

Kuhn Memorial Presbyterian Church
Barboursville, West Virginia
Palm/Passion Sunday
March 28, 2021

This time of worship calls for a spirit of excitement and celebration. Jesus is coming! The people shout, "Hosanna!" which means God save us! The events of Palm Sunday may be demonstrated by placing palm or other lightweight branches, and your coat, jacket, or sweater on the floor where you worship. This is the first century equivalent of the "red carpet" being rolled out for a dignitary. So – worship today is more question and reflection so that we allow ourselves to be a character within the events of Holy Week.

Call to Worship

Humble and riding on a donkey,
we greet you.
Acclaimed by crowds and caroled by children,
we cheer you.
Moving from the peace of the countryside
to the corridors of power,
we salute you, Christ, our Lord.
You are giving the beasts of burden a new dignity;
You are giving majesty a new face;
You are giving those who long for redemption
a new song to sing.
With them, with heart and voice,
we shout, "Hosanna!"

Hymn Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang.
Through pillared courts and temple, the joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed, mid an exultant crowd.
The victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud.
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,
nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

Prayer of the Day

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.
Let these branches be signs of victory,
and grant that we, who carry them, may follow him in the way of the cross,
that dying and rising with him, we may enter into your kingdom,
through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever. Amen.

¹ O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

² Let Israel say,
'His steadfast love endures for ever.'

¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.

²¹ I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

²² The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.

²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵ Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

²⁶ Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.
We bless you from the house of the LORD.

²⁷ The LORD is God,
and he has given us light.

Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.

²⁸ You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.

²⁹ O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

The psalm pre-figures the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. Looking back in time, we can see how the life of Jesus reflects this text. The psalmist calls everyone, including us, to join the parade. What parades have you attended as a spectator? Have you ever been in a parade? What was being celebrated? What is being celebrated in the psalm?

Gospel Reading Matthew 21:1-11 Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

When they 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.'

Jesus gave the disciples a task to do in preparation for his entry into Jerusalem: He told them to go into town and identify a donkey for him to ride upon. They were to tell the owner that Jesus needed it. Think about your own life, your gifts, abilities, and experiences- your mistakes and successes. Imagine someone coming to your door and saying that you have something Jesus needs for his kingdom. What could that be? How would you respond?

I'll close with the reflections of Holy Week by John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg:

Prayers of the Faithful and the Lord's Prayer

Eternal God, we rejoice this morning in the gift of life, which we have received by your grace, and the new life you give in Jesus Christ. Especially we thank you for the love of our families, the affection of our friends, for strength and ability to serve your purpose today, the community in which we live, for the opportunities to witness to your gospel in word and deed. We rejoice in your healing energy that brings peace and comfort.

God of grace, we offer our prayers for the needs of others, committing ourselves to serve them even as we have been served by Jesus Christ. Especially we are concerned for all those for whom we have been praying, those whose names are on our hearts, all those affected by the pandemic, those whose work places them in close proximity to the sick. We pray for the newly bereaved. We pray for those who have lost their jobs, and those who fear the worst. Relieve our anxiety, Lord, fill us with your peace, and sustain us in our daily needs.

We pray for those whose lives are never easy: the homeless, the hungry, the poor, the troubled in body, mind, or circumstance. Give us compassion to understand, to care, and to give. We pray for your Church, here and around the world, and the faithful who may be separated today by distance, but gathered in your Spirit. We pray that our plans for returning to worship in our sanctuary will be accomplished. We pray as Jesus taught us, saying, Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our **debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but, deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen,**

Hymn

“Hosanna in the highest!” That ancient song we sing.
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven our king.
O may we ever praise him, with heart and life and voice.
And in his blissful presence eternally rejoice.

Announcements

On Sunday, April 4, we will receive contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing, this is the ecumenical OGHOS provides assistance in times of tragedy and suffering in the US and around the world.

We will observe the most holy night of the Christian Year with the Lord’s Supper this Thursday – online – at 7 pm. Please supply your elements to be prepared.

We will meet here in the sanctuary next Sunday, Easter, at 11 am when we will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Masks and social distancing are expected. The session is preparing to make the church clean and safe for us. The service will also be recorded and available later in the day on our website.

Blessing

Beloved, God is our beginning and our end,
our starting-point and our haven,
accompanying us in every day’s journey,
using our hands to do the work of creation,
and our lives to bring others the new life Jesus, our Redeemer, gives to the world. Amen.

Postlude