

04.02.23 | COURT STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



**seeking:**  
Where are  
you headed?

10:45 A.M. | WORSHIP IN-PERSON & YOUTUBE LIVESTREAM

GATHERING

Gathering Song

*Hosanna ,Loud Hosanna*

Words: Jeanette Threlfall, 1821-1880

Music: Gesangbuch der H.W.K. Hofkapelle; adapt. and harm. by W.H. Monk  
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*Hosanna, loud hosanna,  
the little children sang,  
through pillared court and temple  
the lovely anthem rang.  
To Jesus, who had blessed them  
close folded to his breast,  
the children sang their praises,  
the simplest and the best.*

*From Olivet they followed  
mid an exultant crowd,  
the victor palm branch waving,  
and chanting clear and loud.  
The Lord of earth and heaven  
rode on in lowly state,  
nor scorned that little children  
should on his bidding wait.*

*"Hosanna in the highest!"  
that ancient song we sing,  
for Christ is our Redeemer,  
the Lord of heaven our King.  
O may we ever praise him  
with heart and life and voice,  
and in his blissful presence  
eternally rejoice!*

## Gathering

One: Where is he going?

**All: Isn't he from Nazareth?**

One: Can anything good come from Nazareth?

**All: Is he headed to Jerusalem?**

One: Do you thin Jerusalem is safe?

**All: Does he know that Pilate is here?**

One: *Where* is he going?

**All: Does he know the city is dangerous?**

One: Does he see the Pharisees watching?

**All: Is this the one we've been waiting for?**

One: Could *this* be the Messiah?

**All: Where is he going?**

One: The crowds are singing, "Hosanna!"

**All: Should I lay down my cloak?**

One: Is this the beginning of the end?

**All: Should we follow?**

One: Should we watch?

**All: Should we sing, "Hosanna"?**

One: Stay awake! He's on the move.

**All: Where is he going?**

One: Listen.

**All: Where is he going?**

One: Watch.

**All: Where is he going?**

One: Stay close.

**All: Where is he going?**

One: Sing, "Hosanna."

**All: Hosanna! Amen.**

## Entering the *Land of the Seeking*

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*There's a place you can get to without any sound  
It's a place where the wick has burned out  
There's a place at the point that's past turning around  
There is a place to be lost long after you're found  
There's a land you can reach if you follow yourself  
It's a land beyond hoarding your fears so to quell  
There's a land where the bottom falls out of the well  
There is a land where your worry and wonder can dwell*

*Coax your quiet questionings  
Speak your soft uncertainties  
There is room for these*

## 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

**One:** 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."

**All:** **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.**

**One:** 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.'"

**All:** **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.**

**One:** 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.

**All:** **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.**

**One:** 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!"

**All: Son of David, give us the conviction to shout your name from the rooftop. Give us the wisdom to sing, "Hosanna!"**

***Draw a map without borders and see where you go***

***In the cover of night, call a question a home***

***Past the edge of defenses you're never alone***

***There is a place where your worries***

***and wonder are known***

***Coax your quiet questionings***

***Speak your soft uncertainties***

***There is room for these***

***In the land of seeking***

***The compass points straight to the heart***

***of a shadow of a doubt***

***The key is the most honest thing***

***that you can't speak aloud***

***There is no wrong way to be unsure of things***

***There is no wrong way to the land of the seeking***

***Coax your quiet questionings***

***Speak your soft uncertainties***

***There is room for these***

***In the land of seeking***

#### Words of Forgiveness

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.

#### Song of Faith

#### Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

WORDS: WILLIAM H. PARKER

MUSIC: FREDERICK A. CHALLINOR

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***Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;  
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here:***

***scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,  
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.***

***First let me hear how the children stood round his  
knee,***

***and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;  
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,***

***all in the lovelight of Jesus' face.***

***Into the city I'd follow the children's band,  
waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;  
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing***

***loudest hosannas, "Jesus is King!"***

The Word of God

Matthew 26:14-27:66

Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who walks headfirst into the world's suffering,  
who lights a candle in the darkest night,  
who pulls back the curtain so we can see the stars.**

**We believe in a God who does not shy away from the truth,  
who is bold in seeking justice,  
and humble in taking power.**

**We believe in a God who sees our hurt and wraps love around it,  
cocooning us in hope,  
tethering us to one another.**

**We believe in a God who is always carrying us  
from the pain of the world  
into the hope of a new day.**

**That is where God is headed.**

**That is where we follow.**

**May it be so.**

**Amen.**

Prayers of the People

*Faith Is Patience in the Night*; WORDS: Mary Nelson Keithahn

MUSIC: John D. Horman

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***Faith is patience in the night,  
waiting for the morning light,  
never giving up the fight.  
Spirit God give us faith.***

**Faith is laughter in our pain,  
joy in pleasures that remain,  
trust in one we can't explain.  
Spirit God give us faith.**

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**Faith is steadfast will to live,  
standing firm and positive,  
being ready still to give,  
Spirit God give us faith.  
Faith is courage under stress,  
confidence in hopelessness,  
greatest gift we can possess.  
Spirit God give us faith.**

### Offering

### Doxology

*Maker in Whom We Live*

#88 Vs 4

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

MUSIC: George J. Elvey

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**Eternal, Triune God,  
let all the hosts above,  
let all on earth below record  
and dwell upon thy love.**

**When heaven and earth are fled  
before thy glorious face,  
sing all the saints thy love hath made  
thine everlasting praise.**

**Amen.**

## Upcoming

The Rock gathering again tonight

Holy Week @ Court Street:

**Holy Thursday** ... Thursday, April 6 @ 7:30 p.m.

**Good Friday** ... Community service at Noon at the UCC Church on 5<sup>th</sup> St.; Worship @ 7:30 p.m. at CSUMC

**Easter Sunday** ... 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 9 we'll gather in the Fellowship Hall for an Easter Egg Hunt; Easter worship with communion at 10:45 a.m.

## Song of Faith

*Christ Jesus, On Sunday, You Rode into Town*

WORDS: Copyright © 2017 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

MUSIC: Traditional Welsh hymn, in John Robert's *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (*Songs of the Sanctuary*)

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**Christ Jesus, on Sunday,  
you rode into town;  
The crowds laid their coats  
and some palms on the ground.  
They made you a welcome  
and called you their king,  
But they did not know  
of the reign you would bring.**

**Christ Jesus, on Monday,  
you went up to pray;  
The sellers were filling  
the Temple that day.  
But who could be reverent?  
That courtyard was loud;  
You overturned tables,  
dispersing the crowd.**

**Christ Jesus, on Thursday,  
you readied a place;  
You hosted a meal  
and you offered the grace.**

**You told your disciples,  
"Now eat of this bread,"  
"Now drink of the cup  
of salvation," you said.**

**With basin and towel,  
with washing of feet,  
You showed us where love  
and humility meet.  
You loved till your love led  
to suffering and loss;  
You knelt down to serve us,  
then hung on a cross.**

**On Friday, you died,  
and the next day was bleak.  
O Christ, we remember  
your whole Holy Week.  
We can't avoid suffering,  
or turn from what's true,  
For out of your death,  
we find new life in you.**

Blessing

Postlude

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*

Rev. Jim West

MUSIC: African folk hymn; arr. Jim West

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Liturgy written by and adapted from Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

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# seeking:

## honest questions for deeper faith

### daily devotional prompts & prayers

Beginning with Ash Wednesday and continuing through the beginning of Easter, use these daily devotional prompts and prayers to expand and deepen your spiritual walk through Lent. You might read them first thing in the morning or incorporate them into your bedtime routine. Perhaps use the questions as prompts to journal and reflect. Day by day, may these prayers remind you that, as you seek God, God is always seeking you.

#### sunday

04.02.23

**prompt:** Palm Sunday could easily be compared to a parade or a social march. What do you, or would you, march for?

**prayer:** God of the parade, when I think about you on Palm Sunday I can't help but wonder: would I have been there? Would I have been in the crowd? Would I have been waving palm branches? Would I have seen you? I'll never know, but what I do know is that I can decide what parades and marches I will show up for today. So when I gather with my neighbors, let me catch a glimpse of you. Lead my feet to the march. Amen.

#### monday

04.03.23

**prompt:** On Palm Sunday the people cry, "Hosanna," which means, "Save us." What is something you'd like to ask God's help with?

**prayer:** Gracious God, there are seasons when all I say is, "thank you," and then there are seasons when all I say is, "help." Remind me that in both the good and the bad, you are here for me. I can bring you the burdens on my heart and you will surround me like a cocoon. Today, I need help with \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you, God. Amen.

#### tuesday

04.04.23

**prompt:** Where are you going? What are you working toward?

**prayer:** God of the road, you know that our life is a journey—we take one step at a time. As the season of Lent comes to an end, I ask you: where am I headed from here? Is there work you need me to do? Are there relationships you need me to foster? Am I being called? Am I being sent? As Lent winds down, turn my heart to the days that follow so that I may continue journeying with you. Amen.

## wednesday

04.05.23

**prompt:** What lights your soul on fire? What are you passionate about?

**prayer:** God of the spark, you weave passion into our hearts for a million different things. Surely this gift is intentional. Surely the passion swirling in my gut is an invitation, a call. Grant me the wisdom to listen to the truth in those rumblings, and the courage to act on them. Amen.

## maundy thursday

04.06.23

**prompt:** Jesus shows his love to the disciples by washing their feet (John 13). How do you show love to others? To God? To yourself?

**prayer:** Gracious God, it's easy to give love. It's sometimes harder to receive it. You washed the disciples' feet, which was an intimate and generous way of saying to them, "I love you." Do I do anything as generous as this? Can I love my neighbors more? Can I love you more? Can I love myself more? Show me how to wash their feet. Show me how to love more freely. Amen.

## good friday

04.07.23

**prompt:** What are you afraid of?

**prayer:** Jesus, you know that the world can be a scary place. Our human capacity for cruelty shows up in full force this week. So as we wade through the heaviness of your final days, help me learn from the heaviness in my own life. What am I afraid of? How can I invite you into that fear? Is that fear trying to teach me anything? I need you. Every day, I need you. Amen.

## holy saturday

04.08.23

**prompt:** What emotions does this week stir up in you? How do you sit with those emotions?

**prayer:** God of our best days and our worst days, this week is laden with emotions. I feel the joy and the fear of Palm Sunday. I feel the grief and love of Maundy Thursday. I feel the pain and the injustice of Good Friday. Help me to sit with these emotions instead of running from them. Allow me to be present to the full story so that I might be present to you. Amen.



A Reconciling Congregation in the Heart of the Brick District  
719 Court Street | Fulton, MO 65251 | 573 . 642 . 5721  
[www.courtumc.org](http://www.courtumc.org) | [UMCCourtStreet@gmail.com](mailto:UMCCourtStreet@gmail.com)  
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