

## Ante Communion Service --- Palm Sunday --- April 2, 2023

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

Hosanna in the highest.

Let us pray together: **Jesus, when you rode into Jerusalem, the people waved palms with shout of acclamation. Grant that, when the shouting dies, we may still walk beside you even to a cross. Amen.**

**Processional Gospel**

**Matthew 21:1-11**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When Jesus and his disciples 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 from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Hymn**

**Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus**

*'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, and to take him at his word;  
just to rest upon his promise, and to know, "Thus saith the Lord."*

*Refrain:*

*Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him! How I've proved him o'er and o'er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust him more!*

*O how sweet to trust in Jesus, just to trust his cleansing blood;  
and in simple faith to plunge me neath the healing, cleansing flood! [Refrain]*

*Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus, just from sin and self to cease;  
just from Jesus simply taking life and rest, and joy and peace. [Refrain]*

*I'm so glad I learned to trust thee, precious Jesus, Savior, Friend  
And I know that thou art with me, will be with me to the end. [Refrain]*

Let us pray. **O God of mercy, 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.**

**First Reading**

**Isaiah 50:4-9a**

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 backward. 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.**

**Psalm 31:9-16**

*In te, Domine, speravi*

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; \*  
**my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.**  
For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; \*  
**my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.**  
I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors,  
a dismay to those of my acquaintance; \*  
**when they see me in the street, they avoid me.**  
I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; \*  
**I am as useless as a broken pot.**  
For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; \*  
**they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.**  
But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord. \*  
**I have said, "You are my God.**  
My times are in your hand; \*  
**rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**  
Make your face to shine upon your servant, \*  
**and in your loving-kindness save me."**  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.**

**Second Reading**

**Philippians 2:5-11**

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

## Matthew 27:11-54

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?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

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; but 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 sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling 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. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were 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!"

## Hymn

## Were You There

*Acapeldridge*

*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?*

*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?*

*Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?*

*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?*

*Celebrant* With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

## *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;

**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For the peace and unity of the world; **That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.**

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;

**And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.**

For the just and proper use of your creation;

**That we may treat your creation with the love of the Creator.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble.

**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. *The People may add their own petitions.*

Hear us, Lord;

**For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*

We will exalt you, O God our King;

**And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. *Silence.*

Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them.

**May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ's presence:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.  
I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you.  
Amen.**

*Celebrant:* While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,

*People:* **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**

*Celebrant:* Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.

*People:* **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

### **Blessing**

Grant, Almighty God, that your people may recognize their weakness and put their whole trust in your strength, so that they may rejoice for ever in the protection of your loving providence; and the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon you, among you, and stay with you always. Amen.

### **Closing Hymn**

### **O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

*Acapeldridge*

*O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,  
Now scornfully surrounded, with thorns thine only crown;  
How art Thou filled with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn!  
How does that visage languish which once was bright as morn!*

*What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest Friend,  
For this Thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end?  
O make me Thine forever, and should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never, out-live my love to Thee.*

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace.

**Thanks be to God.**