

Ascension Lutheran Church

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion April 5, 2020

Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! (Matthew 21:9)

Today we enter into the most holy of seasons in our Christian Church year and that most deepening-of-faith times in our personal journey with Christ. We are led to the table of the Lord's Supper, with Christ's humble service of feet washing and his offering himself as host in the meal. We travel with Jesus to the trial, cross and the darkness of the tomb. Then, we celebrate, with the whole creation, the breaking of the bonds of death and the victory over Satan and sin in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This week, truly, is the holiest of weeks.

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God. Marching with all that we are: our sin, our success, our fear, our joy; the sum of our life, we come into the Jerusalem of our faith with our palm branches in our hand, our God leading us, yet following us. We enter now, and we ask that all who enter through the doors of our church be marked with the cross of Christ.

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 118:19-24)

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter, and give thanks to the Lord.

We will give You thanks, for You have answered us; You have become our salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made;

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Holy God, you promise that your yoke is light, but we burden ourselves with so many things. We heap on ourselves expectations, anger, worries, distractions, reluctance, fear, and busyness. We place a yolk of difficulty around our necks, and we pull with all

our might. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.
Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

Lord, you are the Prince of Peace, but we fill our hearts with so many other things. We take into ourselves division, anger, hostility, and mistrust. We stuff ourselves full with these things, and then they erupt out of us and into the lives of others. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

Lord Jesus, you taught us to worry about nothing, but we so easily are overwhelmed by worries, anxieties, and distractions. We hold tight to our worries, and they distract us by day, and keep us awake at night. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

Embracing God, you called us your children before we had done anything to earn it, and yet we so often expect ourselves to earn our place as your sons and daughters. We hold ourselves to expectations that are unrealistic and painful. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

God, Jesus taught us to be intentional with our time. He knew his mission and his calling, and he lived it out every day. We can so easily become reluctant, or hesitate to do what you have called us to do. We let fear, or even laziness, stand in the way of doing what is right. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

God of the universe, you created everything seen and unseen, and then you rested. You did this to set an example for us about the importance of rest and worship. We can so easily forget our priorities, or fall into the trap of believing that we must do all things at all times. You offer us the gift of rest, but we instead choose exhaustion and weariness. Lord, we lay these burdens down at your feet.

Take our burdens, O God, and give us your perfect peace.

We lift these burdens off of our shoulders and place them at your feet. Receive them, O Lord, as we continue in silent confession.

Silence for reflection

We have placed our burdens at Jesus' feet, and we receive from him a burden that is easy, a table where we can sit together, hearts and minds filled with peace, the assurance that we are God's children, the discernment to do what is right when it is

called for, and the rest and worship that restores our souls. We unburden ourselves here from what does not satisfy. We take up God’s perfect forgiveness and peace. **Here, now, in this place, we are set free and we are changed.**

BLESSING OF PALMS

Hold up your palms or other branches for the blessing.

Let us pray.

We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way.

Bless these branches and those who carry them.

Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross,

So that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you;

Through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

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

Hosanna in the highest.

HYMN #344 “All Glory, Laud and Honor”

Refrain

*All glory, laud, and honor
to you, redeemer, king,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring.*

1 You are the king of Israel
and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming,
our King and Blessed One. *Refrain*

2 The company of angels
are praising you on high;
creation and all mortals
in chorus make reply. *Refrain*

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, 760-821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON **The Rev. Christina Auch**

HYMN OF THE DAY #624 **“Jesus, Still Lead On”**

NICENE CREED

God has gathered his people into one Church through Christ. Together with sisters and brothers throughout the world, we confess our faith.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of mercy, awaken your church to new proclamations of your faithfulness. By your Spirit, give us bold and joyful words to speak, that we sustain the weary with the message of your redemption. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, quiet the earth where it trembles and shakes. Protect vulnerable ecosystems, threatened habitats, and endangered species. Prosper the work of scientists, engineers, and researchers who find ways to restore creation to health and wholeness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, drive away fear and anger that cause us to turn against one another. Give courage to leaders who seek liberation for the oppressed. Bring peace and hope to

those who are in prison and those who face execution. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, send your saving help to all who suffer abuse, insult, discrimination, or contempt. Heal the wounded. Comfort the dying. Bring peace to those suffering chronic or terminal illness. Tend to all who cry out for relief. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts...

Mary Allen (Karen Hubbard's friend), **Kathy** Backof (Donna Lilly's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Carolyn** Blitz (Bill Bridges' friend), **Kathy** Bradley (friend of Bill Bridges), **Jennings** Brooks (Jim Wilson's roommate), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Betty** Connor (Karen Hubbard's friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges Aunt), **Joan** Craig (Clarann Schiavo's friend), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams' friend), **Pat** Farley (Karen Hubbard's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Evan** Greene (Allen Philbeck friend's son), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Markye and Carl** Greenwald (DeBells' friends), **The Holidia Family** (friend of Lisa Philbeck), **Michael** Huntsinger (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mack** Jenkins (Dave Williams' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Cathy** Kingsborough (friend of the Lacy/Smolzer family), **Becky and George** Kraft (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Kevin** Lilly (Vicky Galloway's 2nd cousin), **Heather** Lyerly (Rose Cook's great niece), **Cathy** Lyerly (Rose Cook's sister-in-law), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Jameson** McGill (Pastor Christina's friends' son), **Bernice** McDaniels (Dean Davis' daughter), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Charlotte** Morin (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Nancy** Norris (Charlie Berger's aunt), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Tommy** Price (Edith Kelly's nephew), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Harold** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Lori** Rosamond (Pastor Christina's stepsister), **Pastor Eric** Sellers (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Zuzana** Rybnicek (The Blalock's friend), **Jan** Tucker (Ozark bank employee), **The Vonbehren Family** (Barbara Davis' cousins), **Renee** Walton, **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Eric** West (Bob and Vickie Jones' son-in-law), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams' grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop's aunt), **Denise and Savannah** Yount (Sandra Waldrop's friends)

Members: Dean Davis, Lin Washburn, Dot Paul, Bob Bryant, Jane Sneed, William Coyne, Jim Wilson, Steve Eckard, Sandy Harman, Bobbie Johnson, Patricia DuBose and Bobby Jones

In Undergraduate College: Emma Auch, Brooke Buchanan, Parker Hart, Elizabeth Hoffman, Samantha Hoffman, Jacob Stone

Those Awaiting Arrival of Children: Jack Blalock and Ally Bruser (Greg and Chrystal Blalock’s son and daughter-in-law); Emma and Patrick Budzinski (daughter and son-in-law of Greg and Chrystal Blalock).

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, we pray for all who will prepare and lead worship in this Holy Week. In all things, show us the ways that you call us to die to self, to live for you, and to give of ourselves for the sake of others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, when we breathe our last, you raise us to eternal life. With all your witnesses in heaven and on earth, let us boldly confess the name of Jesus Christ, our resurrection and our hope. We pray especially for the family of Garrett Nielser. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OFFERING

*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website or the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate.2. Click the registration link and enter your payment information.3. Receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.*

*Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

OFFERTORY **“Doxology”**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

HYMN #534 **“Savior, Again to Your Dear Name”**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace.
Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coronavirus Response: All face to face, in person gatherings at Ascension are canceled through Sunday, May 10.

Prayer Concerns: Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

Online Giving is now available. Make a one time or recurring gift using the website or the GivePlus app on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

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