



# PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

March 29, 2026  
11 a.m. | Sanctuary



First Presbyterian  
Church FORT WORTH

# Gathering in God's Name

Prelude

*The Palms*

Faure/Ed Hirschman

*Concerto for Mandolin and String*

Golino/Ralphson

Kyle Sherman and Oscar Garcia, trumpets; Janet Nye, French horn; Jacob Muzquiz, trombone; Ed Jones, tuba

Use the prelude to make the transition from getting here to being here.  
Open yourself to the Spirit of God moving in our midst.

Welcome, Greeting and Announcements

Ashley Drake Mertz

Please sign the Ritual of Friendship pad in your pew.

\*Call to Worship

Bryan Ballew

We raise our voices and wave with joyful hope the palms of deliverance of God's people.

**\*\*Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!**

Our hearts are filled with expectation as we welcome the coming king.

**Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

We receive into the crowded streets of our lives the one  
who is Savior, not only of us, but of all the earth.

**Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

\*Hymn

*All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

196

\*Call to Confession

\*Prayer of Confession

**God of passion and parades, you are sovereign over our high points and our low points. You are always faithful to us. We admit, however, that when following Christ becomes difficult, we often turn away. When discipleship requires unpopular stands, we stammer. When faith forces us to risk, we pause. When our religion commands us to go against the tide, we often turn around. Forgive us, God, for our lukewarm commitments.**

**As Jesus enters Jerusalem, enter our hearts with forgiveness. In this Holy Week, help us to walk with Christ, even to the cross. Amen.**

We continue with a moment for silent prayers and personal confession.

\*Assurance of Pardon

When we face ourselves and God with the awareness of our need, God forgives us, grants us grace to grow, and courage to continue the journey. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

May the peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

\*The Peace

Please share the peace with those around you by saying,  
"The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

\*Response

*We Are Forgiven*

447

# Encountering God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

(page 197, New Testament)

Philippians 2.5-11

Children's Moment

Ann Nielsen

*Jesus Loves Me!*

188

***Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong.***

***Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.***

TEXT: Stanza 1, Anna Bartlett Warner, 1859; stanza 2, David Rutherford McGuire, 1971.

Offering of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

*Hosanna to the Son of David*  
Chancel Choir

Orlando Gibbons

\*Doxology

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

606

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below;  
praise God above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

\*Prayer of Dedication

## The Passion of Our Lord According to Matthew

Matthew 26.1-27.66

**Narrator:** The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.  
When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples,

**Jesus:** You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.

**Narrator:** Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said:

**People:** **Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.**

**Narrator:** Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said,

**People:** **Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.**

**Narrator:** But Jesus, aware of this, said to them,

**Jesus:** Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.

Narrator: Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

Judas: What will you give me if I betray him to you?

Narrator: They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying,

**People: Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?**

Narrator: He said,

Jesus: Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, "The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."

Narrator: So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal. When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said,

Jesus: Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.

Narrator: And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another,

**People: Surely not I, Lord?**

Narrator: He answered,

Jesus: The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.

Narrator: Judas, who betrayed him, said,

Judas: Surely not I, Rabbi?

Narrator: Jesus replied,

Jesus: You have said so.

Hymn *Ah, Holy Jesus (v.1)*

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***Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended,  
that we to judge thee have in hate pretended?  
By foes derided, by thine own rejected, O most afflicted!***

Narrator: While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said,

Jesus: Take, eat; this is my body.

Narrator: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying,

Jesus: Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Hymn *Here, O Our Lord, We See You (v. 3)*

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***This is the hour of banquet and of song; this is the heavenly table for us spread.  
Here let us feast and, feasting, still prolong the fellowship of living wine and bread.***

Narrator: When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered." But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.

Narrator: And so said all the disciples.

Hymn

*Go to Dark Gethsemane (v. 1)*

220

***Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter's power;  
Your Redeemer's conflict see; watch with him one bitter hour;  
Turn not from his griefs away; learn from Jesus Christ to pray.***

Narrator: Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples,

Jesus: Sit here while I go over there and pray.

Narrator: He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them,

Jesus: I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me

Narrator: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed,

Jesus: My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want, but what you want.

Narrator: Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter,

Jesus: So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Narrator: Again he went away for the second time and prayed,

Jesus: My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.

Narrator: Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them,

Jesus: Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.

Narrator: While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,

Judas: The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.

Narrator: At once he came up to Jesus and said

Judas: Greetings, Rabbi!

Narrator: Then Judas kissed him. Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Friend, do what you are here to do.

Narrator: Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?

Narrator: At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

Jesus: Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.

Narrator: Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Hymn

*Ah, Holy Jesus (v. 3)*

218

***Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered,  
the slave hath sinned, and the Son hath suffered;  
for our atonement, while we nothing heeded, God interceded.***

Narrator: Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said,

Witness: This fellow said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days."

Narrator: The high priest stood up and said,

High Priest: Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?

Narrator: But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him,

High Priest: I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

Narrator: Then the high priest tore his clothes and said,

High Priest: He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?

Narrator: They answered,

**People: He deserves death.**

Narrator: Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying,

**People: Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?**

Choir: *Rejected and despised by men and women of our race, he bears transgression's wounding weight and anguish mars his face. This Man of Sorrows, born to loss, acquainted with our grief: this Christ of God now crucified astonishes belief.*

Narrator: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said,

Servant: You also were with Jesus the Galilean.

Narrator: But he denied it before all of them, saying,

Peter: I do not know what you are talking about.

Narrator: When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders,

Servant: This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.

Narrator: Again he denied it with an oath,

Peter: I do not know the man.

Narrator: After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter,

**People: Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.**

Narrator: Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath,

Peter: I do not know the man!

Narrator: At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Hymn

*Ah, Holy Jesus (v. 2)*

218

***Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?  
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee.  
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee; I crucified thee.***

Narrator: When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said,

Judas: I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.

Narrator: But they said

**People: What is that to us? See to it yourself.**

Narrator: Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said,

**People: It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.**

Narrator: After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

***Follow to the judgment hall; view the Lord of life arraigned;  
O the wormwood and the gall! O the pangs his soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss; learn from Christ to bear the cross.***

Narrator: Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him,

Pilate: Are you the King of the Jews?

Narrator: Jesus said,

Jesus: You say so.

Narrator: But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him,

Pilate: Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?

Narrator: But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, call Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them,

Pilate: Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator: For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them,

Pilate: Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

Narrator: And they said,

**People: Barabbas!**

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator: All of them said,

**People: Let him be crucified!**

Narrator: Then he asked,

Pilate: Why? What evil has he done?

Narrator: But they shouted all the more,

**People: Let him be crucified!**

Narrator: So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying,

Pilate: I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.

Narrator: Then the people as a whole answered,

**People: His blood be on us and on our children!**

Narrator: So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying,

**People: Hail, King of the Jews!**

Narrator: They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Hymn

*Go to Dark Gethsemane (v. 3)*

220

***Calvary's mournful mountain climb; there, adoring at his feet,  
mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete;  
"It is finished!" hear him cry; learn from Jesus Christ to die.***

Narrator: As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

**People: You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.**

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,

**People: He saved others. He cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son."**

Narrator: The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice,

Jesus: Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?

Narrator: That is: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

**People: This man is calling for Elijah.**

Narrator: At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said,

**People: Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.**

Narrator: Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

*(silence for meditation)*

Narrator: At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said,

**People: Truly this man was God's Son!**

Narrator: Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb. The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

**People: Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, "After three days I will rise again." Therefore, command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, "He has been raised from the dead," and the last deception would be worse than the first.**

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.

Narrator: So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Choral Reflection

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

Gilbert M. Martin

Chancel Choir

*When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ, my God!  
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.*

*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?*

*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! Amen!*

## Going in God's Name

\*Benediction

Brian Coulter

Postlude

"Largo" from *Xerxes*

Handel/Ralphson

# First Presbyterian Church

## FORT WORTH

**Welcome to First Pres!** We are so glad you are here today. First Pres is an exciting faith community in which to live out your Christian discipleship. If you are a first-time visitor to First Presbyterian Church, please take a moment to see one of the greeters on your way out for a special visitor gift. They will also be glad to answer any questions you might have.



**We celebrate your participation in worship today.** Please take a moment to register your attendance using the QR code here.

**Interested in Joining First Pres?** If you are considering church membership, please speak with a minister following worship. You may also call the church office at 817.335.1231 to speak with Chris Bartley (Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

**Children of all ages are a welcome blessing in worship!** Children are invited to worship with their families. Parents, ask an usher for a worship bag full of activities to keep children engaged. Members, having children in worship is a gift and sign that our congregation is growing. Please welcome children and offer parents a smile of encouragement.

**Stephen Ministry** cares for people in crisis or transition. For more information, contact the Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz in the church office, 817.335.1231 ext. 264.

**Our in-person and online congregations share worship together.** This service may be livestreamed or recorded. Your image (photos and video) may appear on our Facebook page, YouTube channel, and our website. Questions about this policy? Please email [communications@fpcfw.org](mailto:communications@fpcfw.org).



**The One Great Hour of Sharing offering** is one of three special offerings within the Presbyterian Church, and benefits those whose lives have been affected by poverty, hunger, or disaster. Offerings can be made by using the envelopes provided outside the worship spaces and placing your gift in the offering plate, or by using the QR code here to give online.



First Pres is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Learn more about our denomination by visiting [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org).

## Staff & Worship Participants

Pastor/Head of Staff  
Senior Associate Pastor  
Associate Pastor  
Associate Pastor for Youth  
Parish Associate for Pastoral Care  
Director of Music/Organist  
Music Associates  
Associate Organist & Choral Assistant  
Director of Children's Ministry  
Engagement Coordinator  
Senior Director of Engagement & Programs  
Parish Visitor  
Digital Content Producer  
Audio/Video Engineer  
Readers

The Rev. Dr. Brian Coulter  
The Rev. Dr. Michael Waschevski  
The Rev. Dr. Robyn Michalove  
The Rev. Dr. Josh Stewart  
The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz  
Dr. Ahreum Han Congdon  
Rebecca Sawyer, Laura Collins  
Brent McCartney  
Ann Nielsen  
Eric Varnon  
Chris Bartley  
Matt McGraw  
Felix Oyola  
Tristan Medina

Brian Coulter, Bryan Ballew, Micah Jones,  
Comfort Jones, Evelyn McGinnis, Sam Cunningham,  
Philip Schutts, Matt McGraw

*Ministers: The Entire Congregation*

*Partner Congregation in Fort Worth: Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church*

*Partner Congregations in Cuba: Buen Pastor, Resurrection, and Cidra Presbyterian Churches*

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER AT FIRST PRES

*Get details about these events and more at [fpcfw.org/easter](http://fpcfw.org/easter).*

## **HOLY WEEK MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30-APRIL 1**

- **12 p.m. Midday Prayer Services** in the Chapel

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 2**

- **12 p.m. Worship** in the Chapel
- **5:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Dinner & Worship** in the Great Hall
- **7 p.m. Worship** in the Sanctuary or livestream ([fpcfw.org/livestream](http://fpcfw.org/livestream))

## **GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3**

- **12 p.m. Worship** in the Chapel
- **7 p.m. Tenebrae Service** in the Sanctuary or livestream ([fpcfw.org/livestream](http://fpcfw.org/livestream))

## **EASTER EGG HUNT & BREAKFAST**

- **Saturday, April 4 • 9–10 a.m.**  
Families and children are invited for breakfast followed by an egg hunt.

## **EASTER SUNDAY • APRIL 5**

### **SUNRISE SERVICE**

- **7 a.m.** • Memorial Garden

### **EASTER BREAKFAST BUFFET**

- **8:30–11 a.m.** • 3rd Floor Concourse

### **WORSHIP SERVICES**

- **8 a.m. Worship** in the Chapel
- **9 a.m. Worship** in the Great Hall
- **11 a.m. Worship** in the Sanctuary or livestream ([fpcfw.org/livestream](http://fpcfw.org/livestream))



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