

JOURNEY TO EASTER 2026
Walking with Jesus through His Final Days
A Scriptural and Musical Commemoration of Holy Week¹
Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

Prelude

- 5:30p Doors open; music playlist
- 6:00 **Harp, cello, and piano** (Julie and Mischael Staples; Monika, Ambrynn, and Jaantje Bowman; Caroline Money)
- “Where Can I Turn for Peace” (4:41)
 - “Abide with Me” (4:06)
 - “I Need Thee Every Hour” (4:38)
 - “Nearer, My God, to Thee” (3:57)
 - “Be Still My Soul” (4:00)
 - “Come Thou Fount” (2:58)
- 6:28 **Organ: “Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise”** (Dallin Bissett; jubilant to catch audience attention)
-

The Musical Invocation

- 6:30p Welcome** (President Mark Callister, Edgemont East Stake)
- 6:32p Sharon East Messiah Chorus** [Katherine Rosenvall on organ, Diane Carter on piano]
- “Lift Up Your Heads, O Ye Gates,” Handel, *Messiah* (2:00)
 - “Behold the Lamb of God,” Handel, *Messiah* (with cut, 2:40)
 - “Surely He Hath Born Our Griefs,” Handel, *Messiah* (1:45)
- 6:39p Nebo Holiday Chorus and Orchestra**
- “And with His Stripes We Are Healed,” Handel, *Messiah* (2:15)
 - “Ruht wohl, ihr heiligen Gebeine,” Bach, *St. John Passion* (with cut, 4:00)
 - “Ach Herr, laß dein lieb Engelein,” Bach, *St. John Passion* (2:20)
- 6:48p 2 Harps, 4 Cellos, 2 violins, and Piano, “Jesus the Very Thought of Thee”** (Julie and Mischael Staples; Monika, Ambrynn, and Jaantje Bowman; Marcel and Chrisvenn Bowman; Caroline Money) (2:30)
- 6:51p Video Invitation from Jerusalem: Eric Huntsman** (1:37)
- 6:53p Orchestral Bridge: Barber, “Adagio for Strings” with video** (8:00)

¹ Scripture translations are from “Celebrating Holy Week through a New Look at the Gospel Texts” by Eric D. Huntsman, available at https://erichuntsman.com/Huntsman_holy_week_scripture_selections_translation.pdf.

Theme slide and video: “The sacred events between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday are the story of hosanna and hallelujah. *Hosanna* is our plea for God to save. *Hallelujah* expresses our praise to the Lord for the hope of salvation and exaltation. In hosanna and hallelujah we recognize the living Jesus Christ as the heart of Easter.” (Gerrit W. Gong, “Hosanna and Hallelujah—The Living Jesus Christ: The Heart of Restoration and Easter,” April 4, 2020; emphasis added).

The Scriptural Service

Narrators 1 and 2: Eric and Elaine Huntsman

Narrators 3 and 4: John and Lani Hilton

Narrators 5 and 6: Tyler and Kiplin Griffin

7:00p Event Choir: Rob Gardner, “Hosanna (Thy Savior Hath Come),” from *Lamb of God*, with orchestra (4.5 minutes, without scripture narration)

Invocation: Scott Esplin, dean of BYU’s College of Religious Education

Palm Sunday

The Triumphal Entry

Children’s Song and Procession: “Easter Hosanna (chorus only)” and “Hosanna” (*Children’s Songbook*, 68 and 66) [2 minutes; Judith Phair on piano and Katherine Rosenvall on organ]

Reader 1: Eric

“When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethany and Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, he sent ahead two of his disciples, and he said to them, ‘Go to the village facing you, and right as you enter it, you will find a colt tied up, upon which a man has never sat. Untie it and bring it. If someone says to you, “Why are you doing this?” say, “The Lord needs it,” and right away he will send it back here.’ So, they went and found the colt tied up near a doorway, outside in the street, and they untied it. Some of the people who were standing there said to them, ‘What are you doing untying the colt?’ They said to them just what Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and put their cloaks on it, and Jesus took his seat on it. Many people spread out their cloaks on the road, and others, after they had cut leafy branches in the fields, spread them out. And both those who were going ahead and those who were following kept crying,

‘Hosanna!

Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming!

Hosanna in the highest heavens!’” (Mark 11:1–10)

All Choirs, Orchestra, Organ, and Congregation: “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” (Hymn no. 69, PLEASE STAND; THOSE WITH PALM FRONDS MAY WAVE THEM)

Reader 2: Elaine

“Next, Jesus came into the temple . . . Then the blind and lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. Yet when the chief priests and the experts at the law saw the amazing things that he was doing and heard the children in the temple crying out and saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’ they were indignant. So, they said to him, ‘Do you hear what they are saying?’ Jesus said, ‘Yes indeed! Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of infants and those who are nursing I have prepared praise?’” (Mathew 21:14–17)

Elaine sits

Children, Sharon East, then Congregation: “Tell Me the Stories of Jesus” (*Children’s Songbook*, 57, with additional verse) [Katherine Rosevall on organ, Judith Phair on piano]
Text: W. H. Parker, Music: Frederic A. Challinor; Arr. Ryan Murphy

Children v. 1

Sharon East v. 2

Children and Sharon East v. 3

Congregation joins in this final verse

“Into the city I’d follow, The children’s band,
Waving a branch of a palm tree, High in my hand;
One of his heralds, Yes, I would sing,
Loudest hosannas, ‘Jesus is King!’”

Monday

Cursing of the Fig Tree; Cleansing of the Temple; Jesus Teaches in the Temple

Reader 3: John

“On the following day, after they had left Bethany, he was hungry. When he saw from a distance a fig tree that had leaves, he approached it in case he might find something on it. Yet when he reached it, he found nothing except leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response he said to it, ‘May no one ever eat fruit from you again!’ And his disciples heard this.”

Reader 4: Lani

“Then they came to Jerusalem, and when he had come into the temple, he began to cast out those who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. Nor would he allow anyone to carry vessels through the temple. So, he began to teach, saying to them, ‘Is it not written that my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a lair of bandits!’ The chief priests and the experts at the law heard this and began deliberating how they might put him to death, for they were afraid of him because the entire crowd was amazed at his teaching. And when it was evening, he left the city.”

Reader 3: John

“As they were passing by . . . they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots up. Remembering, Peter said to him, ‘Master, look, the fig tree that you cursed has withered!’” (Mark 11:12–21)

Reader 4: Lani

“And he was teaching every day in the temple, but the chief priests and the experts at the law, and also the leaders of the people, kept seeking to put him to death, but they were not able to find what they might do, because all the people were clinging to what they were hearing from him.

“And during the days he was teaching in the temple, and during the nights, after leaving, he spent the night on the mount that is called Olivet. And all the people would get up early in the morning to come to him in the temple to listen to him.” (Luke 19:47–48; 21:37–38)

Tuesday*The Olivet Discourse***Reader 5: Tyler**

“As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Teacher, look! What wonderful stones and buildings!’ In response Jesus said to him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? A stone shall not be left here upon another stone that is not thrown down.’”

Reader 6: Kiplin

Jesus then took his disciples on to the Mount of Olives, where they sat and looked across the Qidron Valley at the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. There, in what is sometimes called the Olivet Discourse, Jesus prophesied about the last days, in particular his glorious second coming.

Reader 5: Tyler

“Watch! I have warned you in advance about all these things. But in those days, after that tribulation, ‘The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky,’ and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man as he comes in the clouds with great power and glory.’” (Mark 13:1–2, 23–26)

Wednesday*Conspiracy against Jesus; the anointing of Jesus; Judas agrees to betray Jesus***Reader 2: Elaine**

Traditionally, the Wednesday of Jesus’ last week is sometimes called “Spy Wednesday” because two dark, conspiratorial episodes frame a beautiful, loving scene. The touching act of a woman who showed her love for Jesus by her selfless act of anointing him in advance of his sacrifice is preceded and followed by scenes of treachery. The *sweetness* of her love is thus highlighted by the *bitter* betrayal of a *friend* choosing to become a *foe*. With the anointing scene emphasized in the middle of these episodes, perhaps we might better call this day of Holy Week, “Loving Wednesday.”

Reader 1: Eric

“Now when the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were two days away, the chief

priests and the experts at the law began to deliberate how they could take him by cunning and put him to death, for they said, ‘Not during the festival so that there will not be a commotion among the people.’”

Reader 2: Elaine

“While he was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the dinner table, a woman who had an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment of pure nard came in. After breaking the flask, she poured it on his head. There were some who began to complain indignantly to each other, saying, ‘Why has this ointment been wasted? For this ointment could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and given to the poor.’ And they scolded her. But Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone. Why are you distressing her? She has done a fine thing for me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do something good for them, but you do not always have me. She has done what she could: she has anointed my body ahead of time for its burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever the good news is proclaimed throughout the whole world, this also which she has done will be recounted in her memory.’”

Reader 1: Eric

“Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to hand him over. When they heard this, they were delighted and promised to give him money. So, he began to look for a convenient opportunity to hand him over.” (Mark 14:1–11)

Maundy Thursday

The Last Supper; Gethsemane; Arrest

Reader 3: John

The traditional name for this day, “Maundy,” comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means “commandment” and recalls the new commandment that Jesus gave at the Last Supper that we should love one another. Crucial episodes that occurred on this night included

the institution of the sacrament,

the washing of the disciples’ feet,

and Jesus’ experience in Gethsemane, where he took upon himself our sins, sorrows, pains, sicknesses, and disappointments, the crushing weight of which caused him to bleed at every pore. He was then betrayed by Judas, abandoned by the disciples, arrested, and then questioned and abused at the hands of the Jewish authorities.

Reader 4: Lani

“On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the paschal lamb, his disciples said to him, ‘Where do you want us to go to make preparations that you may eat the Passover?’ So, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, ‘Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him . . .’ And so the disciples went out and came into the city, found just what he told them, and prepared the Passover.” (Mark 14:12–16)

Reader 3: John

“The Lord Jesus, on the night that he was handed over, took bread, and after he had offered thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body broken for you, this do in my memory.’ In the same way, he took the cup, after he had dined, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in my memory.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:23–26)

John and Lani sit

Nebo and Orchestra vv. 1–3 “O God, the Eternal Father” (Hymn no. 175)
Congregation joins v. 4:

Reader 5: Tyler

Following the institution of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, Mark and Matthew tell us that the disciples sang a hymn, probably one of the psalms, and then left the upper room, heading for Gethsemane.

As they walked through the Qidron Valley, the Temple Mount would have risen above them on their left hand, and on their right side they would have passed many tombs and grave monuments. With these tombs illuminated in the darkness only by the light of the Passover moon and perhaps the torches or lamps they carried, what must have been Jesus’ thoughts as he approached the ordeal ahead? Would these words from the twenty-third psalm have come to his mind?

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
 I will fear no evil:
 For thou art with me;
 Thy rod and thy staff comfort me (Ps 23:4)

Would his friends not abide with him and watch with him in his struggle? Yet we know that in our own darkest hours, we can always know that the Lord will be with us through our nights of struggle.

Tyler holds position

Event Choir with organ: “Abide with Me” (arr. Donald Ripplinger)

Reader 5: Tyler

Then in what is called both the Intercessory Prayer and the Great High Priestly Prayer, Jesus

prayed for his disciples—and for all of us:

“Holy Father, watch over them in your name,
the name that you gave to me,
that they may be one,
even as we are.

“I am in them,
and you in me,
that they might attain perfect unity,
that the world may know
that you sent me,
and that you have loved them
just as you have loved me” (John 17:11b, 23)

Reader 6: Kiplin

“Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he began to feel overwhelmed and distressed. Then he said to them, ‘My soul is consumed with grief, to the point of death. Remain here and keep watch.’” (Mark 14:32–34)

“Next, after he had withdrawn about a stone’s throw from them, kneeling down, he began to pray, “‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me, but let it not be according to my will but yours.’ Then an angel from heaven appeared to him to strengthen him. And because he was in agony, he kept praying more fervently, and his sweat became like [drops] of blood falling onto the ground.” (Luke 22:41–44)

Reader 1: Eric

“Then right away, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived together with a crowd armed with swords and clubs that had been sent by the chief priests, the experts at the law, and the elders. Now the one who was betraying him had given them a signal, saying, ‘The one whom I kiss is the one. Arrest him and lead him away securely.’ So, when he had arrived and had come straight up to him, he said, ‘Master!’ and kissed him. And they laid hands on him and arrested him. . . . Then they all fled, abandoning him.” (Mark 14:43–46, 50)

Reader 2: Elaine

“Then they led Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders, and experts at the law gathered together. . . . The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin were seeking testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they were not finding any. . . . Some of them started spitting on him, blindfolding his face and striking him with their fists, and saying to him, ‘Prophecy!’ And their retainers took him with slaps on the face.” (Mark 14:53, 55, 65)

Good Friday

False Judgment and Abuse; Crucifixion; Burial

Reader 3: John

“Then first thing in the morning, when the chief priests had reached a decision together with the elders, the experts at the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, after they had bound Jesus, they led him away and handed him over to Pilate. . . . [who] said to him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. In truth, my kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate said to him, ‘So you are a king, then?’ Jesus responded, ‘You are saying that I am a king.’

I was born for this,
and for this I came into the world:
to bear witness to the Truth.
Every person who is on the side of truth
hears my voice.’

“Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” (Mark 15:1; John 18:33, 36–38a)

Reader 4: Lani

So Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. Then the soldiers, after they had woven a crown out of thorns, put it on his head and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying, ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’ and slapping him in the face. Pilate came back out and said to them, ‘Look, I am bringing him back out to you so that you may know that I have found no grounds for complaint against him.’ Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, ‘Behold, the man!’” (John 19:1–5)

Event Choir and Organ vv. 1–2 “O Savior, Thou Who Wearest a Crown” (Hymn no. 197) Text: Karen Lynn Davidson; Music: Hans Leo Hassler
Congregation joins for vv. 3–4

Reader 5: Tyler

“Then they brought him to the place *Golgotha*, which is translated ‘The Place of the Skull.’ Next, they gave him some wine mixed with myrrh, but he would not take it. So they crucified him, and they divided his articles of clothing, casting lots for them to see who would take what. It was at nine o’clock when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him that had been written was ‘The King of the Jews.’ And with him they crucified two insurgents, one on his right hand and one on his left.” (Mark 15:22–28)

Reader 6: Kiplin

“Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.’ . . . One of the criminals who had been hung there insulted him, saying, ‘You are not the Christ, are you? Save yourself and us!’ But the other, rebuking him in response, said, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? We have been condemned justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’” (Luke 22:34, 39–43)

Reader 5: Tyler

“When it was noon, darkness arose over the whole earth and lasted until three o’clock. At three o’clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*, which

translated is, ‘My God, my God, why have you deserted me?’” (Mark 15:33–34)

As President Russell M. Nelson has taught, all the previous suffering of Gethsemane “was intensified as he was cruelly crucified on Calvary’s cross” (*Liahona*, Nov. 1988, 88).

Reader 1: Eric

“After this, because Jesus knew that everything had been completed, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I am thirsty.’ A vessel of wine vinegar was standing there, so after they put a sponge full of wine vinegar on a hyssop stalk, they held it to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine vinegar, he said, It is completed! and, after bowing his head, he surrendered his spirit.” (John 19:28–30)

Congregation sings v. 1 “Behold the Great Redeemer Die” (Hymn no. 191)

Nebo and Orchestra singing vv. 2–4 [

Written in the program and projected on the screen: “In order to appreciate the miracle and joy of the resurrection, we must first appreciate the extent of the sacrifice. We invite you to sit quietly and reflect on the price that Jesus paid for us”

Moment of Silence

Lights darken for 60 seconds

Lights come up half-strength for next song, growing towards the end of song

Event Choir: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” with organ

Text, Issac Watts; music, Lowell Mason; arr. Gilbert Martin

Reader 2: Elaine

“There was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. So they laid Jesus there on account of the preparation day of the Jews, because the tomb was close by.” (John 19:41–42)

Event Choir: Ave Verum Corpus, a capella (arr. Philip Stopford; approx. 3:40 minutes)

Holy Saturday

Jesus preaches in the Spirit World

Reader 3: John

“For even Christ suffered once for sins, a righteous man for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. Having been put to death in the flesh yet made alive in the spirit, he, having gone among the spirits in prison, preached to those who had once been disobedient . . . For this reason the gospel was preached even to the dead, so that they might be judged in the flesh as humans are but live in the spirit as God does.” (1 Peter 3:18–19a; 4:6)

Reader 4: Lani

“As I pondered over these things which are written, the eyes of my understanding were opened, and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great. And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in

mortality; and who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer's name. All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. I beheld that they were filled with joy and gladness, and were rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand."

Reader 3: John

"While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful; And there he preached to them the everlasting gospel, the doctrine of the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall, and from individual sins on conditions of repentance . . . And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross." (D&C 138:11–15, 18–19, 35)

Easter Sunday

The Resurrection

Reader 5: Tyler

"On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices that they had prepared. Then they found that the stone had been dislodged from the tomb. Yet when they entered it, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were uncertain as to what this meant, look, two men in gleaming clothing suddenly stood near them. Now while the women were afraid and were bowing their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why are you looking for one who is alive among the dead? He is not here but has risen! Remember what he said to you when he was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be handed over into the power of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.'"' (Luke 24:1–7)

Reader 6: Kiplin

When we arrive at Easter at the end of our journey this week, we will read—alone, together with our families, or in Easter services that morning—the other joyous appearances of the Risen Lord. These include his revelations to Mary Magdalene, to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, to the disciples first in the upper room and later to seven of them on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

But in this dispensation, we are blessed with many modern appearances, such as this one to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon on February 16, 1832:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father." (D&C 76:22–23)

Nebo Holiday Chorus and Orchestra, vv. 1–2 "He Is Risen" (Hymn no. 199); other choirs and congregation stand and sing v. 3 (those with palms may raise or wave them)

8:00p Reproject the Gong quote, “Hosanna and Hallelujah”

Musical Benediction: “Hallelujah Chorus” from Beethoven, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, Choirs with orchestra

Benediction: Kim Money, Latter-day Saint endorsed civilian chaplain

Organ postlude: “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” (Dallin Bissett)

We hope that you can share the loss Jesus’ family and friends felt at his death and reflect on his sacrifice through tomorrow evening. May it increase the joy you feel Easter morning as we echo in our hearts, “Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!”
