



## *Order of worship*

Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday

**March 28, 2021**

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### **Call to worship** *(Mark 11)*

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, those who went ahead were waving palms and those who followed were shouting,

**“Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”**

“Blessed is the coming commonwealth of our ancestor David!”

**“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”**

### **Call to confession**

On this Sunday there is a wide gap between our shouts of praise at the beginning of the service and our entrance into Holy Week and the passion of Jesus by the end of it. Our emotions move from joy to solemnity. Our confession on this Sunday calls us to a special awareness of the grace of God that comes to us in this chasm between joy and sorrow. Let us confess our sin.

### **Prayer of confession**

Holy God, we come waving palms and shouting “Hosanna” for the one who we assume is the Messiah, but the Messiah we get is not the Messiah we expect. The Messiah we get calls us to acknowledge and name the violence in our world and in our lives, but we accept this violence as the normal way of the world. We have learned to live with homelessness, poverty, injustice, racism, sexism and homophobia. And when we fail to see and name the evils of our world, we allow them to flourish. Open our eyes, O God, to see crucifixions in our midst and help us to participate in the places where you are bringing liberation and life. Amen.



### **Assurance of pardon**

Friends, the good news of the gospel assures us that God in Christ meets us in the broken places in order to redeem, liberate and heal us. In Christ, we are healed and our eyes are opened. In Christ we are empowered to partake in God's liberating and justice-seeking work in our world. Thanks be to God.

### **Prayer for illumination**

O God, in the power of your Spirit, enable us to hear your Word for us today, in this time and place. Help us to discern what the Spirit is saying to the church. Amen.

### **Scripture readings**

### **Sermon**

### **Affirmation of faith** *(Romans 3:31-39)*

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Call for the offering**

We come with palms to praise God and to lift up the way God has set before us in Christ. Christ has opened our eyes and hearts to God's redeeming presence in our midst. Let us give in return for what has been given to us in Christ.



### **Prayer of dedication**

O God, may these gifts be a sign of our faith in Christ and a pledge of the loving service empowered by the Spirit of Christ. May these gifts enable your kingdom to come and your will to be done on earth as in heaven. Amen.

### **Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer**

Let us pray for the church, our neighbors in need and the whole world, saying: **Hear our prayer.**

On this Palm and Passion Sunday, we come with praise and leave with passion. Help us, O God, to be ever attentive to your presence in our midst during Holy Week. Help us to see that the crucifixion we remember on Good Friday is present in small and large ways throughout our communities and world. And enable us to stand with the crucified among us, we pray to you, O God: **Hear our prayer.**

O God, we see so much bloodshed in our world. Senseless violence, racialized violence, violence against women, violence against Blacks, Asians and immigrants. Help us to be nonviolent resisters of hate and malice and prejudice. And enable us to be agents of your love in all that we do, we pray to you, O God: **Hear our prayer.**

O God, we pray for the elected leadership in our local governments, state legislatures, Congress and our president. We pray that they would have the courage to work for the common good for all the people of this country, and that they would put aside differences in order to serve the greater good, we pray to you, O God: **Hear our prayer.**

O God, we continue to pray for those struggling during this pandemic. Help us support those delivering needed aid and vaccines, and let us be witnesses to the benefits of receiving the vaccine ourselves. And help us all take responsibility for every measure that protects us, we pray to you, O God:

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying, *Our Father...*



**Charge and benediction** (*Philippians 2*)

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ  
Who, though he was in form of God, he emptied himself and  
took human form,  
And humbled himself to the point of death,  
In order to liberate humanity from our enslavements to death.  
As we enter into Holy Week,  
Let us lift up the brokenhearted,  
And stand with the oppressed.  
And let everything we do be out of the love of God in Christ.  
Amen.

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Liturgy written by Roger Gench  
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