

No Looking Back

As We Gather

So it all comes down to this. “It all” is the history of our Lord’s incarnation, birth, preaching, teaching, healing, calling disciples, and now, “to this”—Jesus coming to His goal in Jerusalem. This Sunday is so full of meaning that it cannot even be succinctly summarized. The meaning of it all unfolds before us as we spend an entire week, cheering the King at His triumphal entry, then gathering with Him in the suspenseful quiet of the Upper Room, then the garden, then His arrest, then the trials, and ultimately the cheers turn into jeers and He reaches His goal in Jerusalem. He dies. Only knowing who Jesus really is and the reason for His death, only in knowing the purpose of God’s Law can we discover the joy of the Gospel, the good news of the forgiveness of our sins, new birth and new life—eternal life! That spiritual knowledge gives us the stamina to endure this week and the rest of our lives.

PROCESSION OF PALMS

If the procession begins outside the nave, the congregation gathers around the processional cross. If the congregation is already seated in the nave, it now stands and faces the processional cross at the entrance to the nave.

Greeting

P The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

C Hosanna to the Son of David.

Collect

P Let us pray.

Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in their hands, gathered to greet Your dearly beloved Son when He came into His Holy City, grant that we may ever hail Him as our King and, when He comes again, may go forth to meet Him with trusting and steadfast hearts and follow Him in the way that leads to eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twelfth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

The Triumphal Entry

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”

¹⁴And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

¹⁵“Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

¹⁷The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

P Let us go forth in peace,

C **in the name of the Lord.**

Hymn: 442 All Glory, Laud, and Honor

ref 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 Blessèd One. Refrain

2 The company of angels
Is praising You on high,
And we with all creation
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 As You received their praises,
Accept the prayers we bring,
O Source of ev'ry blessing,
Our good and gracious King. Refrain

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When all have arrived at their places, the people may raise their branches as the procession concludes with the following:

Greeting

- P** Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
C **Hosanna in the highest.**

WORD

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

- C** **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 50:4–9

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a word
him who is weary.
Morning by morning he awakens;

he awakens my ear
to hear as those who are taught.
⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I turned not backward.
⁶I gave my back to those who strike,
and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
I hid not my face
from disgrace and spitting.
⁷But the Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like a flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.
⁸He who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who is my adversary?
Let him come near to me.
⁹Behold, the Lord GOD helps me;
who will declare me guilty?
Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment;
the moth will eat them up.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Choir – “Lamb of God, What Wondrous Love”

Faure

Epistle

Philippians 2:5–11

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Passion History

Matthew 26–27

- P** The Passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ according to the Holy Evangelist, Saint Matthew.

Hymn stanzas or choral music may be inserted between some or all of the divisions.

1. The Plot against Jesus and Jesus Anointed at Bethany (26:1–16)
2. Preparation for the Passover and Institution of the Lord’s Supper (26:17–29)
3. Prediction of Peter’s Denial (26:30–35)
4. Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (26:36–46)
5. Judas’ Betrayal and the Arrest of Jesus (26:47–56)
6. Jesus before Caiaphas (26:57–68)
7. Peter’s Denial (26:69–75)
8. Jesus before Pilate and the Death of Judas (27:1–14)
9. Pilate Sentences Jesus (27:15–26)
10. Jesus Mocked and Crucified (27:27–44)
11. The Death of Jesus (27:45–56)
12. Jesus’ Burial and a Guard Posted (27:57–66)

The Passion narrative may be read by the pastor or lector, or by multiple readers. The following are several possible models for using more than one reader.

Two readers

Jesus—reads the words of Jesus.

Evangelist—reads all of the parts except for the words of Jesus.

Three readers

Jesus—reads the words of Jesus.

Other characters—a single person reads all of the other persons, such as Peter, Judas, Pilate, etc.

Evangelist—reads only the texts that “tell the story.”

Multiple readers

Jesus—reads the words of Jesus.

Peter, Judas, Pilate, etc.—separate individuals read the words of each of these characters.

Evangelist—reads only the texts that “tell the story.”

The people are invited to stand before Matthew 27:45: “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.”

Hymn: 438 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

- 1 A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth,
The guilt of sinners bearing
And, laden with the sins of earth,

None else the burden sharing;
Goes patient on, grows weak and faint,
To slaughter led without complaint,
That spotless life to offer,
He bears the stripes, the wounds, the lies,
The mockery, and yet replies,
“All this I gladly suffer.”

2 This Lamb is Christ, the soul’s great friend,
The Lamb of God, our Savior,
Whom God the Father chose to send
To gain for us His favor.
“Go forth, My Son,” the Father said,
“And free My children from their dread
Of guilt and condemnation.
The wrath and stripes are hard to bear,
But by Your passion they will share
The fruit of Your salvation.”

3 “Yes, Father, yes, most willingly
I’ll bear what You command Me.
My will conforms to Your decree,
I’ll do what You have asked Me.”
O wondrous Love, what have You done!
The Father offers up His Son,
Desiring our salvation.
O Love, how strong You are to save!
You lay the One into the grave
Who built the earth’s foundation.

4 Lord, when Your glory I shall see
And taste Your kingdom’s pleasure,
Your blood my royal robe shall be,
My joy beyond all measure!
When I appear before Your throne,
Your righteousness shall be my crown;
With these I need not hide me.
And there, in garments richly wrought,
As Your own bride shall we be brought
To stand in joy beside You.

Apostles' Creed

**☐ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

Offertory: 444 No Tramp of Soldiers' Marching Feet

- 1 No tramp of soldiers' marching feet
 With banners and with drums,
 No sound of music's martial beat:
 "The King of glory comes!"
 To greet what pomp of kingly pride
 No bells in triumph ring,
 No city gates swing open wide:
 "Behold, behold your King!"

- 2 And yet He comes. The children cheer;
 With palms His path is strown.
 With ev'ry step the cross draws near:
 The King of glory's throne.
 Astride a colt He passes by
 As loud hosannas ring,
 Or else the very stones would cry
 "Behold, behold your King!"

- 3 What fading flow'rs His road adorn;
 The palms, how soon laid down!

No bloom or leaf but only thorn
The King of glory's crown.
The soldiers mock, the rabble cries,
The streets with tumult ring,
As Pilate to the mob replies,
"Behold, behold your King!"

4 Now He who bore for mortals' sake
The cross and all its pains
And chose a servant's form to take,
The King of glory reigns.
Hosanna to the Savior's name
Till heaven's rafters ring,
And all the ransomed host proclaim
"Behold, behold your King!"

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Offering

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, we give thanks for all Your goodness with which You bless Your whole creation. Above all, we give You thanks that You sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to be our true King, Your Suffering Servant whose death delivers us and all believers from sin, death, and hell. Give us Your grace that we may be faithful in our walk and in our hope, love, and worship. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Inspire Your whole Church throughout the world, especially on this day, to rightly hear and follow Jesus, our eternal King and Lord, in humble faith, with thanksgiving. Give wisdom and grace to all pastors, that they may give themselves to a living and lively proclamation of Your Law and Gospel through which You work true, saving repentance and faith in many. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Give Your grace and forgiveness, wisdom, blessing, and guidance to all who bear the offices of government in our nation and throughout the world. Lead them to the faithful exercise of their authority for the peace, justice, defense, and liberty of all people, especially the most vulnerable. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

- P** Give peace and patience, comfort and healing to all who suffer illness or adversity or who are in sorrow or need, [*especially . . .*]. Deliver all who endure persecution for faith in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

Individual petitions may be added here.

- P** We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served You in Your Church on earth, who now rest from their labors [*silence for remembrance*]. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joys of Your heavenly kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- C** **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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** **Amen.**

Hymn: 441 Ride On, Ride On in Majesty

- 1 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry.
O Savior meek, pursue Thy road,
With palms and scattered garments strowed.
- 2 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.

O Christ, Thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquered sin.

3 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

4 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh.
The Father on His sapphire throne
Awaits His own anointed Son.

5 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.
Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain,
Then take, O God, Thy pow'r and reign.

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