



Celebrate

Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday

April 13, 2025

Today we follow Christ from triumphal entry to the cross, each waypoint of the journey marked by Jesus' compassion for those who would betray, mock, accuse, or do violence to him. Though persecuted and beaten, Jesus the Son of God is not disgraced; instead, he asks forgiveness for those who put him to death. We have walked the Lenten pathway these forty days, each of us invited through baptism to "let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." We enter this holy week accompanying Jesus to the cross with both grief and thanksgiving in our hearts, trusting in God's redeeming love.

Procession with Palms

Luke 19:28-40

If possible, the assembly gathers at a designated place outside the usual worship space, so that all may enter in procession. Palm branches, or branches of other trees and shrubs, are distributed before the service begins.

The presiding minister begins (repeated one or more times).

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

Hosanna in the highest.

After he had said this, [Jesus] went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

²⁹When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here."

³¹If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this, "The Lord needs it." ³²So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴They said, "The Lord needs it." ³⁵Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, ³⁸saying,

"Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the
Lord!

Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!"

³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

The presiding minister and the assembly greet one another.

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.

continued

Procession with Palms, continued

The assisting minister addresses the assembly.

Let us go forth in peace,

in the name of Christ. Amen.

The assembly follows the ministers into the church. “All glory, laud, and honor” (ELW #344) and other suitable hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung as the people process into the church or once they have taken their places.

The presiding minister concludes the procession.

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

Hosanna in the highest.

Prayer of the Day

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Psalm

Psalm 31:9-16; refrain, Ps. 31:5



Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I¹ am in trouble;

my eye is consumed with sorrow,
and also my throat¹ and my belly.

¹⁰For my life is wasted with grief, and my¹ years with sighing;
my strength fails me because of affliction,
and my bones¹ are consumed.

¹¹I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors,
a dismay to¹ my acquaintances;

when they see me in the street¹ they avoid me.

¹²Like the dead I am forgotten,¹ out of mind;
I am as useless as a¹ broken pot. **R**

¹³For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is¹ all around;
they put their heads together against me; they plot to¹ take my life.

¹⁴But as for me, I have trusted in¹ you, O LORD.
I have said, “You¹ are my God.

¹⁵My times are¹ in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who¹ persecute me.

¹⁶Let your face shine up-¹ on your servant;
save me in your¹ steadfast love.” **R**

This text, the third of the four Servant Songs in Isaiah, speaks of the servant's obedience amid persecution. Though the servant has been variously understood as the prophet himself or a remnant of faithful Israel, Christians have often recognized the figure of Christ in these poems.

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.
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.

⁹It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Second Reading

Philippians 2:5-11

Paul quotes from an early Christian hymn that describes Jesus' humble obedience in his incarnation as a human being, even to death, and his exaltation and glory as Lord of all.

Let 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.

Gospel

Luke 22:14—23:56 or Luke 23:1-49 [not printed]

Through the teachings and events of the passion story we see and hear the great contradictions that characterize the coming of God's reign. The leader serves the followers, proud Peter is revealed in his cowardice, and Jesus—the innocent bringer of life—is arrested, beaten, executed, and buried.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Guide your church this Holy Week as we follow in the servant way of Jesus. Protect those who face hostility or oppression for their faith. Humble those who would use faith to dominate others and reinforce their own power. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Make your creation a living witness to Christ's passion and resurrection: in waving palms, shouting stones, fragrant vineyards, murmuring wheat, and revealing fire. Make us attentive to your holy presence in the world, that we may care for the earth you love. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Let your face shine upon the leaders of nations and let the same mind be in them as was in Christ Jesus, so that those with the most power may humble themselves to serve the most vulnerable. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Sustain the weary with a word. Grant perseverance to political prisoners and to any who are exploited, unjustly accused, or wrongly convicted. Abide with all who are in jails, detention centers, or prisons. Console all who experience times of trial or suffering (*especially*). God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Give strength to those who will lead worship during Holy Week: pastors and deacons, altar guilds and sacristans, musicians and assisting ministers, ushers, and office staff. Instill in them awe and joy, that their service may reflect the love of Jesus. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks to you for our beloved dead, trusting that as the cross of Jesus led to the empty tomb, so you welcome those who have died into the paradise of your presence. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 36:5-11. **Tuesday** Isaiah 49:1-7. **Wednesday** Hebrews 12:1-3. **Maundy Thursday** Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14. **Good Friday** John 18:1—19:42. **Resurrection of Our Lord, Vigil of Easter** (commemoration of Olavus Petri, priest, 1552; Laurentius Petri, Bishop of Uppsala, 1573; renewers of the church) Romans 6:3-11. **Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Day** Acts 10:34-43 *or* Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 *or* Acts 10:34-43; Luke 24:1-12 *or* John 20:1-18.

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