



Order of Worship

Palm Sunday

April 13, 2025

Call to worship (from Psalm 118)

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

God's steadfast love endures forever!

The stone that the builders rejected

Has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the day that the Lord has made;

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!

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

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

God's steadfast love endures forever! Let us worship God.

Call to confession

We cannot escape the sin and brokenness in our world or in our hearts. But in Jesus Christ, God comes and meets us in our brokenness and makes us whole again. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin together:

Prayer of confession

Have mercy on us, O God, for we are broken vessels. You call us to follow you, but we deny, abandon and betray. You call us to pursue justice and righteousness, but we stick to the status quo. You invite us into the hope of your Spirit, but we make despair our daily bread. You lead us to the cross, but in our discomfort, we try to skip to the empty tomb. Transform us, O God. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon all our brokenness, that your grace may fill in the cracks of our broken places and make us whole. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (GtG #215)

What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss

To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul?





Prayer for illumination

Illuminating God, shine your light through the darkness of this world into every corner of our hearts. As we read the many words of Scripture, may we recognize the presence of your one true Word, Jesus Christ, who bears your love into the world. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (based on Philippians 2:5-11)

**We trust in God, the source of all hope,
Even as we call on God to meet us in places of hopelessness.
We commit to be disciples of Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
Did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
But emptied himself and was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death –
Even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him
And gave him the name that is above every name,
So that at the name of Jesus ever knee should bend,
In heaven and on earth and under the earth,
And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
To the glory of God the father. Amen.**

Call for the offering

Jesus tells us it is more blessed to give than to receive. May we who have received so much from the Lord give back as we receive the morning offering.

Prayer of dedication

God, giver of all good gifts, we thank you for all that you have graciously poured out on us. As we begin Holy Week and walk the final steps to the cross, we give you thanks for the greatest of all gifts — the gift of yourself to your people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Crucified God, some days the weight of the world feels like more than we can handle. Yet, you have promised to be here with us in the thick of it. Trusting in that assurance, we lift our prayers to you this morning.

Holy One who teaches us to give thanks in all circumstances, we praise you for the beauty of your creation as seasons change and flowers burst from the soil, heralds of the coming of spring. We thank you for the gift of your church and for the congregations with whom we worship and serve. Thank you admonishing us to life in community and for giving us to one another as companions, to bear with each other through joys and sorrows. Even when life is difficult, O God, we praise you for the slivers of good news, hope, and joy that break into our darkness like rays of light in a dark room.





Lord Jesus Christ, as we walk with you toward the cross this Holy Week, we remember the crosses of our world, all the places where your body continues to be broken. We pray for those who are sick or going through medical treatments. We pray for people who are hungry, homeless and poor. We pray for your children languishing in prisons and detention centers and for all who live in fear.

Sovereign Spirit, we pray for the many nations and peoples of your world. Knit us together in harmony in all the places where our lives and cultures intersect. Breathe your goodness and wisdom into the halls of power, where leaders make decisions that affect the lives of others. Lead them toward compassion, justice and peace. And when they will not follow your way, overturn those tables with raging fire of justice and love for all your people.

Great God whose love overcame death on a cross, overcome injustice and despair in our world today. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who taught us to pray, saying: "Our Father..."

Charge and benediction

Friends, when you leave this place, you will go into places that know hopelessness and encounter people who are not strangers to despair. Go forth and walk with them.

Accompany one another into the darkness as Christ accompanies us, trusting in the power of God to bring good news out of desolation and life out of death on a cross.

And as you go, may the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the binding power of the Holy Spirit, encircle you all this Holy Week long until we meet again in the dark of morning at the entrance to a tomb. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Ginna Bairby
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