

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Third and Jackson Streets

Decatur, Indiana

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(*) Please Stand, either in body or in spirit

PALM SUNDAY

March 29, 2026

Matthew 21:1—11

“The disciples’ denial makes us ask: What happens when We Fail Jesus?”

Gathering Music: “The Holy City” Shelly Nussbaum

The Welcome and Announcements: Janet Smith, Liturgist

(Visitors, please sign the Friendship Folder)

The Prelude: “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

*Please take a moment and quiet your mind and open your heart
as we enter this time of worship.*

The Light Appears: The Acolytes Serve

The Church Bell rings:

*The Call to Praise: (Please Rise) Liturgist

Into the belly of the beast, on the back of a beast of burden...

This is no parade of the powerful, no extravaganza for empire.

**Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of
Resistance. Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Into occupied streets, on stolen land...

This is no marvel of military might, no crusade of cruelty.

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Refuge.
Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Into histories of harm, surrounded by lineages of liberation...

This is no acquiescence in advance, no complicity through conformity.

**Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of
Solidarity. Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

May our worship this day prepare the way for the Prince of Peace,
cut branches for the King of Compassion, line the path for the Lord
of Liberation, soften the road for the Sovereign of Solidarity.

**May our worship this day prepare us
for where this way will lead.**

*The Processional Hymn: “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna” No. 174
(Wave Palm Branches)

*The Invocation: Liturgist

**Lay it down, here, now, whatever covers your vulnerability cloaks
your openness. Let it become part of the way of courage. Lay it down,
here, now, whatever shades your brilliance branches over your
belovedness. Let it become part of the way of grace. Spread the cloaks.
Cut the branches. Line this road, this journey, this way with your cries
for freedom until all our hearts and voices move toward, “Hosanna.”**

The Call To Transformation: Rev. Kahler

Time of Silent Reflection

Prayer for New Life: (Responsively) Rev. Kahler

For the ways Empire has taught us to fear difference and believe that
strength and safety require dominance and violence,

God, have mercy.

For the ways Empire makes hierarchy the air we breathe and shapes
who and what has worth and dignity,

Christ, have mercy.

For the ways Empire separates us and convinces us that we don't
belong to the land or each other.

God have mercy.

Open us to notice the tension, longing, and dissonance in our bodies
revealing where Empire has tangled itself around us.

Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.

Words of Grace: (Responsively) Rev. Kahler

Let your soul receive this rest. You and we are not what Empire imagines. There is resistance, liberation, and wisdom beyond Empire.

Praise God who forgives us and frees us inviting us to a belonging where dignity isn't earned, bought, or proven, but received as grace.

The Scripture Reading: Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29
Liturgist
Pew Bible, Pg. 531

The Choir Anthem: "Lord Of Our Hearts He Will Be" Chancel Choir

Prayers of the People: (In remembrance, gladness, gratitude, need)

The Morning Prayer: Spoken and Silent

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

The Prayer Response: The Chancel Choir

The Scripture Reading: Matthew 21:1-11
(Responsively) Rev. Kahler
Pew Bible, Pg. 855

(Bold response from Congregation)

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."

*The Sermon Hymn: "All Hail The Power Of Jesus' Name" No. 97

The Sermon: "The Truth Hurts" Rev. Kahler

The Moment Of Offering: Liturgist

Invitation to Generosity:

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:

With our offerings we say, "thank you" and practice a new economy. With our practices we say, "yes, God," and resist Empire's hold. With our resistance we say, "Hosanna," and

**bless all the ones who journey in the ways of courage and grace.
Amen.**

The Moment of Offering: Ushers serve

The Offertory Music: "Jesus Shall Reign"

*The Doxology:

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit One. Amen.**

*The Hymn of Commitment: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" No. 173
(wave palm branches)

*The Benediction:

Cut Branches: Service Prayers for Palm Sunday Year A was written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema. She is a founding member of the Liberating Lineages Collective

*The Song of Departing Friends: "Amazing Grace" No. 202

**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.**

*The Moment for Silent Prayers Chimes

*The Light is carried forth Acolytes serve

*The Worship Leaders exit

*The Postlude "Rejoice, The Lord Is King"

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Each of Us	Minister of Christ
Rev. Allen Kahler	Minister
Barb Engle	Congregation President
Jan Miller	Board Secretary
Maggie Bolinger	Office Secretary
Stacey Smith	Church Treasurer

Mikayla Smith
Shelly Nussbaum
Kacie Shaffer
Justin Shaffer

Financial Secretary
Music Director/Church Organist
Custodian
Building Manager

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Bob Noack, Bob Hildebrand
Brenda Strickler, Kacie Shaffer
Ushers
Terra Roop

Greeters
Ushers
Acolytes
Money Counter

We welcome all members, visitors, and guests to our worship service this morning. We ask visitors to please take a few moments to sign the Friendship Folder located in each pew and place it in the offering plate. This will help us to faithfully acknowledge your visit with us today.

Today's altar flowers and bulletins are presented by Karen Heller in honor of her daughter Shawny Adams' birthday.

Our Operation Help items for April will be **cereal**. Please place your donations in the tubs in the dining room and West vestibule.

We hope you will join us for our Maundy Thursday service on April 2nd. The service will begin at **6 p.m.** in the sanctuary and proceed to the dining room where we will continue with the service of Hand and Feet Washing, the service of Holy Communion and sharing a meal. Please note that there will be no live-stream for this service since we will be in the dining room for much of the service.

Flowers for the Easter Flower Garden will be delivered Friday at 3:00 p.m. Help is needed to carry them in and arrange them. Please come if you can help.

Community-wide Good Friday services will be held on Friday, April 3rd at the Decatur Church of God. Services begin at 1 p.m. and are open to all members of the community. It is sponsored by the Decatur Ministerial Association.

Please join us for breakfast and table talk on Easter Sunday morning. At 8:45 we will gather for breakfast with sausage biscuits and gravy, pastries and fruit. Instead of Sunday School classes we will have a time to have conversations at each table as we look at how we as a church want to move forward. Join us for food and conversation on Easter Sunday morning.

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a “Christmas In July” garage sale on Saturday, July 25th from 9am-noon. Only Christmas items will be sold, such as Christmas tins, candles, ornaments, greenery, dishes, pictures, cookie cutters, trees, lights, outdoor statues, inflatables and Nativity scenes. Watch for updates as July approaches. Proceeds will go to church upkeep.

Several updates to our sound system are in progress to help project and record sound necessary to enjoy in person or online. To help raise the \$7874.35 needed, Stewardship Committee is holding a fundraiser. Envelopes with a dollar amount on them can be found on the bulletin board in the lower hall by the lounge. As you are able, you are asked to take an envelope and donate that amount to the fundraiser. Of course, you may always donate more if you are able. Amounts range from \$1-\$100 and we hope all who are able will help. You may also mail a check to the office or use the PayPal scan code.

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, April 1: Handbell Choir Practice 6 p.m.
Chancel Choir Practice 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 2: Maundy Thursday Service 6 p.m.

Friday, April 3: Community Good Friday service 1 p.m.
Decatur Church of God
Flower Delivery 3 p.m.

Sunday, April 5: Easter Sunday

Breakfast 8:45 a.m.

Reception of New Members

Worship with Holy Communion 10 a.m.

website: www.zion-ucc-decatur.org

e-mail: office@zionuccdecatur.org

pastor: arkinpastor59@gmail.com

Last Sunday: Worship Attendance: 52 Offering: \$3362.00

Needed per week for budget: \$4045.87

Scan here to make your donation via Paypal



