

Palm and Passion Sunday

Minister: Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

Minister: Let us pray.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Gospel

Matthew 21:1-11

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Blessing of the Palms

M: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

M: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

P: Hosanna in the highest.

Hymn and Psalm

The Hymnal 1982 - #376 Joyful, joyful, we adore thee

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re - flect thy rays,
 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,

hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.
 stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way;
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, bloom - ing mea - dow, flash - ing sea,
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our Bro - ther: all who live in love are thine;

giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant - ing bird and flow - ing foun - tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
 teach us how to love each o - ther, lift us to the joy di - vine.

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 Music: *Hymn to Joy*, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827); adapt. Edward Hodges (1796-1867), alt.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; *his mercy endures for ever.

2 Let Israel now proclaim, *"His mercy endures for ever."

19 Open for me the gates of righteousness; *I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the LORD.

20 "This is the gate of the LORD; *he who is righteous may enter."

21 I will give thanks to you, for you answered me *and have become my salvation.

22 The same stone which the builders rejected * has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the LORD's doing, *and it is marvelous in our eyes.
24 On this day the LORD has acted; *we will rejoice and be glad in it.
25 Hosannah, LORD, hosannah! *LORD, send us now success.
26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; *we bless you from the house of the LORD.
27 God is the LORD; he has shined upon us; *form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.
28 "You are my God, and I will thank you; *you are my God, and I will exalt you."
29 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; *his mercy endures for ever.

M: Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect of the Day

M: Let us pray. Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The 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. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I 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. The 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; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty

Psalm

9 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; *my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.
10 For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; *my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.
11 I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors, a dismay to those of my acquaintance; * when they see me in the street they avoid me.
12 I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; *I am as useless as a broken pot.
13 For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; *they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.
14 But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. *I have said, "You are my God.
15 My times are in your hand; * rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.
16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *and in your loving-kindness save me."

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Passion

Matthew 27:11-54

Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one

of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Post-passion Hymn

Lift Every Voice and Sing II - #37 Were You There?

1. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? _____ Were you
 2. Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? _____ Were you
 3. Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? _____ Were you
 4. Were you there when He rose up from the grave? _____ Were you

1. there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
 2. there when they nailed Him to the tree?
 3. there when they laid Him in the tomb? O! _____
 4. there when He rose up from the grave?

Some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble. _____

1. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? _____
 2. Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? _____
 3. Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? _____
 4. Were you there when He rose up from the grave? _____

Sermon

Prayers of the People

Minister: Let us pray for the Church and for the world. Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your wholeness and healing. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

We commend to your grace and mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that they and we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom. *(pause) Lord, in your mercy*

People: Hear our prayer.

[please offer your own prayers, either silently or aloud at this time]

Celebrant: Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace