



From Words to Deeds: Living Courageously

Holy Week Resources from Join the Movement for Intervening in Moments of Racial Harm

[Palm Sunday – Podcast and Video Transcript](#)

[For Video transcript, see #4 below.]

1. Greeting

Palm Sunday blessings to you, beloved ones of the Holy One. My name is Dr. Sharon Fennema and I am the curator of the United Church of Christ's Join the Movement toward Racial Justice initiative and campaign. I'm so honored and excited to invite you into a deepening of your Lent practice of courageous conversations for Holy Week this year as we explore ways to embody our commitments to racial justice.

2. Scripture Reading

Let us begin our journey this Palm Sunday by dwelling with the story of Jesus' resistance to Roman imperialism through a protest parade rooted in the power of love.

A reading from Matthew 21:1-11

21 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² 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. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Sovereign needs them.' And they will send them immediately."⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Tell the people of Zion,
Look, your Ruler is coming to you,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of Jesus and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Descendant of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our Sovereign God!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹ The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

3. Breath Prayer

With this scripture in our hearts, let us center ourselves for the work ahead with a breath prayer. Let us pray.

As we inhale we pray: In protest and in praise,
As we exhale we pray: let "Hosanna" be my cry.

Inhale: In protest and praise... Exhale: let "Hosanna" be my cry.

In protest and praise...let "Hosanna" be my cry.

May it be so.

4. Moving from Bystander to Upriser – An Introduction

Let me begin by telling you a little bit more about what lies ahead for us this Holy Week.

As part of your courageous conversation practice this Lent, we want to encourage you to continue your brave work by deepening your skills for intervening in moments of racial harm. Each day of Holy Week we will explore steps that help us move from being a bystander to a racial justice upriser. What better way could there be to honor these sacred days than by taking responsibility for harm we cause and harm we witness in the hopes of transformation! This Holy Week, let's practice turning our cries of Hosanna into love letters to the image of God that dwells in each one of us, love letters that refuse to allow fear, bias, prejudice and hatred to go unchecked, because we follow the Palm Sunday Jesus who promises, "if these remain silent, the stones will shout out."

5. Outro

Thanks so much for listening and learning more about where our courageous conversations are taking us this Holy Week. We hope you'll join us tomorrow to discover more about the first part of the practice of intervening in moments of racial harm. Until then, may the love of God enfold you and the justice of God embolden you.