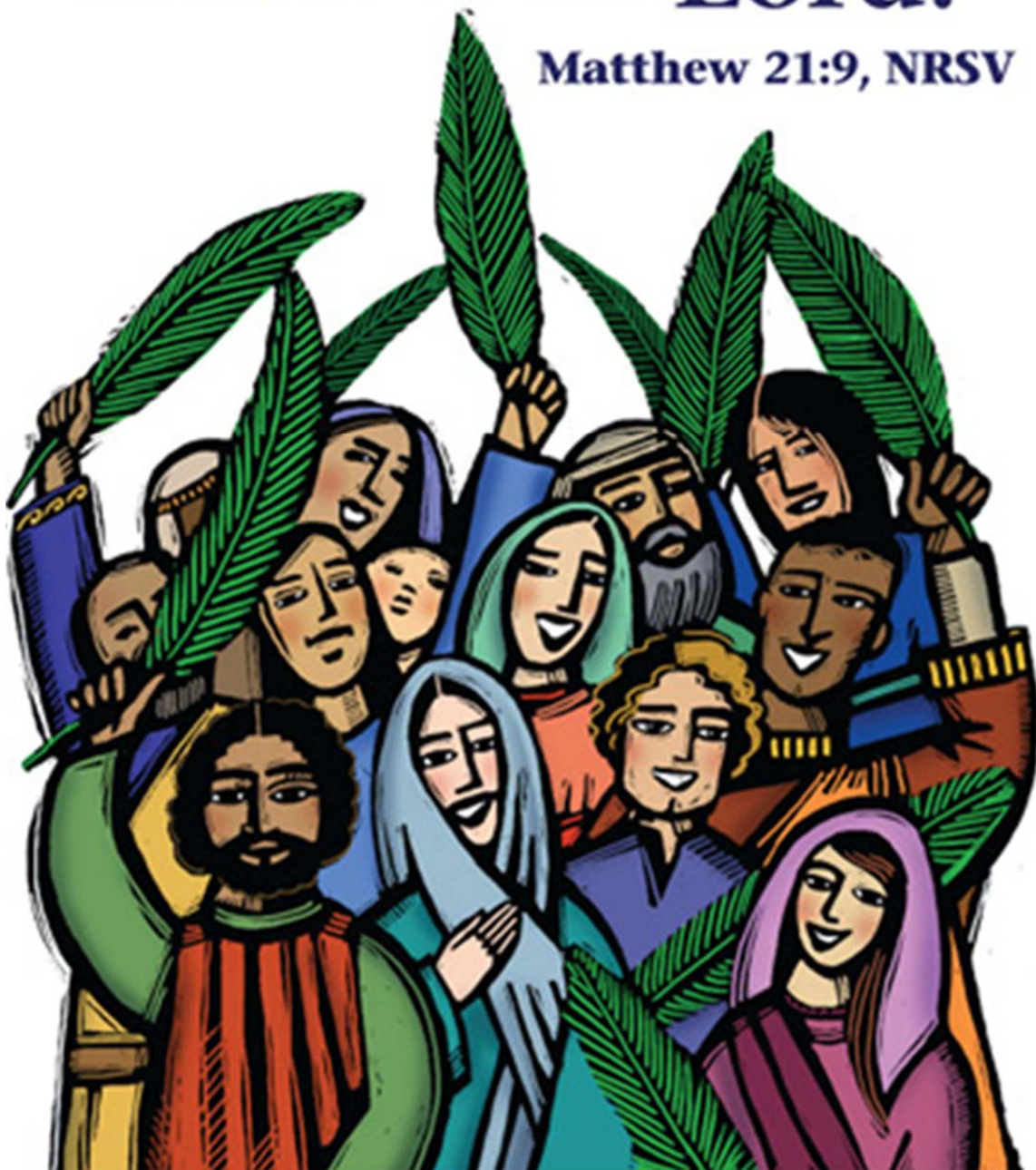


FOUNDED 1716
North Haven
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

**Blessed is the one
who comes in the
name of the Lord!**

Matthew 21:9, NRSV



North Haven, Connecticut
An Open & Affirming Congregation

NORTH HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, March 29, 2026

9:30 a.m.

Palm/Passion Sunday

BLESSING OF THE PALMS (outside)

Leader: Bless these parade palms, O God of Celebration. May they remind us of the simple joys of living.

People: May we remember the excitement that comes with following Christ.

Leader: Bless these protest palms, O God of Justice. May they remind us that Empire is not a thing of the past.

People: May they make us bold and brave to stand up against injustice.

Leader: Bless these funeral palms, O God of Comfort. May they remind us of the road that lies ahead.

People: May they encourage us in times of grief and pain.

Leader: We give you thanks for the parade, the protest, the processional.

All: Guide our steps through this holiest of weeks as we cry out together "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna!" Amen. **

***OPENING HYMN: "All Glory, Laud and Honor" V122**

Refrain Descant

All glo - ry, laud and hon - our to you, Re - deem - er, King,
All glo - ry, laud and hon - our to you, Re - deem - er, King,
to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.
to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

Fine

1 You are the King of Is - rael, and Da - vid's roy - al son,
 2 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
 3 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
 4 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,
 now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and bless - ed one.
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
 to you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 great auth - or of all good - ness, O good and grac - ious king.

D.C

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Here in this place, with these people, we begin that week we call Holy.

People: We crane our necks to see the parade, we will bow our heads as the funeral procession winds through the streets.

Leader: We have been with Jesus on this journey; we long for courage to go to the end.

People: In one hand, we clutch the palm branches; in the other, we cradle our broken hearts.

Leader: As children dance excitedly around him, Jesus humbly enters our lives.

People: Hosanna! We welcome the kingdom bearer into our midst.
 Hosanna! #

ANTHEM: Hosanna

Michael W. Smith
 arr. Michael Barrett

Sung by the Chancel Choir & Children's Choir

***LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE ~unison**

God of all people, You call on us today to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, to break every yoke.

Transform our lives and lead us to the peace and joy that is Easter!

Amen.

*THE GLORIA PATRI

P513

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*trespasses*)

Choral Amen

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

For today's prayer of confession we are going to read the Palm Sunday story together. As we read through the story, we will pause to admit the places where we so often and so easily could change the narrative. So read with me, trusting that no matter what we do or don't do, this story ends with love. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Featuring Matthew 21:1-11, NIV.

Leader: As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

People: **God, forgive us for the times when we do not trust your word and do not follow where you lead. We long to be the ones who can go into the village ahead of you. Forgive us when we play it safe.**

Leader: This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

People: **God, forgive us for forgetting that you are always coming toward us. You are drawing near, like a king on a donkey. Help us find you in our midst.**

Leader: The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

People: Creator God, forgive us for the moments when we choose greed over generosity, or when we choose our self-image over our loyalty to you. Give us the courage to be unabashed in our faith. Give us the strength to throw our coats on the road.

Leader: The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

People: Son of David, give us the conviction to shout your name from the rooftop. Give us the wisdom to sing, “Hosanna!”

Leader: When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

People: With hope in our hearts we pray to you, Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Family of faith, there will be days when we withhold our praise. There will be days when we dare not follow. There will be days when we ignore God’s call, when we choose comfort over courage, and ourselves over others. But even on those days, even on our worst days, we belong to God. Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

People: Nothing can separate us from God’s love. We are loved, forgiven, and sent out to serve. Hosanna! Amen. ###

*HYMN: “Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!”

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SERMON: “Where Are You Headed?”

Rev. Cindy

***PEOPLE'S RESPONSE:** "All Glory Laud and Honour" v3 V122
To you before your passion
They sang their hymns of praise;
to you, now high exalted,
our melody we raise.

PASTORAL CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

PASTORAL PRAYER

Choral Response

THE OFFERTORY

*Doxology

Old 100th

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One." (United Church of Christ version).

*Prayer of Dedication

From your hands, O God, come the blessings that make life possible, even the very gift of life itself. In gratitude and thanks, receive from our hands this portion of our labors. By your Spirit's leading, may we use these gifts to bless the life of others with the assurance of love, the promise of hope, and the course of justice. This we do to your glory. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" V 149

***THE BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE: The Palms by J. Faure

arr. by Ethel Smith

*Please rise in body or spirit.

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Deacon is Sandy Carter. **Greeter** is Beth Anderson. **Scripture Reader** is Jim Bennett. **Camera Operator** is Sue Ciffelli. **Palms** decorate the sanctuary in honor of Palm Sunday. **Please join us for Fellowship in Carroll Hall immediately following the service.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

Sunday	3/29	9:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m. 6:30	WORSHIP: Palm Sunday Tibetan American (K,CR, RR) AA (CH)
Monday	3/30	9:30 a.m. 9:30 1:00 p.m. 4:00 5:30	Music Together (DBL) ORGAN TUNING (S) FOOD PANTRY OPEN BIBLE STUDY (Zoom) New Haven Camera Club (CH)
Tuesday	3/31	9:30 a.m. 10:00 10:30 12:00 p.m. 3:30 6:00	Music Together (DBL) Al-Anon (K) Music Together (DBL) PLP (Library) United Girls' Choir (CH, K, S) BIBLE STUDY (Zoom)
Wednesday	4/1	10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	FOOD PANTRY OPEN Lions Club (CH)
Thursday	4/2	7:00 p.m.	MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE
Friday	4/3	10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	FOOD PANTRY OPEN GOOD FRIDAY PRAYER WALK (S)
Saturday	4/4	7:30 a.m.	MENS FELLOWSHIP
Sunday	4/5	9:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m. 6:30	WORSHIP: EASTER Sunday Tibetan American (K,CR, RR) AA (CH)

*Small print indicates non-Church function
Bold print starts new day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Mark Bessette 03/29, Charlotte Shea 03/31, Janelly Ane Santiago 03/31, Jeff Hutchins 04/03, Sandy Carter 04/04.

In Our Prayers This Week are: The Rev. Deb Ruotolo, Lee Guckert, Melanie Howlett, Linda Rankin, Linda Shannon, Marlene Bellonio, Meg Adams, Ann Schneider, and Charlotte Shea.

*HYMN: "Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!"

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1 Ride on, ride on in ma - jes - ty! Hark! all the tribes ho - san - na cry;
 2 Ride on, ride on in ma - jes - ty! In low - ly pomp ride on to die;
 3 Ride on, ride on in ma - jes - ty! The wing-ed squad-rons of the sky
 4 Ride on, ride on in ma - jes - ty! Thy last and fierc - est strife is nigh;

Thy hum - ble beast pur - sues his road With palms and scat - tered gar - ments strowed.
 O Christ, thy tri - umphs now be - gin O'er cap - tive death and con - quered sin.
 Look down with sad and won - dering eyes To see the ap - proach - ing sac - ri - fice.
 Bow thy meek head to mor - tal pain, Then take, O Christ, thy power, and reign. A - men

*CLOSING HYMN "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

V 149

Descant

4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine,
 D A D G D

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast
 1 Quand je me tour - ne vers la croix
 2 Qui donc pour - rait cal - mer ce coeur

that were a pres - ent far too small:

on which the Prince of glo - ry died,
save in the death of Christ, my God:
où Christ ex - pi - re sur le bois
hor - mis la croix de mon Sau - veur?

Chords: D, G, A, D, A

love so a - maz - ing, so di - vine,

my rich - est gain I count but loss,
all the vain things that charm me most,
mon coeur bles - sé, rem - pli de deuil,
Tous mes plai - sirs, mes vains dé - sirs,

Chords: A, E, A, D, E, A

de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
prend en dé - goût mon fol or - gueil.
je veux, ô Christ, te les of - frir.

Chords: G, D, Em, D, A, D

3 See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small:
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

MISSION

Our church's mission is to bind ourselves with Jesus Christ in:

- Worship together;
- Nurture of Christian discipleship; and
- Compassionate service to our community and beyond.

VISION

We are a hub for the larger community as a church of action:

- Conducting regular, robust worship in a responsible and relevant way in an ever changing and challenging world;
- Welcoming all people from different and diverse backgrounds to become a community of disciples together; and
- Involved in purposeful action and activities through the structure of self-directed Mission Teams.

VALUES

We:

- Pray together, encourage each other, and trust one another;
- Take personal responsibility for fellowship and our community; and
- Celebrate with honored traditions.

Church Staff: All the Members, Ministers to the World

The Reverend Cindy Stasko, Bridge Pastor

Karlee Etter, Ministry Coordinator for Children

Jeffrey Hutchins, Director of Music

Heather Meachen, Organist

Julie Schweickert, Office Manager

Dave Nelson, Sexton

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Covenant To Care

Thank you to all who took an Easter Tag and have filled a basket. The deadline to bring baskets back to the church is today. If you forgot to bring your basket this morning, please coordinate with Cathy Harple to ensure the baskets are at the church before the social workers come.

Easter Lilies Offering: With the arrival of spring and its early signs of emergence of flowers and shrubs, we remind you of the Easter Lily Special offering that has been a part of our Easter tradition for many years. As most of you know, the lilies allow us to give a memorial to our family members and beautify the sanctuary for Easter Sunday. They are distributed to our shut-ins and ill members after the service. We invite your contribution toward the purchase of Easter Lilies for the sanctuary. The best way to make a contribution is online through the website, or by email. Please note to whom the Lilies are dedicated. If you send your contribution by regular mail, please call the Church Office with your dedication, so we know it is coming. Your support is appreciated.

Special Music Collection Fund Ongoing: It feels so soon after Christmas this year that I am once again humbly asking for “Special Music” collections. We were so excited to welcome some very special guests and young professional musicians to our 7:00PM Christmas Eve service this past year. Joshua Peiffer, Gina Huang, and Edan Sabah are a wonderful combo of young musicians at a pro level! The music Staff, Choir(s), and Mission Team are so grateful to those generous souls, past and present, who remember this “Special Music for Christmas/Easter” collection each year. They have helped give a professional pay rate to our guests (and multiple years of conservatory music study 100%! counts as pro! We are so proud of Joshua and his SURGING musicianship! “We knew him when...” . For Easter, we have become fond of our trumpet players and are hoping to have them back. If you wish to donate online, you can click “Online Giving” on our website or go directly to our payment platform:
<https://giving.servantkeeper.com/nhu-3>
And select “Music - Special Collections”

You can also use our trusty and pretty pink collection envelopes distributed throughout the church. Thank you ever so much!

Safety Mission Team: In order to make our church safer for members and visitors, beginning on April 12, we will be locking all doors on Sunday morning 15 minutes after the service has started. There will be a sign on the main front door instructing anyone who arrives after 9:45 to ring the doorbell at the elevator entrance to be let in. Thanks for your cooperation. We all want our church to be a safe place.

Cheryl Bogert, for the Safety Mission Team

Easter Sunday Cross

Our Church cross will be erected on the front lawn of the Church for Easter Sunday. Please bring cut flowers to place on the cross or a plant to be placed at the foot of the cross. Each year the cross has been beautifully adorned and we look forward to it again this Easter. We thank the Flower Nook for their continued donation of flowers for the Cross.

