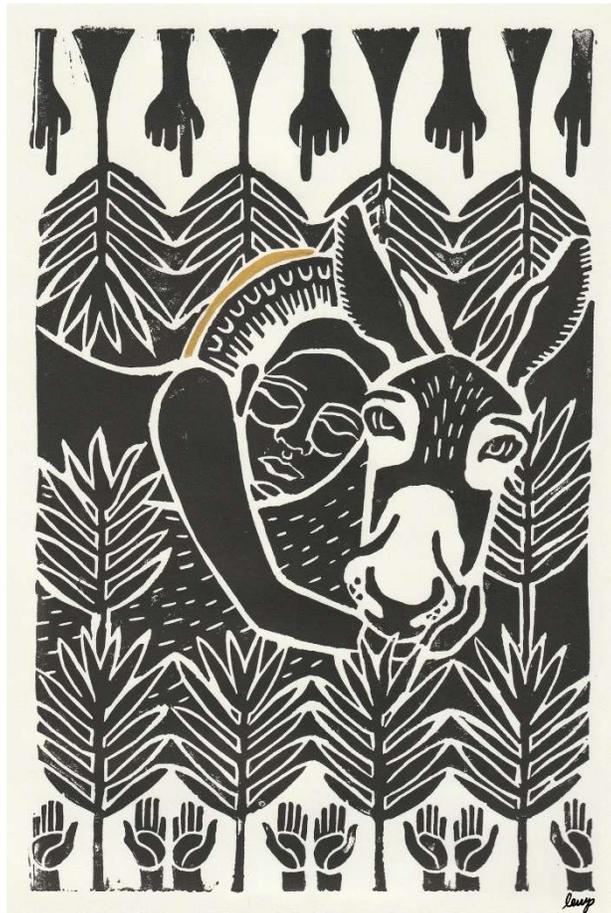




*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of the United Church of Christ*



Order of Worship for
March 29, 2026 10:30 am

Welcome to Worship at Center Church!
We are delighted that you are with us today.

SIXTH SUNDAY IN LENT – PALM SUNDAY
AGAIN & AGAIN, WE DRAW ON COURAGE
MARCH 29, 2026 – ORDER OF WORSHIP
Cover Art: “Through the Palms,” by Lauren Wright Pittman

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

CHIMES

PRELUDE The Royal March

G. F. Handel

Christopher Latournes, Timpani

CHORAL INTROIT Sing Hosanna!

J. J. Martin

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT*†

One: Hosanna!

All: Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the Name of the Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The story of faith is a story of courage.

All: It took courage for John the Baptist to prepare the way.

One: It took courage for Mary to say, “Here I am. Use me.”

All: It took courage for the disciples to drop their nets and follow Jesus.

One: It took courage for the paralyzed man’s friends to lower him through the roof.

All: It took courage for Peter to walk on water.

One: It took courage for Zacchaeus to give half of his possessions to the poor.

All: It took courage for Jesus to enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

One: Faith has never been easy. It is a journey of courage.

All: Again and again, God, show us the way.

One: Let us worship a brave and courageous God.

*OPENING HYMN NCH 216 All Glory, Laud and Honor

ST. THEODULPH

PASSING OF THE PEACE

A TIME FOR CHILDREN

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

***“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 simples and the best.***

PALM PARADE NCH 213 Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

ELLACOMBE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*If we could buy our way closer to you, we'd sell everything we have.
If we could work our way to you, we'd never take a day off.
If we could walk our way to you, we'd keep our tennis shoes on tight.
But I know—we know—we cannot buy, or work, or walk our way closer to you.
We must listen our way closer to you.
So holy God, as you have so often done again and again,
Open our ears.
Clear out the self-talk that keeps us from you.
Dust out the negativity and distractions.
Remove any doubt hindering our way. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE John 12: 1-19

SERMON Again and Again, We Draw on Courage

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

MUSICAL RESPONSE Verily (From *The Seven Last Words*)

T. DuBois

*Stewart Battle, Baritone; Chris Dukes, Tenor
Center Church Choir*

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of palm branches and hallelujahs:
We confess—we love a good Palm Sunday celebration.
We love the sound of a joyful parade.
We love shouting, “Hallelujah!”
We love that Palm Sunday means Easter is just around the corner.
We love good news.
However, if we slow down and pay attention,
We know that Palm Sunday was not a walk in the park for you.
There was risk. There was fear. There was the threat of violence.
You were leading a peaceful protest against an unjust empire,
And the whole world knew it.
Forgive us for glossing over the courage this day took.
Remind us that the story of faith is a story of courage,
And even we can do hard things.
With hope we pray. Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: Family of faith,
Even when we gloss over the truth,
Even when our courage fails us,
Even when we doubt that we can do hard things,
God believes in us. God loves us. God forgives us.
Hear and believe this truth:

All: **We are known.
We are loved.
We are forgiven.
Again and again and again. Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN NCH 215 Ride On, Ride On in Majesty

ST. DROSTANE

BENEDICTION

*As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again,
Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.
Amen.*

CHORAL BENEDICTION Sing Hosanna!

J. J. Martin

ORGAN POSTLUDE The Emperor's Fanfare for Timpani and Organ

A. Soler

*Thank you to everyone who participated in worship today!
Go forth in Peace, beloved of God.*

*Please join us on Thursday, April 2 at 6 PM, at 60 Gold Street (next door)
for our Maundy Thursday Tenebrae and communion service.*

*Our ecumenical Good Friday service will be at 3 PM on Friday, April 3,
at Immanuel Congregational Church, 10 Woodland Street, Hartford.*

Join us for on Resurrection Sunday at 10:30 AM.