

Order of service
Palm/Passion Sunday
April 5, 2020

Call to worship *(based on Psalm 118)*

We gather to give thanks for God's steadfast love, a love that endures forever. We enter the gates of righteousness that the Lord has opened to us. We rejoice because God is our salvation and it is marvelous in our eyes!

Call to confession

On this day of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, we wave our palm branches, throw our coats before him, shout our praises and confidently confess our sin because of the sacrifice he made in order to save the world.

Prayer of confession

Lord, you hold nothing back, not even your Son. The lengths you will go to be in relationship with us are astounding. Jesus pours himself out for our sake and enters Jerusalem in order to take upon himself the sin of the world. Yet, we fail to respond with gratitude. We neglect to hear and heed your saving Word. We turn aside from your way and withhold that of which you have need. Forgive our fleeting faithfulness and our hollow shouts of Hosanna. Humble us, turn us toward you, help us to look to the interests of others, shape us into a closer imitation of Christ, our Savior. *(Silent prayer)*

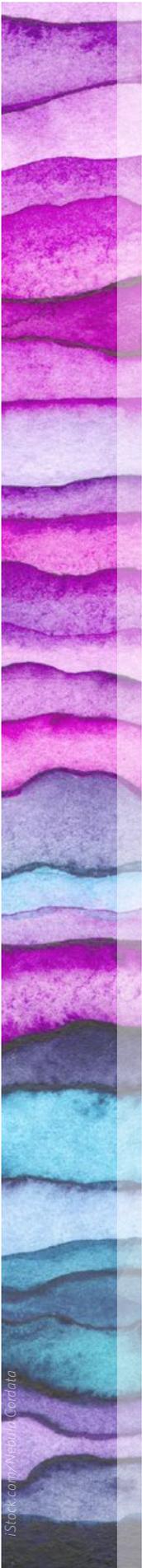
Assurance of pardon *(based on Isaiah 50)*

The Lord helps us, therefore we will not be disgraced. The Lord helps us, who will declare us guilty?

Friends, morning by morning new mercies we receive, believe the good news, through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Amen.

Prayer for illumination

God we cannot contain our Hosannas! We must cry out: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Equip us now in the reading and preaching of your Word to remain steadfast in our shouts of praise and acts of faith.



Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(The Apostles' Creed)*

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Call for the offering

Like that day long ago, we welcome Jesus to Jerusalem, waving palm branches, throwing our cloaks on the road, and giving him our gifts in joyous response to his entry into the world, into Jerusalem and into our lives. Let us worship God with today's offering.

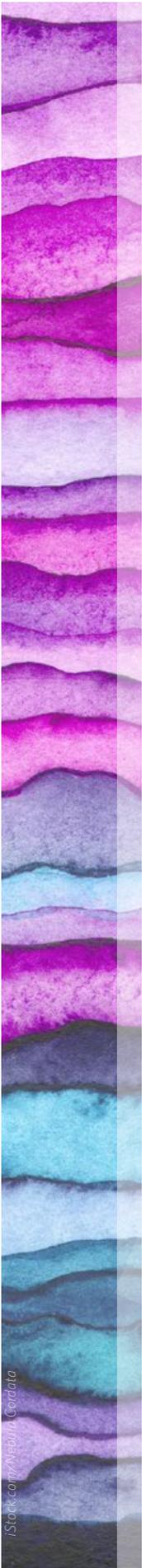
Prayer of dedication

Lord, take our gifts, offered in gratitude, never adequate, but in your grace, always blessed, multiplied and used to show your love, compassion and care. May the resources you have entrusted to us, freely given to you, make visible here and now Jesus' timeless mission of justice and mercy. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Lord, your word sustains the weary. You bind up the brokenhearted and bring good news to the poor. As you enter into the chaos of Jerusalem, we trust you come to us in whatever turmoil we are experiencing. Even as some of us shout our praises, others among us cannot even murmur a word of hope. You see us all, lined up by the road, isolated in our homes, incarcerated or incapacitated, worried about our loved ones and those who are ill, exhausted from caring for the sick and laboring at essential work, and you are moved with compassion. You come to Jerusalem, getting ever closer to the cross, pouring yourself out in order to bring forgiveness, reconciliation and salvation.

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Seeing you, humble, riding on a donkey, vulnerable and unwilling to turn away from suffering, we are bold to pour ourselves to you, crying, "Hosanna!" and "God, help us!" We do not know how to voice our deepest needs or fears or hopes or longings, yet you know them all before a word is on our tongues. We cast everything before you, Lord of all, trusting your promise of an easy yoke and a light burden.

We call out for healing for the sick, relief for the suffering, justice for the oppressed, relief for the exhausted, hope for the downtrodden and comfort for those who mourn. As we wonder what will come next, as we struggle with countless uncertainties and mounting anxieties, we look to you, the blessed One who comes in the name of the Lord, for help, for assurance and for the peace that passes understanding.

As we draw close to you and attempt to follow, even to the cross, we rejoice in your near presence. We give thanks for your selfless sacrifice. We give thanks for the health care professionals, the grocery store workers, the frontline responders. We remain grateful for all of those on the Way with us. United in you, Lord Christ, we will stand together and stand up for those who have fallen by the wayside and walk with those who fear they have been forgotten. Strengthen us for the days ahead so that we will remain faithful to you, your will and your call, until we see you face to face. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to say when we pray, *Our Father...*

Charge and benediction *(from the Book of Common Worship)*

Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous and strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Jill Duffield
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