

March 24

Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday



Introduction to the day

This week, the center of the church's year, is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. Mark's gospel presents Jesus in his complete human vulnerability: agitated, grieved, scared, forsaken. Though we lament Christ's suffering and all human suffering, we also expect God's salvation: in the wine and bread, Jesus promises that his death will mark a new covenant with all people. We enter this holy week thirsty for the completion of God's astonishing work.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We begin worship outside with our palm fronds

Tonight – Evening Prayer 9:30pm FBLive

Tuesday – Men's Bible Study 6:30pm hybrid

Wednesday – Morning Prayer 9:30am FBLive

Maundy Thursday – Worship 7pm

Good Friday – Worship 7pm

Holy Saturday – Easter Vigil 9:30pm

Next Sunday – Easter, Egg Hunt and Meal following worship

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

ACCLAMATION (3X)

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Mark 11:1-11

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’ ” ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

BLESSING OF PALMS

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

We praise you, O God,

for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Today he entered the holy city in triumph

and was proclaimed messiah and king

by those who spread garments and branches along his way.

Bless these branches and those who carry them.

Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross,

so that, joined to his death and resurrection,

we enter into life with you;

through the same Jesus Christ,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PROCESSION *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

Refrain

All glory, laud, and honor
to you, redeemer, king,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring.

1 You are the king of Israel
and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming,
our King and Blessed One. Refrain

2 The company of angels
are praising you on high;
creation and all mortals
in chorus make reply. Refrain

3 The multitude of pilgrims
with palms before you went;
our praise and prayer and anthems
before you we present. Refrain

4 To you, before your passion,
they sang their hymns of praise.
To you, now high exalted,
our melody we raise. Refrain

5 Their praises you accepted;
accept the prayers we bring,
great author of all goodness,
O good and gracious King. Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

As we now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, let us pray. O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

A reading from Isaiah.

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear

to listen as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

⁶I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

^{9a}It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 31:9-16

⁹Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;
my eye wastes away from grief,
my soul and body also.

¹⁰For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery,
and my bones waste away.

¹¹I am the scorn of all my adversaries,
a horror to my neighbors,
an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee from me.

¹²I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.

¹³For I hear the whispering of many —
terror all around! —
as they scheme together against me,
as they plot to take my life.

¹⁴But I trust in you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my God."

¹⁵My times are in your hand;

deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

¹⁶Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11

A reading from Philippians.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**We are turning, Lord, to hear you; you are merciful and kind—
slow to anger, rich in blessing, and with love to us inclined.**

GOSPEL: Mark 14:1--15:47

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

3: It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him;

2: for they said, “Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.”

3: Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, (*tambourine trill/shake begins*) went to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus to them.

1: When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money.

2: So Judas began to look for an opportunity to betray Jesus. (*tambourine stops*)

1: On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, at evening Jesus came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said,

3: “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, the one who is eating with me.”

1: They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, “Surely, not I?”

3: Jesus said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me.

2: For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.” (*cymbal rim*)

1: While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.”

3: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it.

1: Jesus said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

2: When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

1: And Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters; for it is written,

2: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”

3: Peter said to him, “Even though all become deserters, I will not.”

1: Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

3: But Peter said vehemently, (*tambourine trill*) “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.”

1: And all of them said the same. (*tambourine stops*)

3: They went to a place called Gethsemane; and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”

2: He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated.

1: And Jesus said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; (*hand drum throughout this section: quarter and two eighths*) remain here, and keep awake.”

2: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

3: He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.”

1: Jesus came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? (*drum crescendo begins*)

2: Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

3: And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.

2: And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him.

3: Jesus came a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

1: Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.” (*drum stops*)

2: Immediately, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

3: Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.”

1: So when he came, he went up to Jesus at once and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him.

2: Then they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.

3: But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. (*cymbal rim*)

2: Then Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit?”

3: Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.” (*tambourine trill*)

2: All of them deserted him and fled.

1: A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth.

2: They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

3: They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled.

1: Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

2: Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none.

1: For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

3: Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”

2: But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

1: Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?”

2: But he was silent and did not answer.

1: Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

2: Jesus said, “I am; and (*soft cymbal roll begins and slowly crescendos through the entire section*) ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’”

3: Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, (*cymbal slow, dramatic crescendo*) “Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?”

1: All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!” The guards also took him over and beat him.

(*crescendo leads to cymbal crash*)

3: While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by.

1: When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

2: But Peter denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.”

(tambourine trill) And he went out into the forecourt.

3: Then the cock crowed. *(tambourine trill ends with a hand slap)*

2: And the servant girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.”

3: But again he denied it.

1: Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.”

2: But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, *(tambourine trill)* “I do not know this man you are talking about.”

1: At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. *(tambourine hand slap)* Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

3: And he broke down and wept. *(cymbal rim)*

3: As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

2: Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” He answered him, “You say so.”

3: Then the chief priests accused him of many things.

1: Pilate asked him again, “Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.”

3: But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

2: Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked.

3: Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection.

1: So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, *(cymbal roll)* “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?”

2: For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over.

3: But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. *(roll leads to cymbal crash)*

1: Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?”

2: They shouted back, “Crucify him!” *(cymbal roll)*

3: Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?”

2: But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him!” *(roll leads to cymbal crash)*

1: So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

3: Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort.

2: And they clothed him in a purple cloak; *(tambourine trill)* and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him.

1: And they began saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!”

2: They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.

3: After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. (*tambourine stops*)

2: They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

3: Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).

1: And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.

2: And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

1: It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."

The assembly stands.

2: And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

1: Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!"

3: In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe."

2: Those who were crucified with him also taunted him. (*cymbal rim*)

1: When it was noon, (*slow hand drum toll in this section*) darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

2: At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (*drum crescendo*)

3: When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah."

2: And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down."

1: Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. (*drum stops*)

Ten seconds of silence.

(*out of the silence a cymbal roll crescendos to a very loud crash*)

3: (wait until the crash) And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

1: Now when the centurion, who stood facing Jesus, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

2: Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock.

1: He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body was laid.

3: The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need. *A brief silence.*

Blessed One, today the church sings glad hosannas as we enter Holy Week. Prepare us to bear witness to Christ's suffering and death endured for our sake. Gather your people around the cross and comfort us with resurrection hope. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Renew your good creation and protect the balance of life on earth. Encourage the work of foresters, scientists, arborists, gardeners, and river keepers. We pray for the health of pollinating insects, songbirds, and native plants. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Establish peace and justice among the nations (*regions in conflict may be named*). Hold to account any with authority to judge others. Grant that courts, legislatures, and local governments will serve with integrity and compassion. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Bring hope to any who feel forsaken or forgotten. Make a way for refugees and asylum seekers. Reunite families enduring separation. We pray for any who are incarcerated, institutionalized, or in foster care, that they may know your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Give energy and joy to our pastor/s, deacons, worship leaders, and musicians. Bless baptismal candidates, their sponsors, confirmands, and teachers (*individuals preparing for baptism and confirmation may be named*). Watch over those who travel. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Blessed One, our times are in your hand. Sustain us in discipleship throughout our lives and receive us into everlasting life. (*We give thanks for the courage of Oscar Arnulfo Romero, bishop and martyr, whom we commemorate today.*) **Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING PRAYER

**Jesus, you are the bread of life
and the host of this meal.**

**Bless these gifts that we have gathered
that all people may know your goodness.**

**Feed us not only with this holy food
but with hunger for justice and peace.**

We pray this in your name. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
whose suffering and death gave salvation to all.

You gather your people around the tree of the cross,
transforming death into life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:
**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.
Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.
Come, Holy Spirit.

With [name/s and] your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God,
at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.
As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,
now make us one loaf to feed the world;
in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Beloved,
we are God's own people,
holy, washed, renewed.
God bless you and keep you,
shower you with mercy,
fill you with courage,
and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share your bread.
Thanks be to God.