

March 24, 2024

Palm Sunday

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" William H. Monk. Arr. Cindy Berry

Extinguishing a Lenten Candle *written by Won Hur. Used with permission. The United Church of Canada*

Crowds of people lined streets to welcome Jesus from Nazareth riding into town on a donkey.

On the other side of Jerusalem, some others went to see a proper Roman military parade.

They watched Pontius Pilate riding on a war horse accompanied by battle-hardened foot soldiers with their swords, shields, helmets, and war drums.

They were the enemy. They were impressive and fearful.

At Jesus' parade, the people were shouting, "Hosanna, save us, we pray."

"Save us from the tyranny of the Romans who rule over us."

Save us from the Romans of our day too, so that we may live in peace.

Save us, so that we can live with dignity.

Save us, so that we can live as ones created in God's image.

We shout. We pray. And we wait.

When will the day of God, the kingdom of God, come?

The sixth candle is extinguished.

Refrain: MV 90 "Don't Be Afraid" Words: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, Music: John L. Bell

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Don't be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised, promised to be always near.

Prayer:

O God, who rules over the universe, please do not let the fools of this world destroy your world. Do not let them gloat over you and us. Do not let them have the last say or the last laugh. May your will be done.

May justice and peace prevail. May we truly know that we live and move and have our being in you and through you. So, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Call to Worship *Zechariah 9:9*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Look! Your king comes to you;

triumphant and victorious is he –

humble and riding on a donkey;

on a colt, the foal of a donkey!

Hymn: VU 122 "All Glory, Laud and Honour" Words, Music, Translation: Public Domain

All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer, King,

to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

You are the King of Israel, and David's royal son,

now in the Lord's name coming, our King and blessed one.

All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer, King,

to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went,

our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present.

All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer, King,

to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
to you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.
All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,
great author of all goodness, O good and gracious king.
All glory, laud and honour to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

Holy One, today your Christ entered Jerusalem, surrounded by cheers and waving branches; the way paved with the cloaks of the people. Today your Christ comes riding into our hearts; and we sing and cheer and wave our branches and pave the way with the cloaks of our faith. And after the parade is over, we will turn away and go back to our old lives, our old ways, our old sins. With all due haste we will discard our commitment as we discard our palms. We will pick up our faith, shake it out, fold it up, and put it back on the shelf, where it belongs. Merciful God, save us! Save us from ourselves. Help us to let our fears, our doubts, our faithlessness slip from our lives and fall at your feet, so we may stand with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, the Christ, who comes in your name to save us all. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Ministry of Music: “Song of the Palms” Tune: Traditional French Carol, Arr. Jon Paige (BMI)
Text: Jon Paige

A New Creed

We are not alone,
we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God’s presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn VU 124 "He Came Riding on a Donkey" Words: Gordon Light Music: Gordon Light arr. Nan Thompson
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He came riding on a donkey, he came riding into town;
slow and easy kind of lowly he came riding with the dawn.
His disciples walked beside him, staying close, a little shy;
not too sure where he would guide them, on to live or on to die.
But all the morning sang his praises; waking birds and dancing wind;
here he is the Son of David; riding on to take his throne.

Then the children gathered, singing shouts of laughter, bursting cheer;
in the streets their song was ringing, "Hosannas" filled the morning air.
Timid adults strained to see him, caught the Spirit, joined the song;
spread their cloaks along before him, branches flashing in the sun.
So all the city sang his praises, waking streets and dancing crowd;
here he is, the Son of David; our Messiah, Son of God.

In our fasting, and our feasting, called to follow in his way;
called to walk his road to Easter, called to live his cross today.
Hosanna to the Son of David, hosanna in the heavens above;
blessed is he who comes to save us, blessed is he who brings his love.
Let us join to sing his praises; open hearts and souls to God;
he is with us, Son of David; God's Messiah, Christ the Lord.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 VU 837 *parts one, three, and four*

R: Hallelujah! hallelujah!

Let Israel now say:

'God's love endures forever.'

Let the house of Aaron say:

'God's love endures forever.'

Let those who fear God say:

'God's love endures forever.'

R: Hallelujah! hallelujah!

Open to me the gates of the temple,
that I may enter and give thanks to God.

**This is the gate of God;
through it the righteous shall enter.**

I thank you for you have answered me;
you have become my salvation.

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

This is God's doing, marvellous in our eyes.

**This is the day that God has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

R: Hallelujah! hallelujah!

Save us, O God, we pray;

God, we pray, give us success.

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

We bless you from the house of God.

God, our God, has given us light;

with palm branches in hand let us march to the altar.

You are my God, and I will thank you;

you are my God, and I will extol you.

R: Hallelujah! hallelujah!

Scripture: Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and 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. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna!

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

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Then 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 other readings for this week are:

*Liturgy of the Palms - **John 12:12-16***

*Liturgy of the Passion - **Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1- 15:47***

Meditation: "The Original Reformer"

Hymn VU 117 "Jesus Christ is Waiting" Words: John L. Bell 1984

Music: French carol, 15th C; harmony The Iona Community 1984

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Jesus Christ is waiting, waiting in the streets;

no one is his neighbour, all alone he eats.

Listen, Lord Jesus, I am lonely too.

Make me, friend or stranger, fit to wait on you.

Jesus Christ is raging, raging in the streets,

where injustice spirals and real hope retreats.

Listen, Lord Jesus, I am angry too.

In the Kingdom's causes let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing, healing in the streets;

curing those who suffer, touching those he greets.

Listen, Lord Jesus, I have pity too.

Let my care be active, healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is dancing, dancing in the streets,
where each sign of hatred he, with love, defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus, I should triumph too.
On suspicion's graveyard let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling, calling in the streets,
"Who will join my journey? I will guide their feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus, let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me; I will follow you.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

As Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey so many years ago, Christ continues to ride into our world and into our hearts through our ministries and through our offerings, bringing grace and hope and life to the vulnerable and marginalized of our day. Our tithes and other offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn *to tune Old 100th written by G.W. Dub Shepherd. Used with permission.*

Music in the Public Domain

Praise God throughout these forty days;
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise;
And praise the Spirit who imparts
God's love in Christ into our hearts.

Prayer of Dedication

Jesus, may our offerings this morning be like the donkey that you rode into Jerusalem; may they support your ministry, and may they carry that ministry into all the places in our community and in the world where it needs to go. Amen.

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

We praise you, O God, for your redemption of the world through Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph and was proclaimed Messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Yet, within days, the triumph turned to tragedy, the hosannas turned to calls for his crucifixion, the elation turned to agony. You, O Lord, know our suffering.

You who faced opposition from many know the difficulties your church faces in this world. This week we pray especially for Kerwood United Church who recently completed their amalgamation with Strathroy United Church, and their spiritual leader, the Rev. Dr. Brad Morrison.

You, who came to be saviour of the world, know the struggles of people everywhere, like the people of the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia.

You, who wept at Lazarus' death know the pain of mourning.

You, who healed many, know the suffering of those like Barbara Clark, Gord Lewis, their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our hearts

You, who spent forty days and forty nights in the desert know all about walking difficult paths. Lord, in your faithfulness, be with all for whom we pray, and see us all into your kingdom, where, with God our Father, and in the unity of the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, now and forever. We continue praying the words that Jesus taught, saying;

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
for yours is the kingdom the power
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn VU 127 "Ride On! Ride On in Majesty!" Words: Henry Hart Milman 1821 Music: Graham George 1939
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Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry:
O Saviour meek, pursue thy road
with palms and scattered garments strowed.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
The winged squadrons of the sky
look down with sad and wondering eyes
to see the-approaching sacrifice.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, thy power, and reign.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the God of hope,
grant us strength for the journey;
the Christ of compassion,
grant us empathy for all we meet;
and the Spirit of truth
grant us wisdom and vision for the way ahead,
as we journey through this Holy Week. **Amen.**

Response: VU 425 "God, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing" vs. 1

God, dismiss us with your blessing;
fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each your love possessing,
triumph in redeeming grace;
O refresh us, O refresh us,
travelling through the wilderness.

Postlude: "Lift High the Cross" Sydney Nicholson. Arr. Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMEMBER: As of Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024, worship returns to **10:00 a.m.**

Maundy Thursday - March 28: A Seder/Potluck dinner is being planned. The Seder is the traditional Passover meal that includes reading, drinking 4 cups of wine, telling stories, eating special foods, singing and other Passover traditions. We start at **5:00 p.m.**

*** Please register for this event by phoning, emailing or talking with Rev. Mark this week, so we know how many people to plan/set up for.**

Good Friday – March 29: A joint service with St. Peter’s Anglican Church is planned for **10:30 a.m.**
The service will be held at DUC.

Holy Saturday – March 30: Selections of “Holy Week Meditations” will be performed by vocalists from the Don Wright Faculty of Music at St. Peter’s Anglican Church at 2 p.m.
Freewill offering for choir honorarium.

Easter Sunday – March 31: A Communion Service is planned for the First Sunday of Easter. **10:00 a.m.**

Holy Humour Sunday – April 7: Now collecting jokes (appropriate for worship) for Holy Humour Sunday

SAVE THE DATE: Oyster Supper Friday, April 19 at 6:00 p.m. More information to follow.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

March 25 – Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 36:5-11; Hebrews 9:11-15; John 12:1-11

March 26 – Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 71:1-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; John 12:20-36

March 27 – Wednesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 70; Hebrews 12:1-3; John 13:21-32

March 28 – Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-7, 31b-35

March 29 – Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25 OR Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1- 19:42

March 30 – Holy Saturday

John 14:1-14 OR Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24; Psalm 35:1-4, 15-16; 1 Peter 4:1-8; Matthew 27:57-66 OR John 19:38-42

March 31 – Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 OR Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18 OR Mark 16:1-8