PASSION SUNDAY READING: *Matthew 26:14-16*

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE   *Our Darkness*   Taize Chant
                                  The First Church Choir

POSTLUDE   *Carillon*   Louis Vierne

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First Church of Christ Congregational

12 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107

(860) 233-9605

www.whfirstchurch.org

To Give Online: http://www.whfirstchurch.org/giving/give

First Church's worship services are live streamed every Sunday downstairs in our church library,
the John P. Webster Library. Watch church while your toddler plays in our children's area or if you
need a separate place to worship for any other reason.

first church
WEST HARTFORD

Living in Spirit • Committed to Service • Open to All

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026
10 o'clock

Rev. Fredd Ward, Senior Pastor
Jim Boratko, Director of Worship Arts
Amanda Bethune, Director of Faith Formation

PRELUDES   *Valet will ich dir geben, BWV 736*   J. S. Bach
                     Valet will ich dir geben   Georg Kaufman
                     ("I bid farewell to vain worldly joys")

WELCOME

†PSALTER READING RESPONSIVE   Nina Lawrence

One: O give thanks to God, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!

Many: **Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we may enter through them and give thanks to God.**

One: This is the gate of our God; the righteous shall enter through it.

Many: **We thank you that you have answered us and have become our salvation.**

One: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Many: **This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

One: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

Many: **O give thanks to God, for God is good, for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

†HYMN 192   *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*   ST. THEODULPH

†OPENING PRAYER

Christ of both celebration and sorrow, be with us in our time of worship this day and in the week ahead. Help us embrace the fullness of our sacred story -- the triumphal entry and the tragic betrayal. Strengthen us to proclaim blessing and hope, no matter the circumstances. Stay with us, that we may become children of light and love. Amen.

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES   AMANDA BETHUNE

ANTHEM   *God So Loved the World*   John Stainer/Boratko

† Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

PALM SUNDAY READING   Matthew 21:1-11

                     The First Church Choir

†RESPONSE   *Lord Jesus, Think on Me*   SOUTHWELL

Lord Jesus, think on me, and purge away my sin,
From worldly passions set me free, and make me pure within.

SERMON   *Who Is This? What's In It for Me?*   Rev. Fredd Ward

HYMN 191   *Ride On, Ride On in Majesty*   CANNONBURY

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. 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 OFFERING

May the enduring values of generosity, grace, and love inspire our giving and our daily living. May these values become the focus of our thoughts during this time of offering.

OFFERTORY   *The Palms*   Jean Fauré
                 The First Church Choir, Bob Ball, soloist

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:
              Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

†OFFERTORY PRAYER

We give you thanks, Christ Jesus, for your goodness and your grace. Bless the gifts we offer to you. May they bring goodness and grace to your world. In gratitude and joy, we pray. Amen.

†HYMN 211   *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*   LONESOME VALLEY

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments following the service!