

First United Methodist Church
of Shelton, Connecticut
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



April 13, 2025 | Palm Sunday

Revised Common Lectionary Texts

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 | Luke 19:28-40

Prelude: "Hosanna Loud Hosanna"

Ellercombe

Choral Introit: "Make Way, Make Way" (W&S 3044)

Kendrick

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Prayer

***Call to Worship**

UMC Discipleship Ministries

Leader: Today, we join Jesus in the final ascent to Jerusalem, knowing the depths we will descend on our journey through Holy Week.

People: Open the gates of righteousness, that we may come worship God!

L: We join the disciples in declaring that Jesus, riding on a donkey, is our Ruler, the One who will bring peace and salvation for all.

P: Open the gates of peace, that we may come worship God!

L: We join with the bystanders who questioned and wondered who this Jesus really is, who feared the consequences of angering the powers that be.

P: Open the gates of truth, that we may come worship God!

L: The journey through Holy Week brings us face-to-face with the stark reality of sin and God's faithfulness to save.

P: Open the gates of salvation, that we may come worship God whose steadfast love never fails!

***Opening Hymn:** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

UMH 278

Prayer of Confession

UMC Discipleship Ministries

Merciful God: With the psalmist, we declare, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them!" But we forget that only by your grace can we be righteous. With the crowds, we proclaim, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" But we neglect to follow you when you show us the ways to make peace on earth as it is in heaven. With the Pharisees, we notice our siblings doing their best to follow you and command, "Order them to stop!" But we refuse to listen to your command to love our neighbors as you love us. Forgive us, merciful God, and free us to follow Jesus down the road into Jerusalem, confronting the death-dealing powers of this world with the truth of your peace and steadfast love. Amen.

Moment of Silent Confessional Prayer & Words of Assurance

The Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Children's Message: "Cornerstone"

Children's Hymn: "Blessed Be the Name" (2X)

UMH 63

***Gospel Reading:** Luke 19:28-40

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: "Shouting Stones"

Response: "The Apostle's Creed"

UMH 882

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***universal*

**Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer**

UMH 895

Passing of the Peace

Invitation To Offer Our Gifts

Offertory: "Jesus Paid It All"

Grape

***Presenting Our Gifts:** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow." UMH 95

**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**

UMC Discipleship Ministries (adapted)

God of Peace, who reigns in unexpected ways, we gather before you in this season of Lent, bringing our gifts as an offering of our hearts. Just as the crowd welcomed Jesus with shouts of praise, we offer our lives in service to your kingdom. Use these gifts to bring hope, healing, and love to a world longing for your peace. Guide us to give generously with joyful hearts, knowing that in our giving, we proclaim your reign of grace. Bless these offerings and all who give in the name of Christ, our Savior. Amen.

***Sending Hymn: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor"**

UMH 280

Closing Unison Prayer

UMH 281

Almighty God, you sent your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to suffer death on the cross. Grant that we may share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and in the Holy Spirit, One God, now and ever. Amen.

Benediction

Postlude: "Cares Chorus"

Willard

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

A Note for Easter from Pastor Bill

"Not an Idle Tale"

Holy Week is almost here. As I am writing this, we are just a few days away from the celebration with palms that quickly gives way to the solemnity of Jesus's last supper with the disciples prior to his crucifixion, death, and return to life on Resurrection Sunday. The week asks us to experience a whirlwind of emotions as we reflect on all that happened two thousand years ago.

This week also reminds us of the importance of our Christian faith in the present day, one that presents so many parallels to that time so long ago. While the Holy Week experience is familiar, it should also be approached anew, this year and every year.

In the Gospel of Luke passage (Luke 24:1-12) for Easter Sunday, we revisit Mary Magdelene at the empty tomb of Christ that early Sunday morning. And Mary was not alone. We are told that there was a group of women with her. Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others were there to witness the scene and have their encounter with the angels who asked, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

Of course, these women rushed back to report to the apostles what had happened. But they did not believe! It was thought that the women were sharing an "idle tale" (Luke 24:11). It was not until Peter inspected the tomb for himself that the women were believed.

There are plenty of people in the world who dismiss this Good News, this miracle of the resurrection of Christ and the promise of life eternal it gives us all. It is a simple reality we must face. But that does not mean that we stop loving or disregard those who do not believe. On the contrary! We should be loving even more.

The Holy Spirit is continuously working in and through us. Each act of kindness, *any one* act of Christian love can be the one that turns a heart and mind toward God. During this Easter season, know that ours is not an idle tale of resurrection, but a life-giving truth that we are all called to share. Death has been defeated!

May God bless you and your family as we approach the cross and discover the empty tomb once again. Experience the joy of life assured by Christ.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bill



Jesus on a donkey.

WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

An email newsletter is sent out each Wednesday. Please have any items for submission to the church office by Wednesday at 9 am.

TO REACH PASTOR BILL

Please call or text 475-282-2800. He may also be reached via email: pastor@umcshelton.org. His office hours at the church office are Mondays and Fridays from 9:00 am to 2 pm (but may vary from week to week).

SERVING TODAY:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Ron Giannattasio, Organist
Kim Dumschott, Liturgist
Sal Iorfino, Video & Sound Tech

CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Ron Giannattasio, Organist

Bob Singletary, Chair. of Church Council
Bob Wood, Chair. of the Board of Trustees
Jorge Varas Chair. of Staff Parish Relations Committee

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship and our church community. We are so glad you are here. We invite you to participate in the service as much as you feel comfortable and to sit out parts of the service you might not yet feel comfortable with. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, you are welcome here. As our "Welcoming Statement" says, "We welcome **all** to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church."

(see below for complete "Welcome" and "Mission" statements)

**SUNDAY WORSHIP // 10:00 also live-streamed & recorded
Fellowship 11:00 am**

Welcoming Church Statement

A welcoming family of God committed to becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

We affirm and respect each individual as a child of God. We celebrate the uniqueness of each person and welcome people of every age, ethnicity, and race, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, socio-economic situation, and physical/mental ability.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to create a community of faith that reflects Christ's message of love and justice. We invite all to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church in Christ.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SHELTON

188 ROCKY REST RD. // SHELTON, CT 06484

PHONE: (203)929-3537 **WEB:** UMCSHELTON.ORG

Make Way W&S 3044

Make way, make way
for Christ the King
in splendor arrives.
Fling wide the gates and welcome him
Into your lives.

Refrain

Make way, make way
for the King of kings.
Make way, make way
and let his kingdom in.

He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free.
The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,
the blind shall see.

Refrain

Make way, make way
for the King of kings.
Make way, make way
and let his kingdom in.

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!

Blessed Be the Name (2x) UMH 63

Blessed be the name! Blessed be the name!
Blessed be the name of the Lord!
Blessed be the name! Blessed be the name!
Blessed be the name of the Lord!

All Glory, Laud & Honor UMH 280

Refrain:

All glory, laud, and honor,
to thee, Redeemer, King!
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring.

Thou art the King of Israel,
thou David's royal Son,
who in the Lord's Name comest,
the King and Blessed One. **Refrain**

The company of angels
are praising thee on high;
and we with all creation
in chorus make reply. **Refrain**

The people of the Hebrews
with palms before thee went;
our prayer and praise and anthems
before thee we present. **Refrain**

To thee before thy passion
they sang their hymns of praise;
to thee, now high exalted,
our melody we raise. **Refrain**

Thou didst accept their praises;
accept the prayers we bring,
who in all good delightest,
thou good and gracious King. **Refrain**