



Order of Worship

Palm Sunday

March 24, 2024

Call to worship (Mark 11:9, Psalm 136:1, Psalm 118:25,26, Zechariah 9:9)

With crowds from ancient times we cry,

Hosanna! Save us!

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good!

God's steadfast love endures forever.

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

We bless you in the house of the Lord!

Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he,

Humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Let us worship the living God!

Call to confession

Let us now confess before God our tendency, like the Jerusalem crowds, to profess our faith in moments of enthusiasm and deny our faith in moments of fear and stress.

Prayer of confession

Merciful God, as we enter this Holy Week of Lent, solemnly gathered at your house of prayer, we turn our hearts toward Jerusalem. We want to walk the way with Jesus, to be present each step from the Mount of Olives to the cross to the empty tomb. And yet we fall away. Forgive our stubborn resistance to Christ's work and witness. Inspire us by your Spirit to follow in his way, until we enter with him into the city not made by human hands, the new Jerusalem, eternal in the heavens. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Assurance of pardon

The one who rode into Jerusalem to cheering crowds knew that the cross awaited. In this way, we might know the great love of God for us. Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, has defeated sin forever.

Hear and believe this good news! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!





Prayer for illumination

Open our hearts and our ears to hear your Word as it is read and proclaimed. Fill us with the Spirit and surprise us, for we eagerly expect your Word and know that you will speak to us today.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (Confession of 1967, Inclusive Language)

The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church's mission. His human life involves the church in the common life of all people. His service to men and women commits the church to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all human suffering so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of persons in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God's judgment on the inhumanity that marks human relations, and the awful consequences of the church's own complicity in injustice. In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of God's renewal of human life in society and of God's victory over all wrong.

Call for the offering

Consider what you carry in your hands today. Do you carry the reign of a donkey, a cloak to share, a branch to wave? What do you bring to welcome the Lord today? Whether you share your gifts today as the plates are passed, online, or through the mail, trust that the Lord needs you.

Prayer of dedication

As the crowds cried, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord," we are truly grateful for the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ our Lord. Receive these gifts as a symbol of the dedication of our very selves to you, O God. Use our gifts and use us as a part of the inbreaking of your kingdom, which comes and is still coming into our world today. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

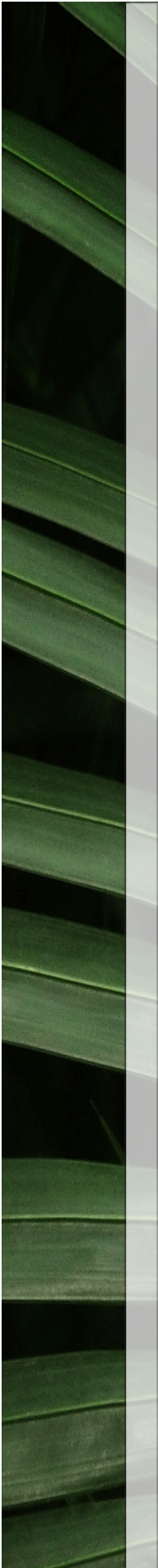
O Lord, we love a parade. We love the floats and the bands. We love to wave at those passing by. We remember the joy of candy thrown to the crowd. And what could be better than balloons or ticker tape to celebrate a victory? Oh what joy!

And yet, we know too well that parades can become mobs. That celebrations are interrupted by gunshots. That shouts of joy are replaced by screams of terror. That cries of "Hosanna!" can turn into shouts of "Crucify!" Oh, Lord, we need you.

Hear our prayers for those who wait for the heroes and victors to arrive instead of joining the fight themselves.

Hear our prayers for those who cannot lift their voice because life or





health has worn them down.

Hear our prayers for those who spoil the joy with their own agenda.

Hear our prayers for those who feel a burden of expectations they cannot meet.

Hear our prayers for those who just need a little peace and quiet.

Hear our prayers for those who wonder why everyone else has not yet joined the march for justice.

Hear our prayers for those who have heard, “not yet, wait a little longer.”

Hear our prayers for those who cannot face the cross.

Hear our prayers for those who desperately need an empty tomb on Easter morning.

Hear our prayers for us and all the things we carry.

Give us strength and courage, faith and hope, to follow Jesus this Holy Week. As we dine at tables, as we pray, as we walk, and even as we flee, remind us of your love that never fails. Oh, Lord, we need you, until that day when we might know the joy.

As we wait, with the confidence of children of God, we pray as Jesus taught us: **“Our Father...”**.

Charge and benediction

As we enter this Holy Week, may we have the courage and the faith to wait and to walk, to listen and to pray, to plan and to be surprised by the plan of the Lord that leads to life. And as we go to invite others to join us in this most sacred way, may the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit draw near to us and carry us this day and each day to come. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Matthew A. Rich and provided for free distribution.

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