



## **Sunday, March 24, 2024**

### **Palm Sunday/ Sunday of Passion**

*This week, the center of the church's year, is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. Mark's gospel presents Jesus in his complete human vulnerability: agitated, grieved, scared, forsaken. Though we lament Christ's suffering and all human suffering, we also expect God's salvation: in the wine and bread, Jesus promises that his death will mark a new covenant with all people. We enter this holy week thirsty for the completion of God's astonishing work.*

### **GATHERING**

#### **WELCOME**

This is the day the Lord has made.  
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

*(Meet in the Narthex)*

#### **THE PROCESSION WITH PALMS**

*(Branches are distributed before the service begins)*

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
**Hosanna to the Son of David.**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

We stand with the crowd, who welcome God's Anointed One;  
**We rejoice in Jesus' courage, for we feel the threat of the religions and military powers.**

We stand with the crowd, who welcomes God's Anointed One;  
**We rejoice that Jesus is with his friends, the disciples, but we wonder whether they can withstand the stress.**

We stand with the crowd, who welcomes God's Anointed One.  
**We rejoice in the acceptance of the onlookers, of one so holy, but we ask ourselves, "can they resist the evil pressure of the leadership?"**

We stand with the crowd, who welcomes God's Anointed One.  
**We rejoice that God's just and compassionate way has been recognized, but we wonder, will the love of God triumph in the coming crisis? Amen.**

## PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Mark 11:1-11

*Jesus enters Jerusalem*

<sup>1</sup>When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples <sup>2</sup>and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” <sup>4</sup>They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, <sup>5</sup>some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup>They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. <sup>7</sup>Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup>Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

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

<sup>10</sup>Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

<sup>11</sup>Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## BLESSINGS OF THE PALMS

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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.**

## PROCESSION

Let us go forth in peace,

**In the name of Christ, Amen.**

*(The choir begins the procession, as “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” is sung. The congregation to follow.)*

**ELW #344** vs. 1,2,3,5 *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

(Featuring Trumpeters – Betty Wehner & Jeff Peleaux)

*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*

5 Their praises you accepted;  
accept the prayers we bring,  
great author of all goodness,  
O good and gracious King. *Refrain*

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

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

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Everlasting God,  
**in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

## **WORD**

### **SPECIAL MUSIC**

#### **Reading: Philippians 2:5-11**

*Christ did not act to attain status and glory but was obedient to God even to the point of death. Following Christ's example, we do not seek personal status or glory but care for others as God cared for us in Christ's death.*

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,

<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

*(Please stand as you are able)*

Weekly Liturgy, Palm Sunday page 3

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Return to the Lord*

Return to the Lord, your God,  
For he is gracious and merciful,  
Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
And abounding in steadfast love.

Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

### **Gospel: Mark 14:1 -15:47** (Narrative) *The reading stands for the sermon*

*The passion story in Mark's gospel presents Jesus as one who dies abandoned by all. He shows himself to be the true Son of God by giving his life for those who have forsaken him.*

*Speaking Parts: Narrator Jesus Peter Judas Pilate  
High Priest Servant Bystander Officer*

*The Congregation will read in unison the part of the **People**.  
(Words in parenthesis are not read.)*

*Narrator:* It was now two days before the Festival of Passover and Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were looking for a way to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death.

*People:* **"We must not do it during the festival," they said, "or the people might riot."**

*Narrator:* Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon, a man who had suffered from a dreaded skin disease. While Jesus was eating, a woman came in with an alabaster jar full of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head. Some of the people there became angry and said to one another,

*People:* **"What was the use of wasting the perfume? It could have been sold for more than three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor!"**

*Narrator:* And they criticized her harshly. But Jesus said,

*Jesus:* "Leave her alone! Why are you bothering her? She has done a fine and beautiful thing for me. You will always have poor people with you, and any time you want to, you can help them. But you will not always have me. She did what she could; she poured perfume on my body to prepare it ahead of time for burial. Now, I assure you that wherever the gospel is preached all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

*Narrator:* Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went off to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus to them. They were pleased to hear what he had to say, and promised to give him money. So Judas started looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them.

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the day the lambs for the Passover meal were killed, Jesus' disciples asked him,

*People:* **"Where do you want us to go and get the Passover meal ready for you?"**

*Narrator:* Then Jesus sent two of them with these instructions:

*Jesus:* "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house he enters, and say to the owner of the house: "The Teacher says, Where is the room where my disciples and I will eat the Passover meal?" Then he will show you a large upstairs room, fixed up and furnished, where you will get everything ready for us."

*Narrator:* The disciples left, went to the city, and found everything just as Jesus had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal. When it was evening, Jesus came with the twelve disciples. While they were at the table eating, Jesus said,

*Jesus:* "I tell you that one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me."

*Narrator:* The disciples were upset and began to ask him, one after the other,

*People:* **"Surely you don't mean me, do you?"**

*Narrator:* Jesus answered,

*Jesus:* "It will be one of you twelve, one who dips his bread in the dish with me. The Son of Man will die as the Scriptures say he will; but how terrible for that man who will betray the Son of Man! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!"

*Narrator:* While they were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples.

*Jesus:* "Take it," (he said,) "this is my body."

*Narrator:* Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and handed it to them; and they all drank from it. Jesus said,

*Jesus:* "This is my blood which is poured out for many, my blood which seals God's covenant. I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine in the Kingdom of God."

*Narrator:* Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus said to them,

*Jesus:* "All of you will run away and leave me, for the scripture says, 'God will kill the shepherd, and the sheep will all be scattered.' But after I am raised to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you."

*Narrator:* Peter answered,

*Peter:* "I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!"

*Narrator:* Jesus said to Peter,

*Jesus:* "I tell you that before the rooster crows two times tonight, you will say three times that you do not know me."

*Narrator:* Peter answered even more strongly,

*Peter:* "I will never say that, even if I have to die with you!"

*Narrator:* And all the other disciples said the same thing.

They came to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples,

*Jesus:* "Sit here while I pray."

*Narrator:* He took Peter, James, and John with him. Distress and anguish came over him, and he said to them,

*Jesus:* "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch."

*Narrator:* He went a little farther on, threw himself on the ground, and prayed that, if possible, he might not have to go through that time of suffering.

*Jesus:* "Father," (he prayed,) "my Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want."

*Narrator:* Then he returned and found the three disciples asleep. He said to Peter,

*Jesus:* "Simon, are you asleep? Weren't you able to stay awake for even one hour?" (And he said to them,) "Keep watch, and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

*Narrator:* He went away once more and prayed, saying the same words. Then he came back to the disciples and found them asleep; they could not keep their eyes open. And they did not know what to say to him. When he came back the third time, he said to them,

*Jesus:* "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come! Look, the Son of Man is now being handed over to the power of sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!"

*Narrator:* Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs and sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders. The traitor had given the crowd a signal:

*Judas:* "The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him and take him away under guard."

*Narrator:* As soon as Judas arrived, he went up to Jesus and said,

*Judas:* "Teacher!"

*Narrator:* and kissed him. So they arrested Jesus and held him tight. But one of those standing there drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus spoke up and said to them,

*Jesus:* "Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? Day after day I was with you teaching in the Temple, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must come true."

*Narrator:* Then all the disciples left him and ran away. A certain young man, dressed only in a linen cloth, was following Jesus. They tried to arrest him, but he ran away naked, leaving the cloth behind.

Then Jesus was taken to the High Priest's house, where all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the Law were gathering. Peter followed from a distance and went into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. There he sat down with the guards, keeping himself warm by the fire. The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some evidence against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they could not find any. Many witnesses told lies against Jesus, but their stories did not agree. Then some men stood up and told this lie against Jesus:

*People:* **"We heard him say, 'I will tear down this Temple which men have made, and after three days I will build one that is not made by men.'"**

*Narrator:* Not even they, however, could make their stories agree. The High Priest stood up in front of them all and questioned Jesus,

*HighPriest:* "Have you no answer to the accusation they bring against you?"

*Narrator:* But Jesus kept quiet and would not say a word. Again the High Priest questioned him,

*HighPriest:* "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed God?"

*Jesus:* "I am," (answered Jesus,) "and you will all see the Son of Man seated at the right side of the Almighty and coming with the clouds of heaven!"

*Narrator:* The High Priest tore his robes and said,

*HighPriest:* "We don't need any more witnesses! You heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?"

*Narrator:* They all voted against him: he was guilty and should be put to death. Some of them began to spit on Jesus, and they blindfolded him and hit him.

*People:* **"Guess who hit you!" they said. And the guards took him and slapped him.**

*Narrator:* Peter was still down in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant women came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and said,

*Servant:* "You, too, were with Jesus of Nazareth."

*Narrator:* But he denied it.

*Peter:* "I don't know . . . I don't understand what you are talking about,"

*Narrator:* he answered, and went out into the passageway. Just then a rooster crowed. The servant woman saw him there and began to repeat to the bystanders,

*Servant:* "He is one of them!"

*Narrator:* But Peter denied it again.

A little while later the bystanders accused Peter again,

*People:* **"You can't deny that you are one of them, because you, too, are from Galilee."**

*Narrator:* Then Peter said,

*Peter:* "I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know the man you are talking about!"

*Narrator:* Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him,

*Jesus:* "Before the rooster crows two times, you will say three times that you do not know me."

*Narrator:* And he broke down and cried.

**15:1** Early in the morning the chief priests met hurriedly with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council, and made their plans. They put Jesus in chains, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him,

*Pilate:* "Are you the king of the Jews?"

*Jesus:* (Jesus answered,) "So you say."

*Narrator:* The chief priests were accusing Jesus of many things, so Pilate questioned him again,

*Pilate:* "Aren't you going to answer? Listen to all their accusations!"

*Narrator:* Again Jesus refused to say a word, and Pilate was amazed. At every Passover Festival Pilate was in the habit of setting free any one prisoner the people asked for. At that time a man named Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder in the riot. When the crowd gathered and began to ask Pilate for the usual favor, he asked them,

*Pilate:* "Do you want me to set free for you the king of the Jews?"

*Narrator:* He knew very well that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask, instead, that Pilate set Barabbas free for them. Pilate spoke again to the crowd,

*Pilate:* "What, then, do you want me to do with the one you call the king of the Jews?"

*Narrator:* They shouted back,

*People:* **"Crucify him!"**

*Pilate:* "But what crime has he committed?" (Pilate asked.)

*Narrator:* They shouted all the louder,

*People:* **"Crucify him!"**

*Narrator:* Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers took Jesus inside to the courtyard of the governor's palace and called together the rest of the company. They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorny branches, and put it on his head. Then they began to salute him:

*People:* **"Long live the King of the Jews!"**

*Narrator:* They beat him over the head with a stick, spat on him, fell on their knees, and bowed down to him. When they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. On the way they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was from Cyrene and was the father of Alexander and Rufus.)

They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull." There they tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. Then they crucified him and divided his clothes among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get which piece of clothing. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The notice of the accusation against him said: "The King of the Jews." They also crucified two bandits with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left. People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus:

*People:* **"Aha! You were going to tear down the Temple and build it back up in three days! Now come down from the cross and save yourself!"**

*Narrator:* In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law made fun of Jesus, saying to one another,

*People:* **"He saved others, but he cannot save himself! Let us see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!"**

*Narrator:* And the two who were crucified with Jesus insulted him also.

At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout,

*Jesus:* "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"

*Narrator:* which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?" Some of the people there heard him and said,

*Bystander:* "**Listen, he is calling for Elijah!**"

*Narrator:* One of them ran up with a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, and put it on the end of a stick. Then he held it up to Jesus' lips and said,

*Bystander:* "**Wait! Let us see if Elijah is coming to bring him down from the cross!**"

*Narrator:* With a loud cry Jesus died. The curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The army officer who was standing there in front of the cross saw how Jesus had died.

*Officer:* "This man was really the Son of God!" (he said.)

*Narrator:* Some women were there, looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, and Salome. They had followed Jesus while he was in Galilee and had helped him. Many other women who had come to Jerusalem with him were there also.

It was toward evening when Joseph of Arimathea arrived. He was a respected member of the Council, who was waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of God. It was Preparation day (that is, the day before the Sabbath), so Joseph went boldly into the presence of Pilate and asked him for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead. He called the army officer and asked him if Jesus had been dead a long time. After hearing the officer's report, Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. Joseph bought a linen sheet, took the body down, wrapped it in the sheet, and placed it in a tomb which had been dug out of solid rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body of Jesus was placed.

*Narrator:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(Please be seated)*

**Music:** *Jesus Loves Me* – ELW #595

## **CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**Music:** *Lord, Listen to your Children Praying* – ELW #752

## **SONG OF THE DAY ELW #353 vs. 1,5 Were you There**

- 1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,  
tremble.  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
- 5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,  
tremble.  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Text: African American spiritual

*(Please stand as you are able)*

Let us confess our faith in the words of the

## **NICENE CREED**



**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**

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

Blessed One, today the church sings glad hosannas as we enter Holy Week. Prepare us to bear witness to Christ's suffering and death endured for our sake. Gather your people around the cross and comfort us with resurrection hope. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Renew your good creation and protect the balance of life on earth. Encourage the work of foresters, scientists, arborists, gardeners, and river keepers. We pray for the health of pollinating insects, songbirds, and native plants. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Establish peace and justice among the nations. Hold to account any with authority to judge others. Grant that courts, legislatures, and local governments will serve with integrity and compassion. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Bring hope to any who feel forsaken or forgotten. Make a way for refugees and asylum seekers. Reunite families enduring separation. We pray for any who are incarcerated, institutionalized, or in foster care, that they may know your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Give energy and joy to our pastor/s, deacons, worship leaders, and musicians. Bless baptismal candidates, their sponsors, confirmands, and teachers. Watch over those who travel. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Accept our thanksgiving for the people you surround us with, especially for those who celebrate their lives and birth this week:

enrich them with a sense of joy and grace for yet another year. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Save us from ourselves, from racism in all its hidden forms, from hollow words without actions, forgive us, renew us, call us to action Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For those fighting cancer and other serious illnesses, grant strength and grace. We pray for doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers and all who work toward treatments and cures. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For police officers and firefighters, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For your people in the midst of war, civil unrest, or conflict, grant protection, strength and hope for a better tomorrow. Bring peace and an end to the conflict. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For Vicar Tom Helmich this year, may your Spirit surround him with all that is needful and joy-filled. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Blessed One, our times are in your hand. Sustain us in discipleship throughout our lives and receive us into everlasting life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Share the peace ...

*(Please be seated)*

## **MEAL**

## **OFFERING**

*The Worship/Communion Registration Card may be placed in the offering plate as it is passed.*

*Thank you for your support of our ministry.*

*(Please stand as you are able)*

## **OFFERTORY ELW #186 Create In Me a Clean Heart**

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

Text: Lutheran Book of Worship

## **THE LORD'S SUPPER: Words of Institution**

### **Grace at the table: The Lord's Prayer**

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

*(Please stand as you are able)*

### **COMMUNION SONG** *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.  
Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

## **COMMUNION BLESSING**

### **POST COMMUNION CANTICLE ELW #208** *Praise to You, O God of Mercy*

Praise to you, O God of mercy:  
thanks be to you forever!  
Raising high the weak and lowly:  
thanks be to you forever!

Text: *Now the Feast and Celebration*, Marty Haugen, © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## **SENDING**

*(Please be seated)*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and keep you,  
may the Lord smile upon you and be gracious to you,  
may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. + Amen.

### **SENDING SONG ELW# 347** vs 1 *Go to Dark Gethsemane*

1 Go to dark Gethsemane,  
all who feel the tempter's pow'r;  
your Redeemer's conflict see.  
Watch with him one bitter hour;  
turn not from his griefs away;  
learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share your bread.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

## NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

March 31, 2024

### EASTER

**Acts 10:34-43**

*God raised Jesus on the third day*

**Isaiah 25:6-9** (alternate)

*The feast of Victory*

**Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (*Ps. 118:24*)

**1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

*Witnesses to the risen Christ*

**Acts 10:34-43** (alternate)

*God raised Jesus on the third day*

**Mark 16:1-8**

*The resurrection of Jesus is announced, and the response is one of terror and amazement.*

**John 20:1-18** (alternate)

*Seeing the risen Christ*

## GOSPEL MESSAGE

March 24, 2024

### SUNDAY OF THE PASSION / PALM SUNDAY

#### The Heart of the Story

Martin Luther called the Psalms a “little Bible.” He wrote that all the rest of the Holy Scriptures could be found in them. Luther went so far as to suggest that in the Psalms the church can glimpse the death and resurrection of Christ. In these ancient songs and prayers of the Hebrew people, every human emotion is laid bare: joy and contentment, anger and sorrow, hope and despair. The Psalms give voice to the wide spectrum of experiences that mark our human lives. This is their power—they speak the heart’s language, turbulent as our hearts may sometimes be.

In a similar way, Holy Week places us at the center of the whole story of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection. From the “hosannas” of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem to the seeming abandonment of the cross, emotions run high this week as the story of Christ’s passion reaches into the depths of our human experience. The palm and passion stories are themselves a “little Bible” of salvation for the church within the wider story of God’s saving love for all.

As we gather to hear the story of Christ’s passion anew, the words and rituals of the church’s worship life invite us to feel our way into this story from the inside out. We hear the shouts of blessing and come to the Passover in quiet hope. We follow to Gethsemane and to the cross, with mixed emotions. What does betrayal feel like in our bodies? What about amazement? Fear? How have we experienced ridicule or shame? How have we ourselves dismissed or derided others?

The palm and passion stories offer us a chance to contemplate Christ’s sufferings and meditate on our salvation—to come side by side with Christ’s passion and so to know and access our own. We are invited to honestly glimpse the workings of our own hearts. Nothing is off limits to God’s grace. No human experience is untouched by the story of God’s redemptive love.

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

## Upcoming Commemorations

**Joseph, Guardian of Jesus**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024**

Though the Bible tells us little about the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, we know that he was a carpenter or builder by trade. He is also shown as being devoted both to God and to Mary and Jesus. It is assumed that he died before Jesus became an adult.

**Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, died 1556**

**Thursday, March 21, 2024**

Cranmer's lasting achievement is contributing to and overseeing the creation of the Book of Common Prayer, which remains (in revised form) the worship book of the Anglican Communion. He was burned at the stake under Queen Mary for his support of the Protestant Reformation.

**Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, died 1758**

**Friday, March 22, 2024**

A Puritan minister in Connecticut, Edwards is remembered as being a great preacher. Though his most famous sermon talks at length about hell, he was more concerned with God's love. He served both as missionary to the Housatonic people in Massachusetts, and as president of the future Princeton University.

**Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, died 1980**

**Sunday, March 24, 2024**

Romero was deeply concerned with injustices evident toward the poor and powerless in El Salvador, and worked forthrightly against political repression. He was assassinated while presiding at the eucharist in a chapel near the cathedral in San Salvador.

**Annunciation of Our Lord**

**Monday, March 25, 2024**

Nine months before Christmas we celebrate the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world's creation and of Jesus' death on the cross.

**Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church, died 1824**

**Friday, March 29, 2024**

Hauge was a layperson who wished to revitalize the church in Norway. As a result of a mystical experience, he felt called to preach. Many professionals in the church feared his motives and influence, and he was imprisoned for leading unauthorized gatherings.