



Thornbury, Ontario
Grace United Church
Bold. Nurturing. Liberal. Christian.

March 29, 2026

Palm Sunday

Find this service at www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live

Leading us today in Worship:

Minister: Rev. Dr. Brian Goodings
Director of Music: Dr. Christopher Burton
Guest Musician: Karen James
Lay Reader: Carol Clarke

Leader: regular font ~ **All: bold font** ~ *Sung words: bold italics.*

Asterisk * Indicates when the congregation may stand if able.

Scripture for Meditation:

*Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.*

We Gather Together in Community

PRELUDE:

A Medley of Palm Sunday Hymns

“A Stewardship Second:”

*Stewardship is a spiritual practice. How do we share our abundance
to prepare the way for Jesus?*

WELCOME:

Extinguishing Last Candle of Lent: (Red for Palm Sunday)

“We Shall Overcome” (adapted by Horace J. Scruggs, III)

*We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
We shall overcome some day
O deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall overcome someday*

*We shall live as one, we shall live as one
We shall live as one, some day
O deep in my heart, I do believe
That we shall live as one someday.*

**OUR COMMITMENT to SAFER SPACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
of the LAND:**

We believe all people are made in the image of God and are entitled to dignity and respect. At Grace United Church we try to offer a safer, inclusive and generous space for all who are seeking a faith community. We offer full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, all races, ages and abilities in the life and work of the ministry.

In gratitude and respect,

The United Church of Canada gathers, worships, and works on Indigenous lands across Canada.

OPENING PRAYER: (Adapted from Ted Loder)

O God, may we have the courage to take our place in your story.

Help us create a community that is a crucible of peace, a parable of your kingdom;

A contradiction amongst the principalities and powers;

A place of welcome sanctuary amidst our fear-filled society;

A community of praise in a world of criticism;

A place of safety in a world of threat;
A heartbeat of life in the tomb of death.

O God you are the Word of Difference

We join with the parade of "Holy Fools"; we dare to believe that loving you and our neighbours as ourselves leads to True Life for all. AMEN

HOPE and REASSURANCE: (adapted from John O'Donohue)

May all that is unforgiven; be released.
May our fears yield their deepest tranquilities.
May all that is un-lived of God within us,
Blossom into a future graced with love.

***OPENING HYMN: VU #124**

"He Came Riding on a Donkey"

- 1 **He came riding on a donkey,
he came riding into town;
slow and easy kind of lowly
he came riding with the dawn.
His disciples walked beside him,
staying close, a little shy;
not too sure where he would guide them,
on to live or on to die.
But all the morning sang his praises;
waking birds and dancing wind;
here he is, the Son of David;
riding on to take his throne.**

- 2 **Then the children gathered, singing
shouts of laughter, bursting cheer;
in the streets their song was ringing,
'Hosannas' filled the morning air.
Timid adults strained to see him,
caught the Spirit, joined the song;
spread their cloaks along before him,**

branches flashing in the sun.
 So all the city sang his praises;
 waking streets and dancing crowd;
 here he is, the Son of David;
 our Messiah, Son of God.

- 3 In our fasting, and our feasting,
 called to follow in his way;
 called to walk his road to Easter,
 called to live his cross today.
 Hosanna to the Son of David,
 hosanna in the heavens above;
 blessed is he who comes to save us,
 blessed is he who brings his love.
 Let us join to sing his praises;
 open hearts and souls to God;
 he is with us, Son of David;
 God's Messiah, Christ the Lord.

Lighting the Children's Lantern

Theme Conversation: Holy Week

We Listen Together

SCRIPTURE READING:

Gospel Reading Luke 19: 28-40
 (Jesus' entry into Jerusalem)



After he had said this, he went on
 ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'

"So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus, and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. Now as he was approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

CHOIR ANTHEM:

"He's Been There Too" - V. MacKenzie

SERMON: "Bright Sadness" Rev Brian Goodings

PASTORAL and LORD'S PRAYER:

***HYMN: VU # 123 “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”**

**1 Hosanna, loud hosanna
 the happy children sang;
 through pillared court and temple
 the joyful anthem rang;
 to Jesus, who had blessed them
 close folded to his breast,
 the children sang their praises,
 the simplest and the best.**

**2 From Olivet they followed
 ‘mid an exultant crowd,
 the victory palm branch waving,
 and singing clear and loud;
 the Lord of earth and heaven
 rode on in lowly state,
 content that little children
 should on his bidding wait.**

**3 ‘Hosanna in the highest!’
 That ancient song we sing,
 for Christ is our Redeemer;
 earth, let your anthems ring.
 O may we ever praise him
 with heart and life and voice,
 and in his humble presence
 eternally rejoice!**

We Respond to God’s Word

INVITATION to the OFFERING:

We hear of a king riding on a donkey. Ridiculous! Jesus’ life and death are a story of paradox. Our God knows

suffering and ridicule, and instead of vengeance, invites us to love. Commands us to share. Implores us to seek justice and dignity for all. Through our gifts, this community of faith and The United Church of Canada—through Mission and Service—are doing just that. Seeking to transform lives, inspire meaning, and build a better world. Please give generously!

PRAYER of DEDICATION of OUR OFFERINGS:

God of equality, your call to be counter-cultural has not changed—so it was with Jesus atop a donkey, it is today. Help us start with ourselves, sharing our abundance and praying for a world where power is shared, not wielded. From time to time we will wave palms or placards, with your presence in our lives a reminder. Bless the monies received today and at other times through PAR and online, and may these gifts be part of your kin(g)dom revolution. Amen.

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***Mail:** Grace UC, 140 Bruce St. S. PO Box 219, Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0
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***Tap your debit card** at the door of the church, or Donate to Grace United Church Thornbury through **CanadaHelps.org**. Our account is set up with them now and it is easy to register. Tax receipts are given automatically at the time of giving.*

Care, Prayer, Share

DEDICATION HYMN: VU #343

***I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
‘twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.
I love to tell the story, ‘twill be my theme in glory,***

To tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

What's up at Grace?

We Begin our Service in the Name of Christ!

***HYMN:** VU #127 "Ride On! Ride On in Majesty!"

1 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry:

O Saviour meek, pursue thy road

with palms and scattered garments strowed.

2 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die;

O Christ, thy triumphs now begin

o'er captive death and conquered sin.

3 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

The winged squadrons of the sky

look down with sad and wondering eyes

to see the approaching sacrifice.

4 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die;

bow thy meek head to mortal pain,

then take, O God, thy power, and reign.

*COMMISSIONING,

*BENEDICTION: VU #586

"We Shall Go Out with Hope of Resurrection"

1 We shall go out with hope of resurrection;
we shall go out, from strength to strength go on;

**we shall go out and tell our stories boldly;
tales of a love that will not let us go.
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted;
we'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed;
we'll weave a cloth of all the world united
within the vision of new life in Christ.**

- 2 We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken;
we'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed;
we'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
expressive love alive in every heart.
We'll share our joy with those who still are weeping,
raise hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,
we'll leap and dance the resurrection story,
including all in circles of our love.**



Holy Week

POSTLUDE:

“Gigue” from English Suite No. 4 - J.S. Bach

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Opening Prayer: Adapted from Ted Loder.

Hope and Resurrection: Adapted from John O'Donohue

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Prelude: A Medley of Palm Sunday Hymns

Anthem: "He's Been There Too" - V. MacKenzie

Postlude: "Gigue" from English Suite No. 4 - J.S. Bach