

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION
PALM SUNDAY
Service of the Word
April 5, 2020



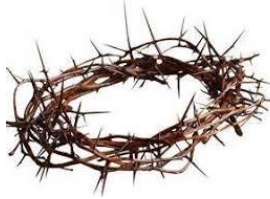
Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
85 E. Brandt Boulevard
Landisville, PA

*United in Christ,
we are called to love and serve.*

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION
PALM SUNDAY
April 5, 2020

A Service of the Word



GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Ride On, Ride On, in Majesty

J. Behnke

† **GATHERING** †

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: This is a day filled with great emotions ... from great joy to intense sadness. As we begin today's service, remember these words of jubilation:

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

Hosanna in the highest.

GOSPEL READING OF THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Hear now the words of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem according to the Gospel of St. Matthew, the 21st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The gospel is read.

Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "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.'"

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road, The 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!”

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

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

BLESSING OF THE PALMS

The Lord be with you.

Let us pray. (*A brief silence is kept.*) 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 will 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.**

HYMN

All Glory, Laud and Honor

Sung by
Zion Choir Members

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*)

3. The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present. (*Refrain*)



4. To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise.
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise. (*Refrain*)
5. Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,
Great author of all goodness, O good and gracious King. (*Refrain*)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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

† **THE WORD** †

FIRST READING

Isaiah 50:4-9a

A reading from Isaiah.

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord GOD helps me; therefore, I have not been disgraced; therefore, I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Philippians 2:5-11

A reading from Philippians.

Let the same mind be in you that was in 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, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 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 every 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

My Song Is Love Unknown

Sung by

Zion's Choir Members

My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.

Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?

THE READING OF THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

Matthew 27:11-54

Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "you say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him. "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the

elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying: "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself? If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's son." The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lema sabachtaani?" That is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man has called for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. (Pause) At that moment the curtain of the temple split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and

entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

Here ends the reading of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Caruana

Friends in Christ, grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today definitely isn’t the normal Palm Sunday people are used to. In fact, it feels kind of weird. Here I am in the Sanctuary of Zion Lutheran Church standing in front of empty pews, James at the organ, and Jeff who will be assisting with the service while you’re watching either on Zion’s website or our Facebook page. There’s no waving of the palms here, no singing of hosannas, just quiet. But you know, this day in the church calendar has always been a little different ... a little weird.

First of all, it’s the only Sunday that goes by two names: Palm Sunday and the Sunday of the Passion. It’s also a day when there are two gospel readings: one from Matthew 21 about *Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey* as bystanders excitedly waved palm branches, shouted Hosannas (an expression of joy and praise, and adoration), and the people spread their cloaks and tree branches on the road); and the second reading from Matthew 27 that reminds us of Christ’s sufferings, crucifixion, and the redemption of mankind. And because of the weirdness of today, I’ve been thinking about renaming today “Turmoil Sunday” – a day of extremes ... from joy to sadness all in the blink of an eye.

But does turmoil remind you of the gospel? Are you watching this service hoping or expecting Jesus to bring some turmoil today? Is turmoil bringing Jesus, the one we want to know and follow?

My guess is that the answers to those questions are a resounding “No.” I can honestly say to you that I’ve never prayed for Jesus to bring me some good ol’ turmoil (although in today’s world we’re certainly experiencing it right now). And I’m betting most of you haven’t prayed for turmoil. Most of us probably pray for and hope Jesus will bring just the opposite: some peace and calm, answers to our questions especially about the new virus attacking the world as I speak, and solutions to our personal problems. I don’t think anyone is watching this service looking for turmoil. I think you’re watching to hear the story of Jesus riding on a donkey, to shout hosannas wherever you are, and to know palms are available for you today.

I suspect the crowds that followed Jesus weren't so different from us. They rejoiced at Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and so do we. And most of us would be pretty happy to leave that way.

So why would I want to rename this day "Turmoil Sunday?" Well, despite what we see, our expectations and hopes for the day, and even what we want to believe, the city itself, Jerusalem, has a very different response to the triumphal entry of Jesus. "When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?'" Jesus and turmoil seem to go together.

I wonder if Jerusalem sees and understands something we don't. I wonder if we're too easily distracted by the donkey, hosannas, and palms so that we miss what's really happening. I wonder if the city's response just might be the most faithful and appropriate response? Maybe we should all be in turmoil on this day. Maybe turmoil is today's good news. Maybe the turmoil Jesus brings is exactly what we need.

Matthew makes it very clear that turmoil set the tone not just for today but throughout this entire week and even into Easter. But it's not our usual understanding of the word turmoil. It's more than just chaos, confusion, and uncertainty.

The Greek word that's been translated as turmoil really means to shake or quake, and it's descriptive of what happens in an earthquake. Matthew uses this same Greek word to describe the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the shaking of the earth and the splitting of the rocks at Jesus' crucifixion, the earthquake that accompanies the angel coming and rolling the stone away from Jesus' tomb, and the shaking of the guard who stood at the tomb.

Matthew is describing seismic events in which our lives and our world are shaken to the core and something is destroyed. That's what earthquakes do. However, the destruction brought about by Holy Week isn't the end ... it's a new beginning. The tremblers of this week will forever change who we are and the life we live.

On Monday the fragrance of love will mingle with the coming death of Jesus and everyone in the house will be shaken. On Tuesday the invitation to die before we die will become the epicenter of our faith. On Wednesday Judas' betrayal will reveal the fault line in all of us. On Thursday we will tremble at the image of intimacy, touching, and the visualization of the washing of another person's feet. On Friday the earth will quake as the cross of our creator is plunged into the heart of death. And finally, the silence of Saturday will cause the gates of hell to shudder and burst open.

Holy Week will be one earthquake after another, and the foundations on which we stand are shaken. Old things crumble and fall. The structures we've built our lives on are left in

ruin and rubble. That's how Jerusalem experiences Jesus' entry and that's why this day should be called "Turmoil Sunday."

So, let me ask you this. What parts of your life and world need some Jesus kind of turmoil? What in you needs to be shaken awake and back to life? What has become foundational for your life but no longer supports your life. What are the old ways of thinking, seeing, and acting that just need to crumble and fall? In what ways have you become a prisoner of the life you have built for yourself? Somewhere in each of our lives we need the triumphant turmoil of Christ. It's the devastation of everything in us that keeps us from being fully alive, fully ourselves, and fully God's. It's the devastation that creates space and a place for a new foundation, a new structure, and a new life.

The turmoil of this day is also the triumph of this day. The triumph of Palm Sunday is not in the donkey, the hosannas, or the palms. It's Christ's earth-shaking entry into our world and our lives. It's a triumph that will continue to be revealed throughout this week. It's a triumph that happens whenever and wherever Jesus is present. It's a triumph that causes us to change for the sake of our Lord and Savior.

And to that I say, "Thanks be to God." Amen.

MUSIC FOR THE PASSION *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* R. Lehman

APOSTLES' CREED

As an expression of our faith, let us say or read the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let's pray:

Almighty God, you have created us in your wisdom and saved us by your grace, and you empower us by your Holy Spirit to live to your honor and to your glory.

Grant that as we recall the events of your Passion, your Holy Spirit may move us to true repentance, firmer faith, and greater loyalty to you for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We thank you, God, for the victory obtained through the cross. Our hearts rejoice as we shout Hosanna in the highest, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Through your death, burial, resurrection and ascension you have proved that all power is in your hands.

We pray for all congregations, that through the celebrations surrounding Christ's journey to the cross, ministries might be renewed and our faith restored.

We pray for all who are in need during this Holy Week, especially those who are on our prayer list and those on the front lines helping in so many ways to help win the battle over the coronavirus ... doctors, nurses, medical technicians, research scientists, various health organizations, manufactures of needed supplies, and all those behind the scenes performing essential functions. Bring hope and healing to those who are quarantined, those who have tested positive for COVID-19, and those who are frustrated and depressed by the restrictions instituted to help stop the spread of the virus. Bring comfort and peace in the midst of turmoil.

We give thanks for all your people who have lived and died in the faith. We rejoice in the happiness they now enjoy and anticipate by your grace that we may join with them in celebrating the unending Easter.

Through God precious Son we pray. Amen.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING *My Song is Love Unknown* Sung by
Zion's Choir Members

Sometimes we str
ew his way and his sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day, hosannas to our king.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath,
And for his death we thirst and cry.
And for his death we thirst and cry.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Creator of heaven and earth, we give you thanks and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. He was with you in the beginning, your Word spoken in the darkness, bringing forth light and life. Though equal with you, he emptied himself and took the form of a slave. Knowing our human weakness, he gave himself up to our violence and was lifted high upon the cross. He breathed forgiveness on us, and drew the whole world to himself, sharing his life with all people and showing the fullness of your love. By his humility and death, by his glorious, risen life, you have made us a new people, called by name to bear witness to his love in the world you have made.

We give you thanks that on the night before Jesus died for us he sat down and ate with his disciples. Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said: "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper, Jesus took a cup of wine, said the blessing, and gave it to his friends saying, "Drink this, all of you: it is the new Covenant, poured out for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me." As we remember his cross and tomb, his death and resurrection, we praise him, we thank him, and we love him beyond all measure. Amen.

† THE SENDING †

BLESSING

The God who formed us in love, who renews us through grace, and who will transform us into glory, † bless you this day and always.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

Go to Dark Gethsemane

R. Lehman

CONCLUSION ON THE SERVICE

Brothers and sister in Christ, peace be with you throughout this Holy Week remembering always to connect with God, connect with others, and connect others with God.



*Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord.*

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy Week Services



April 5	Palm Sunday Services
April 9	Maundy Thursday
April 10	Good Friday
April 12	Easter Sunday

Services for all of these services will be videoed.

**The link to the videos of the services,
along with the bulletins, will be
emailed to members of the congregation.**

**Links and bulletins will also be posted on
the church website (www.zionhempfield.net).**

