

Order of Worship for at Home Use
March 28, 2021
Palm Sunday

Welcome to worship with Grace@Home!

We pray that you are healthy and well as you worship this week.

If you wish to worship via the video, click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvN31WXNcdU>

As we gather online it is important to remember that we are not alone. We gather with our brothers and sisters in this church and in Christ's church wherever God has placed us. We are, after all, the body of Christ and the family of God. As His people we gather for worship and we are reminded of the promise that Christ will be with us, even to the very end of the age. We are also reminded that as God's children we are a great community and even when distanced we remain God's children in communion with God and one another.

Today as we gather, I encourage you to create a comfortable space for worship where you are reminded of God's presence in your life and that He is with you in this moment. Surround yourself with the symbols of Grace. Find a place that is peaceful so that you might hear the still quiet voice of God when it speaks to you. Maybe light a candle as a reminder of God's light in the world and in your life, have your Bible with you as it is God's revelation to us in this moment.

Pastor Jim



We Gather as God's Family to Worship

Introit "A Solemn Processional" R. Haan
Dr. David Dorway & Trumpet

Welcome Pastor Dana Pope

Welcome to worship with Grace@Home. We are so glad that you have chosen to worship with us this weekend as we celebrate the triumphal entry Jesus made into Jerusalem. We gather together this weekend in preparation of our celebrations of holy week, which begins today on Palm Sunday. With the crowds we cry "Hosanna!" and we worship our God in unity and hope. Let us worship our God together!

Call to Worship Pastor Dana Pope

One: Humble and riding on a donkey, humble King, we greet you.

All: We cry hosanna!

One: Acclaimed by crowds and sung to by children,

All: We praise Your holy name.

One: You are giving the beast of burden a new dignity;

All: You give majesty a new face;

One: You are giving those who long for redemption a new song to sing.

All: With heart and voice, we shout: Hosanna!

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

One: Let us worship God!

—adapted from Common Order, Panel on Worship, Church of Scotland, 1994.

Hymn "All Glory, Laud and Honor" vs 1 & 2 arr. W. Mudde
Dr. Lisa Elliott

Sharing the Peace of Christ ****not in video****

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you...

and also with you.

In this time of social distancing it is important for us to remember that in Christ we are connected to all who believe in Jesus in every time and place. As the world continues to be isolated, and many are feeling anxious, as Christians we share the peace of Christ as a way to offer hope and the joy of Christ. Again today we use the familiar words, "The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you... and also with you."

Now, or after your time of worship, reach out via text, email, phone or video call, to someone outside of your home extending the invitation to enter into the peace of Christ with our faith community.

Praise God, that His peace is with us, always!

Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Pastor Dana Pope

Holy One, we praise Your Holy name. We lift our hearts and hands in love and adoration as we come into Your presence in prayer. As we come to Your throne today we remember Your entry into Jerusalem, and with all that gathered long ago and we cry, "Hosanna! Save us!"

Even as we rejoice in Your saving work in and for us, we know that we still need saving. We have gone our own way, done what is evil in Your sight, and we have left things undone. Forgive the ways that we have gone astray, and help us turn and return to You. We ask humbly that You would set us on right paths, open new avenues and pathways for us that we might journey alongside Jesus, in the fellowship of Your people, and form us - Holy One - into the people that You have designed us to be. In gratitude we put our faith and trust in You...

As we pray today we plead for our world. Where violence and injustice continues we pray for Your hand of protection and guidance; where Your faithful people continue to disagree we pray for understanding and connection that a way forward in Your righteousness may be found; where isolation and loneliness stretches on and on, we pray for life giving relationships and connection; where illnesses are life threatening and caregivers are weary, we pray for energy, wisdom and healing. Gracious God, what we really need is more of You and Your Holy Spirit. We need Your shalom, wholeness, completeness and perfect peace. Please move over all of creation once again, and create it anew.

This Holy Week, O God, we pray that our faith would be strengthened as we are led to the cross of Christ. More than any temporary measure, we pray for eternal life and the light of Christ to fill our world, our homes and our souls. We thank You for hearing our prayers, for touching our lives and hearts, and never leaving or forsaking us. We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus, Who taught us to pray, 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen.

We Listen to God's Word

Hymn/Praise

Jesus Loves Me

not in video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C63z5hCd7bc>

Today, I brought with me to church a red carpet. Who gets to walk on a red carpet? Can you think of a time when someone gets to walk on a special red carpet? It happens at the White House when the President is going to speak. It happens at awards ceremonies like the Academy Awards. Usually there are a lot of cameras and microphones and social media so that everyone can see the important person who gets to walk on the special red carpet that is rolled out for them. Red carpets are ways we show certain people they are special or important. The carpet is a way of making the path they are walking clear and special. This tradition has been around for thousands of years. Today in church we are hearing the story of Palm Sunday. This is the day when Jesus came to the capital city of Jerusalem and a crowd came out to meet Him. They made a special path for Jesus to the city by laying down their coats. And those who did not have enough money to have coats they cut soft branches from the trees. From Palm trees. They did this to show the world that Jesus was the welcome king.

Special Music

"We Thank You Lord"

arr. L. Larson
Chancel Choir

Reading of the Word

Mark 11:1-11

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

¹As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ²saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.' "

⁴They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

¹⁰"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest!"

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Message

“Palms and Passion”

This is Palm Sunday. It is the day we remember Jesus’ march into Jerusalem. It marks the beginning of holy week or Passion Week as some call it because the story of this week tells better than any other the love and passion God Almighty has for His people. It is a story that is hard to believe. It is a story that is full of mystery, challenge, pain, and unsuspected surprises. It is a great story; it is one that should be read by all people and written on the hearts of those who follow Jesus.

Passion Week begins with Palm Sunday: the first day of the last week of Jesus’ life on earth. This week begins with the parade or a march on Palm Sunday and ends with Easter, the day of his resurrection after He dies on the cross. This day begins with a march on Jerusalem, but it is no ordinary parade or march. This march was carefully orchestrated to have meaning and symbolism that spoke then and continues to speak over 2000 years later.

On Palm Sunday, Jesus traveled from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem, the capital city of the region and, certainly, the capital for the Jews. This was the City of David, the place where it was believed that God would set up His throne and re-establish his kingdom. This was also the place where the Romans wielded their power to control the region. On Palm Sunday, Jesus, the one who had been preaching about God, the one who had performed miracles in the name of God and the one who was heralded as God’s chosen one, rode into town on a donkey or a colt or foal of a donkey. The animal is described differently in the Gospels, but the symbolism is the same. This was the man who had controlled nature with a word, fed thousands with a simple prayer and a few loaves and fishes. He had stilled storms and raised people from the dead. And, maybe, most importantly, He told everyone that God loved the world so much that all it takes to receive the blessing of God for eternity is to simply believe and follow, God will do the rest, no matter what the cost.

To understand this event, you have to know a little about donkeys and parades in the day of Jesus. This is where the power of symbols speaks loudly on Palm Sunday. According to William Barclay, there were two types of royal parades. When a king was leading the armies off to battle, he would ride a stallion surrounded by his legions. When a king came in peace, he would ride a donkey and the people would parade with him laying their cloaks on the roadway making the journey smooth and soft. Making it a roadway fit for a king. In the time of Jesus, the donkey was not considered a lowly beast of burden, but a sign of wealth and resource. A donkey in the time of Jesus was a work animal for those who could afford it, but it was also the bearer of royal good news – peace provided by a conquering hero.

The symbolism cannot be denied. Jesus healed the sick, conquered death with his friend Lazarus and the little girl Tabatha. He stilled the storm; He spoke of good news while He fed the hungry. If He could do all this, Rome was surely no match for Him. Jesus had proven who he was and now He was coming to town. God's town. He was coming to town and people were lining the streets to see Him. The conquering hero was coming to town with a message of good news and peace.

That's the story of Palm Sunday. Jesus has come to town. The people turn out to welcome Him. They are caught up in the hype. Only a few, it seems understood that Jesus was the true messiah predicted by Isaiah to be the suffering servant. They were the believers. They were the faithful and they knew that Jesus was coming to town and He was the rightful king.

So here is the deal, the one everyone was talking about came to town as a conquering hero. They wanted Jesus to be a revolutionary that conquered their enemies, the Romans. The people came out to celebrate Him. It was a celebration with people chanting and marching and celebrating. We don't have many spectacles like this today. When we parade for politicians there are now as many protestors as people celebrating. The only real celebration of heroes today that I can think of is the red carpet at the Academy Awards!

So, I brought a red carpet. It is a sign of modern days, social media, celebration. But it is not just enough to have a red carpet. At the Academy awards there are the people and the flashing cameras and paparazzi and all the accolades. "Wow look at her... she is amazing...why is someone so beautiful with someone like him?" You know. All the praise and glamour of the moment. It is easy to get caught up in that kind of moment. That is kind of like what happened on Palm Sunday.

The problem with crowds is that it is easy to find yourself in a parade and not know where it is going. You are just there for the celebration.

When my kids were in high school, they both were big participants in Speech and debate at Green Valley Highschool. I will never forget one of the first debate tournaments Peter went to. He debated for two days and at the awards ceremony parents and contestants were all cheering the winners and those whose debate was of note. Peter had never been invited to one of these award ceremonies and when they read his name with a bunch of other kids, he was so caught up in the moment he jumped up, went on stage, grabbed one of the trophies all while the crowd cheered...and laughed a little. Turns out they called his name to the first level winners. The thing is there were three or four more levels to go before you won a trophy. You see the trophies are for people that win! Nevertheless, Peter got his first trophy that day and later he was eating Coronado's pizza, even though he went to Green Valley. You see you can get caught up in the crowd and not know you are lost until the parade ends. It is not that hard to do.

The crowd at Palm Sunday was honoring Christ and the march turned into a parade with the crowd and its carpet of palm branches. But Jesus did not delude himself into thinking that He was something that He was not. Jesus knew He was the Messiah who would suffer and die for His people. He was not coming to overthrow the government. He understood what it meant to serve. He would be the suffering servant of God and in doing so he would redeem the people who had wandered and lost their way.

Many of the people, however, never realized who Jesus was. They were caught up in the moment and they missed its importance. They wanted a party, and they wanted a revolution. But when it came to Good Friday and the death of Jesus, there was no crowd.

Folks don't be caught up in the moment. God gave you a brain, a soul, and a heart. Use them to understand who you are and whose you are. Use your brain and heart to follow God, no matter which direction the crowd goes. Follow God, not the crowd. God's march goes on, the crowd of this day will eventually lose its way and wander off.

Jesus came into Jerusalem on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey, the Roman symbol of a conquering hero. He would conquer death on Good Friday, as the greatest act of servanthood of all time. Today I think Jesus still comes to us like He did on Palm Sunday. He is humble. He comes as God's humble Son, a servant of God and a savior to His people. Will you follow Him, or are you just caught up in the crowd?

We Respond to the Voice of God

Presentation Tithes & Offerings

Pastor Dana Pope

As we continue to worship, we respond to God's love for us, and the needs of the world, by blessing God's kingdom with our time, talents, energy and resources. Today as an act of offering, take this time to turn your heart to God and reflect on how you might be light and life to our hurting world. Ask God for wisdom and inspiration as we navigate this time of heartbreak, separation, grief, injustice and violence. Today and this week turn to God and let us dedicate ourselves to lean into Christ's peace and offer that to our world. Let us return God's tithes and our offerings to the church via mail or online giving, using text to give or the following link:

<https://onrealm.org/gracepclv/-/give/now>

Offertory

“We Thank You Lord”

arr. L. Larson
Chancel Choir

Offertory Prayer

Pastor Dana Pope

We thank You Lord, for the bounty of creation; for the gift of joy and excitement we feel as we celebrate Palm Sunday and the beginning of holy week...with Easter right around the corner. We thank You for the gift of life You have given us, for all of the people and circumstances that You put in our paths as a means of grace. Help us now to share all that You give us. Bless and multiply our time and talents, our energy and conversations, our finances and our tithes... that all would be used to bless Your holy Kingdom. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

We Go with God to Love and Serve

Closing Hymn

“In Christ Alone”

arr. K. Getty/S. Townsend
Kathy Koch & Savannah Scarlett

Benediction

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

Go in peace, and know that you go nowhere by accident,
It is God who is sending you.
So, go with the power of God Almighty,
go with the love of our Lord Jesus Christ; and,
with the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.
Go, and for heaven's sake, make a difference!

As you continue to worship this week, please keep the following people in prayer, and reach out to one another in word or deed.

In Need of Prayer

Dolores Harris (Merrill Gardens)

Judy Aitken, Becky Aldridge, Fred & Mickie Bratschie, Bernard Buswell, Bill Carlston, Leslie Cary, Bob & Joan Clark, Carol Daniel, Ann Donithan, Rosamaria Duenas, Pennie & Wayne Everhart, Joice Franklin, Mary Gafford, Charlene Harper, Pam Kodey, Christian and Lara Kolberg, Dorell Koon, Richard Lyle, Carole McKinnis, Sherrie Miles, Don Moore, Maggie O’Donnell, Alice Oiler, Dodi Palmer, Mary Phillips, Aminta & Jorge Santanilla, Bruce Simon, Marty & Barbara Swartout, Mike Walsh, and Dick Wohletz

In Memoriam:

Jack Crockett 3/18/2020
Randy Innis 3/18/2020
Clark Trapp 3/18/2020
Ruthy Stull 3/19/2020
Ted Phillips 4/1/2020
Violet Cross 4/4/2020
Bill Franklin 5/4/2020
Greg Holt 5/7/2020
Carol Mohr 5/25/2020
Priscilla Taylor 7/4/2020
Louis Romero 8/8/2020
Bettye Hodgkins 8/11/2020
Gary Oiler 8/23/2020
Donna Gibson 9/14/2020
Audrey Mitchell 12/1/2020
Alice Black 12/23/2020
Phyllis McGuire 12/29/2020
Carol Moore 12/30/2020
Andrew Davis 1/1/2021
Kay Stinson 1/3/2021
Robert “Bob” Lockhart 1/16/2021
Laverne Willman 1/11/2021
Jennifer Moore 2/12/2021
Joe Fontana 2/22/2021
Greta Hougnon 3/17/2021