



**Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge**  
**Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026**  
**Worship at Home**

Email: [northpelham.rockwaypc@gmail.com](mailto:northpelham.rockwaypc@gmail.com) Website: <https://northpelhamrockwaypresbyterian.ca>

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: We come to worship today, saying: Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

**P: We come to meet Jesus and to ask in our hearts: Who is he for us? Is he the One who calls us to follow in love? Or someone we do not fully understand?**

L: We come seeking what truly matters: what it means to live, what it means to love, and what brings true peace.

**P: Even when we feel unsure on our journey, God gives us direction and the courage to keep walking.**

L: Come to us, O God, as we worship. Fill us with your love, faith, and hope.

**P: Let us worship God together!**

Hymn 214

**All glory, laud and honour**

**PRAYERS OF APPROACH, CONFESSION and The Lord's Prayer**

Come to us, O God.

Come to us as a peace beyond our understanding. Come to us as a love without limits. Come to us as a faith and hope that remain strong, even when fear and doubt surround us. Come to us, O God, and move within us.

We confess that there are many reasons why our hearts feel unsettled. Our world feels uncertain. Our lives, though filled with good moments, can also feel fragile and shaken. We carry concerns for family. We worry about health and finances. Some relationships are difficult. Sometimes the needs of others feel heavy, and even our own needs go unnoticed. In all these things, O God, we come to you just as we are.

Now, in silence, we offer to you what is in our hearts: the thoughts and feelings we cannot fully put into words. (silence)

Visit us, O God. Give us courage not to turn away from what is real, but to trust that you are with us, even there. As we enter this Holy Week, renew in us a living hope. Help us to look toward Easter with quiet trust and expectation. May your light begin to rise within us, even now. We pray in the name of Jesus, who walks with us and who teaches us to pray, saying:

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.  
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors  
 and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

### **Sharing The Peace of Jesus Christ**

Hymn 218                    **Hosanna, loud hosanna**

### **Children of God's Moment**

#### **Prayer for Understanding**

Gracious God,  
 open our hearts and minds to your Word. Teach us your way of true peace, formed through your  
 love and compassion. Help us to hear, understand, and follow Jesus. Amen.

#### **SCRIPTURE PASSAGES**

**Responsive Psalm 118: 19–29**  
**Zechariah 9: 9–10; Luke 19: 28–47**

#### **SERMON**

### **The Way of True Peace**

There are moments in life when what we see on the surface is not the whole story. Sometimes, something can look joyful and hopeful, but underneath, there is also sadness, longing, and a deeper truth waiting to be seen. Palm Sunday is one of those moments.

We picture a crowd full of excitement. People are waving palm branches. They are laying down their cloaks on the road. They are cheering as Jesus enters Jerusalem. It feels like a celebration, almost like a parade. There is energy, hope, and expectation in the air.

But if we look more closely, we begin to notice something else. Beneath the joy, there is tension. Beneath the celebration, there is sorrow. And within this moment, there is a message that speaks deeply into our lives today. Palm Sunday is not only the beginning of Holy Week. It shows us what kind of king Jesus is, and what kind of peace he came to bring.

All four Gospels tell this story. And each one connects it to a prophecy from the book of Zechariah. This prophecy speaks about a king—the Messiah—who is coming to save the people. But this king is not what people expect. He comes “triumphant and victorious,” but also “humble and riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” This is important. A king would normally ride a strong warhorse. A king would come with soldiers, armor, and power. A king would show strength in a way the world understands.

But Jesus does the opposite. He rides a donkey. He comes in humility. And the prophecy goes further. It says that this king will remove the tools of war—the chariot, the warhorse, the battle

bow. And instead, he will bring peace to the nations. This tells us something very important. Jesus is not coming to win through violence. He is coming to bring peace in a completely different way.

We see this even more clearly as Jesus gets closer to Jerusalem. He does not celebrate. He weeps. He looks at the city and begins to cry. And he says, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace.” This is a very tender and painful moment. Jesus sees the people. He loves them. But he also knows that they do not fully understand what true peace is. And so he speaks these words: *what would bring you peace*. This is the question for us as well. What truly brings peace?

To understand this better, we need to go back in history. About 160 years before Jesus, the Jewish people were suffering under a harsh ruler named Antiochus Epiphanes. He treated them cruelly and even desecrated their temple. Then a leader rose up—Judas Maccabeus. He led a rebellion against the enemy. He fought with strength and courage. And he won.

When he entered Jerusalem, he rode on a warhorse. He came as a strong leader, a warrior. The people welcomed him with palm branches. They celebrated his victory. He went into the temple and cleansed it. For the people, this was a powerful moment. They saw him as a savior: someone who brought freedom through strength. So, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, many people were expecting the same kind of leader. They were hoping for another strong king. Another victory. Another moment of power.

But Jesus does something very different. He rides a donkey, not a warhorse. He weeps instead of celebrating. And he speaks about peace—not as defeating enemies, but as something deeper and more lasting.

After entering the city, Jesus goes into the temple. This reminds people of Judas Maccabeus. But again, what Jesus does is different. He drives out those who are buying and selling in the temple. He says that God’s house has become a “den of robbers.” This is a strong action. But the problem is not foreign enemies. The problem is inside.

The religious leaders have created a system that benefits themselves. They place heavy burdens on the people. They use religion to control others. They use fear to keep their power. And Jesus challenges this. He shows that the real problem is not only outside oppression. It is also the brokenness within human systems—and within our own hearts.

So again, we return to the question: What truly brings peace? Is peace about control? Is it about power and strength? Is it about forcing others to obey? Or is peace something different?

This question is not only about the past. It is also about our world today. There are voices around us that say compassion is weakness. That caring too much can make us less strong. That we need to focus on success, power, and control. But is that really strength? Or is it a way to protect the interests of a few, while others suffer?

Jesus shows us another way. He shows us that compassion is not weakness. It is strength. Empathy—the ability to feel with others—is not something to remove. It is something to grow. When we lose empathy, we lose part of what makes us human. When compassion fades, relationships begin to break. And without love, peace cannot last.

Palm Sunday invites us to reflect on our own lives. What kind of peace are we living? Do we create peace by keeping distance from others? By protecting ourselves? By avoiding difficult relationships? Or do we create peace by caring? By listening? By being present for one another, even when it is not easy?

When we talk about what breaks this peace, we are talking about what the Bible calls "sin." Sin is not just a word we hear in church. It is something we experience in everyday life. It is the fear that closes our hearts. It is the selfishness that keeps us from caring. It is the indifference that makes us turn away from others. These are what we might call “anti-love” forces. And what Jesus faces on the cross is a confrontation with these very things. The cross is not just about a theory of salvation. It is about bringing these broken parts of us into the light. It is about letting them be removed. So that love can grow again.

And this is what resurrection life looks like. The early church became a community shaped by compassion. People shared what they had. They cared for the weak. They welcomed those who were left out. They lived differently—because they followed Jesus.

This is also our calling today. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We are called to be his voice and his heart. We are called to live in a way that reflects his peace: a peace that is gentle, a peace that is humble, and a peace that is rooted in love.

This is not always easy. Sometimes it is hard to be patient. Sometimes it is hard to forgive. Sometimes we feel tired, hurt, or discouraged. But even in those moments, Jesus continues to invite us again and again to return to love, to choose compassion, and to walk in his way.

As we begin this Holy Week, we are invited to slow down to reflect, to notice what is happening in our hearts, to ask where we need healing, and to open ourselves again to God’s love. Because in the end, this is the truth we are given: peace without love is not real peace. It may look strong for a moment, but it cannot last. Only the peace that grows from love, from empathy and from compassion, is the peace that truly heals.

May this Palm Sunday be more than just a memory. May it serve as a turning point for us — a moment when we choose the path of Jesus again. In moments of difficulty, choose patience. In moments of need, choose compassion. In moments of fear, choose love. This is Jesus’ way: a gentle way, yet deeply powerful, bringing a peace that truly lasts. Amen.

Violin music

**Amazing Grace**

Joy Jourg

Hymn 740

**Make me a channel of your peace**

**Invitation to the Offering**

**Doxology****Prayer of Dedication**

Gracious God,

we offer these gifts with thankful hearts. Use them to share your peace, love, and compassion in the world. May our lives also become an offering of your grace. Amen.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People**

Gracious God,

we thank you for the ways we experience peace in our lives, even when life is not easy or clear. We thank you for the people who care for us—those who remind us that we are loved, who stand by us in good times and difficult times, and who show us patience and understanding even when we are not at our best.

On this Palm Sunday, we also remember those who know little of peace in our lives and in our world where peace feels far away. When fear grows and problems feel overwhelming, it becomes easy for us to blame, to judge, and even to hurt one another. We see this not only in our own lives, but also in our leaders and in the actions of nations.

Too often, we turn quickly to force and control. War becomes the easy answer, instead of the slow and patient work of peace. But we forget the cost: the loss of life, the destruction of homes, and the deep wounds that remain for generations. How can peace grow when pain keeps being passed on as anger and revenge?

O God, have mercy. Soften hearts that are hardened by anger. Comfort those who are overwhelmed by grief. We pray for the people of Iran, and for all in the Middle East: in Israel, in Lebanon, and in every place where fear and violence continue.

Closer to home, we pray for those in hospitals where staff are tired and stretched. We pray for those in prisons, for those without safe housing, and for those struggling to afford daily needs.

And yet, even in these hard places, we give thanks. We see small acts of kindness. We see care, patience, and compassion. These moments remind us that your Spirit is still at work. Thank you, O God, that your image still shines in people, even in difficult times. Help us to live in that light, and to share your peace wherever we are. Teach us to live in the way of Jesus: a way of empathy, compassion, and true peace.

Now, in silence, we name before you those people and situations that are close to our hearts.  
(silence)

God of love, may your compassion flow through us to others. Bring healing where there is hurt, hope where there is despair, and peace deep within every heart. We pray in the name of Jesus, who is our peace. Amen.

Hymn 217

**Ride on, ride on in majesty**

## BENEDICTION

May the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with compassion and guide you in the way of true peace. And all God's people said, "Amen."

## Sung Response- Go Now In Peace

## Postlude

<p><b>We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe</b></p>
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**\*Next Sunday Worship on April 5, 2026, at North Pelham**

**Good Friday Walk & Service at Rockway on April 3:** Join us for a meaningful Good Friday as we reflect on the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the Cross: Walk at Rotary Park (meet at Rockway) – 10:00 AM; Worship Service – 11:00 AM; and Fellowship to follow – pizza and vegetables will be provided. Please bring a dessert to share. All are welcome—walk, worship, and fellowship with us at Rockway!

**\*Easter Breakfast & Service – April 5:** Join us for Easter Sunday at North Pelham! We'll begin with a delicious Eggs Benedict breakfast at 9:00 AM (Freewill offering to benefit Rose City Kids, supporting children and youth in Welland). Our Easter Worship Service follows at 10:00 AM. All are welcome! Please invite your family members and friends to celebrate Easter together.

**\*RPCW Meeting:** The RPCW will meet on Wednesday, April 1, at 1:30 PM at the church.

**\*Monday Tai Chi & Qigong – Easter Monday Break:** Please note that there will be no Tai Chi & Qigong class tomorrow, as it is Easter Monday. Classes will resume on Monday, April 13 at the usual times. Thank you, and we look forward to gathering again soon.

**\*Wednesdays - Bible Study:** Join us every Wednesday at 10:00 AM at North Pelham, led by our spiritual leader, Diane McMillan.

**\*Thursdays – Outreach Walking:** Join us for the Wellness Walk and Coffee Chat! We gather at 9:30 a.m. at Canada Games Park to start our walk together. After the walk, we meet at Rockway for a joyful chat over hot and fresh coffee at 10:45 am.

**\* West St. Andrew's Annual Beef Dinner**

West St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church is hosting their Annual Beef Dinner on Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 5:30 PM, located at 42 Pelham Road, St. Catharines. Tickets are \$25 per person and include roast beef, mashed potatoes, carrots, salad, tea/coffee, and homemade pie. All are welcome!

**\*Steve Bell Concert – April 12**

Knox Presbyterian Church (St. Catharines) will host Canadian singer-songwriter Steve Bell in concert on Sunday, April 12 at 7:00 PM (53 Church St.). Tickets: \$25 through the Knox church office (905-641-8868) or \$26 online at [SteveBell.com](http://SteveBell.com). All are welcome.

**\*Prayer Requests and Pastoral Care:**

If you or someone you know is facing illness, grief, or any need, please contact your elder or Rev. Jacob: **Phone: 289-213-2797; Email: [jacoblee0501@gmail.com](mailto:jacoblee0501@gmail.com)** We are here to pray and care for one another. “Carry one another’s burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)