

Wesley United Methodist Church

Serving the Community with Faith & Love Since 1927!

Rev. Nizzi Santos Digan, Pastor & Spiritual Director

10:00 AM Sunday Worship

Palm Sunday

Last Sunday Before Holy Week

March 29, 2026

At Wesley United Methodist Church, we foster a sanctuary culture by creating a safe environment where all feel welcomed, loved, accepted, valued, and affirmed for who they are, through intentional practices such as empathy, compassion, generosity, hospitality, and inclusion.



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Please let an usher know if you have questions, need assistance, or have a concern about health or safety.

Please Stand in Body or in Spirit When You See the *

Gathering /Processional

Everyone is invited to gather in Brewer Hall with your palms. Our processional will be led by the choirs.

Prelude

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

*Wesley Ringers
Jason Krug, composer*

Welcome

Pastor Nizzi

***Call to Worship**

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

ALL: Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!

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

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

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

ALL: Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest heaven! Let us worship! Amen.

***Opening Hymn/Processional**

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

UMH 278

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!

***Praise Songs**

I Will Lift Up Your Name Higher

I will lift up your name higher...
Great Jehovah you are wonderful
I will lift up your name higher...

I Have Joy in My Heart

I have joy in my heart, deep, deep down in my heart...
Jesus gave to me, and no one can destroy it.
I have joy in my heart; deep, deep down in my heart...

Opening Prayer

**Lord Jesus Christ, on the first Palm Sunday You entered the rebellious city
where You were to die. Come into our hearts, we pray and make them fully Yours.
And as Your disciples blessed Your coming and the crowd spread garments and branches in Your
way, make us ready to lay at Your feet all that we have and all that we are, that we too may bless
Your coming. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

(Moment of Silence for Personal Confession)

Assurance of Pardon

God Is Forgiveness

Debbie O’Driscoll

God is forgiveness. Dare to forgive and God will be with you.
God is forgiveness. Love and do not fear.

Time for the Child in Each of Us

Pastor Nizzi

Call to Prayer

Lead Us, Guide Us

TFWS 2214

Lead us, guide us, along the way, for if You lead us, we cannot stray.
Lord, let us walk each day with you. Lead us, O Lord, lead us.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Nizzi

The Lord's Prayer

(You are invited to pray in the language of your choice to celebrate our diversity.)

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.

*Gospel Reading

Matthew 21:1-11

(NRSVUE)

Jesus's Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: "Tell the daughter of Zion, look, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and He sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of Him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

This is the Word of God for us, the people of God. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Anthem

Hosanna to the Son of David

Allen Pote, composer

Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Crowds of children join in singing, hear the loud hosannas ringing,
to the King of Glory bringing songs of praise.

He is here, the true Messiah, Israel, rejoice! Hosanna in the highest!

Mighty ruler, our defender, coming not in royal splendor,

humble King to you we render songs of praise!

He is here, the true Messiah, Israel, rejoice! Hosanna in the highest!

Message

The King Who Comes in Humility

Rev. Nizzi Digan

The Offering & Offertory Music

Ghanaian Choir

Who Loves You Like Jesus

James Varrick Armaah, composer

Who loves you like Jesus?
What friend love you like Jesus?
Who in your family loves you like Jesus?
Which of your parents love you like Jesus?
He was disgraced. He was slapped.
He was spat on because of our sins.
Who is like him?
Truly, there is no one like him.
Who loves you like Jesus?
Which of your parents love you like Jesus?

*Doxology

Tune: OLD 100th

Praise God throughout these forty days
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise.
And praise the Spirit who imparts
God's love in Christ into our hearts. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Humble Savior, You ride into our lives not with force, but with invitation—calling us to follow, to risk, and to trust. As we bring these gifts, we confess we don't always understand where the road leads. But like those who laid down cloaks and waved palms, we offer what we have with hope in our hearts and praise on our lips. Use these offerings to proclaim Your kingdom—where love confronts fear, and peace dares to speak in the shadow of power. Save us, Lord. Use us. Amen.

*Passing of Peace

Shalom

Mensah Essilfie, composer

God's peace be unto you,
We wish you Shalom!
The peace of God which transcends all
understanding be with you forevermore.

Announcements

Gifty Bentum-Asante

THREE THEMES IN THE PASSION NARRATIVE OF JESUS

A. Human Weakness and Betrayal

The Passion story begins with human failure and fear.

- **Betrayal by Judas** – *Matthew 26:14–16*
Judas Iscariot agrees to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
- **The disciples fall asleep in Gethsemane** – *Matthew 26:40–41*
- **Peter denies Jesus** – *Matthew 26:69–75*
Peter the Apostle denies knowing Jesus three times.

These moments remind us how fragile human loyalty can be.

Stay with me

Congregation

8 Stay with me Bleibet hier

p *f* *p* *f*

Dm *Gm6* *Dm* *Gm6* *Dm* *C*

F *C* *Dm* *ASUS* *A*

Stay with me, re - main here with me, watch and
Blei - bet hier und wa - chet mit mir, wa - chet und
pray, watch and pray.
be - tet, wa - chet und be - tet.

B. The Quiet Strength and Faithfulness of Jesus

Even in suffering, Jesus remains faithful to God's will.

- **Prayer in Gethsemane** – *Matthew 26:39*
“My Father... not as I will, but as you will.”
- **Jesus before the council and Pilate** – *Matthew 26:62–63; 27:11–14*
Jesus responds with restraint and dignity before **Pontius Pilate**.
- **Jesus refuses retaliation when arrested** – *Matthew 26:52–54*

Jesus shows strength not through violence, but through obedience and love.

Music *Were You There*

Congregation

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (were you there)
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (were you there)
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (were you there)

Were you there when the sun refused to shine? (were you there)
Were you there when the sun refused to shine? (were you there)
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when the sun refused to shine? (were you there)

C. The climax of the story reveals the depth of God's love.

- **The crucifixion** – *Matthew 27:32–37*
- **Jesus' final cry** – *Matthew 27:46*
"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- **The temple curtain torn in two** – *Matthew 27:50–51*
- **The centurion's confession** – *Matthew 27:54*
"Truly this man was God's Son!"

Even in the darkest moment, God's saving love is revealed.

Musical Reflection *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*

Chancel Choir
Carlos Davis, clarinet
Robert Leaf, composer

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown;
O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine!
Yet in this time of sorrow, I joy to call thee mine.

Stripping of the Altar (In Silence)

*You are invited to remain in the sanctuary for a period of reflection
before leaving in silence, after the pastor has recessed.*

Worship Leaders: Ellen Orofino (liturgist), Gifty Bentum-Asante,
Desmond Cheetham, David Dagle, Carlos Davis (clarinet), Ronna Davis, Deborah O'Driscoll, Antonio Paredes,
David Potts, Jennifer Quansah, Bill Robbins, Gary Robinson
Chancel Choir, Ghanaian Choir, Worship Tech Team

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The Call to Worship is posted on **Life in Liturgy**, from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). <https://lifeinliturgy.wordpress.com/>

The Opening Prayer is posted on the Church of Scotland's Starters for Sunday website. <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

The Prayer of Dedication is from umcdiscipleship.org

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Looking Ahead to Holy Week

Maundy Thursday WAUM Service - Quinsigamond UMC April 2, 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Quinsigamond UMC 9 Stebbins St. Worcester, MA 01607 (508)755-6237

Good Friday WAUM Service-(7 Last Words) - Oakdale UMC April 3, 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Oakdale UMC 15 N. Main St. West Boylston, MA 01583 (508)835-2601