

**SUNDAY
WORSHIP**

MARCH 29, 2026

PALM SUNDAY

Worship Leader

John Mardis

Children's Message

Brandyn Miller

Director of Music

Luke Overton

Senior Pastor

Brandyn Miller

Musicians

Steve Peters & Clare Hanson

Office Manager

Michelle Wolfe

Custodian

Kyle Lindaman

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Prelude *Lift High the Cross - arr. Cindy Berry* Clare Hanson

Bringing in the Light of Christ

Introit *All I Need* John Mardis

Welcome and Announcements Brandyn Miller

***Call to Worship** Brandyn Miller

One: People of First Congregational, bring your garments and branches—Jesus is coming into town!
Shout Hosanna!

All: Hosanna! Our deliverer has come! Let all the hungry be fed!

One: Jesus, the servant king, has come to show us a new kind of power.

All: Hosanna! Our liberator will set the prisoners free!

One: Let us worship the one who will save us from corruption. Shout Hosanna to the King of Kings!

All: Hosanna! Hosanna! The bread of life has come to sustain us. Believing this promise, let us worship together!

***Opening Hymn** *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* #216 (NCH - Black)

***Opening Prayer** (responsive) John Mardis

One: Holy God, we gather on this Palm Sunday and find ourselves in solidarity with the crowds who shouted for salvation. We know our needs, both individually and collectively. Our hunger for righteousness and justice compels us to proclaim, “Hosanna! Save us!” two thousand years later. As we begin this journey toward the cross, from admiration to despair, we know we are well-nourished for the path ahead.

All: You have prepared us, fed us with love and truth, and refreshed our spirits throughout the Lenten season. Let us carry the spirit of Hosanna in our hearts, ready to serve and love, knowing the journey continues toward resurrection and renewal. May the bread we break, both physical and spiritual, remind us of your presence in every step. Guide us on this path and sustain us for the work ahead. Amen.

***Call & Prayer of Confession** (responsive) Brandyn Miller

Pastor: Because human beings often choose corrupt powers to save us, let us confess the ways in which we have shouted “Hosanna” to the empire rather than trusting in Jesus.

People: Holy and saving God, we confess we have sought comfort in systems of power that promise salvation through dominance, control, and division. We place our hope in the forces of wealth, status, and self-preservation, rather than in the humility of Christ. We align ourselves with the powers of this world, turning away from the radical love, justice, and peace embodied in Jesus. We fail to notice how the cries for justice of the oppressed mirror the “Hosannas” of hope. We ignore the cries of the poor, the marginalized, and the suffering, choosing instead the easy path of complicity. We turn a blind eye to the earth’s cries and the injustices so many endure. Forgive us, O God, for placing our trust in the powers of this world rather than in the power of your love. Renew our hearts and minds and lead us back to the path of true salvation, where love, justice, and peace reign. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon** Brandyn Miller

Pastor: Siblings in Christ, hear this good news: Jesus comes not with armies or powers of this world, but with the radical gift of love and forgiveness. Though we have often turned away, God in Christ offers us grace and peace. In Christ, our sins are forgiven, and we are made whole. Amen.

Choir Anthem *On the Road to Jerusalem* - Joseph M. Martin Chancel Choir

Children’s Message Brandyn Miller

Invitation to Offertory John Mardis

Offertory *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* - arr. Mark Patterson Clare Hanson

***Doxology** #515 (Pilgrim - Red)

***Prayer of Dedication** John Mardis

Scripture Readings John 12:12-16, Luke 19:28-40 John Mardis

Leader: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon *“Bread for the Road”* Brandyn Miller

***Song of Reflection** *Bread of Life* (See Screen)
Words & Music by Andrea Hamilton and Amanda Weisenheimer

***Affirmation of Faith** (unison)

John Mardis

We believe in Jesus Christ, who rode into Jerusalem not on a warhorse but on a humble donkey, proclaiming peace instead of domination.

We believe in the way of the servant leader, where greatness is found in humility, and power is made perfect in love.

We believe in choosing integrity over bluster, faithfulness over greed, and justice over the empty promises of empire.

We believe God's kingdom is not built by violence, but by the transformative power of grace, mercy, and sacrifice.

We believe salvation is not found in the halls of the mighty, but in the heart of Christ, who calls us to walk the road of love and courage.

We believe in shouting "Hosanna" to the one who brings true peace, trusting not in the powers of this world, but in the reign of God that has no end. Amen.

Joys & Concerns

John Mardis

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: **Hear our prayer**

Prayers of the People (responsive)

Brandyn Miller

One: God of compassion, who breaks bread with us at the table of justice, we pray for all who hunger in this world. We remember those who struggle under oppressive systems, those whose voices are unheard, and those whose needs are unmet.

All: Hosanna, save us.

One: We pray for those who suffer from the scarcity of resources, whether food, shelter, or safety. Remind us that true justice is found in sharing the bread of life with one another, offering not only sustenance for the body but dignity and respect for all.

All: Hosanna, save us.

One: We ask you to stir our hearts to action—to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, and speak out against injustice. Strengthen us in the broken bread of Christ, who gave all for the sake of the world, and may we be willing to do the same.

All: Hosanna, save us.

One: We pray for the leaders of this world, that they may have hearts open to the cries of the oppressed and the wisdom to lead with fairness and compassion. Guide them as they seek peace and justice for all.

All: Hosanna, save us.

One: Help us, O God, to be witnesses of your love, working to build a world where all people can partake of the bread you offer, and where justice and peace reign. We offer this prayer, trusting in the power of your love to transform the world.

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

Brandyn Miller

You may use the words most familiar to you.

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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***Parting Hymn**

Ride On! Ride On in Majesty

#215 (NCH - Black)

***Benediction**

Brandyn Miller

Carrying Out the Light of Christ

Postlude

All Glory, Laud, and Honor - setting Barbara Harbach

Steve Peters

*As the postlude begins, you are invited to depart in peace.
The music continues as a blessing for those who wish to remain in reflection.*

** Please Rise in body or spirit*