

Home Service for 3/28/2021 Palm Service

Welcome and Announcements

You might notice a few changes. You may also find listening to some of your favorite hymns helpful in worship.

Call to Worship:

Precious Jesus, help us to walk alongside you and bear witness to your journey this week: from table, to trial, to cross, to grave, and to empty tomb. Inspire us to work with one another for a world over which heaven and earth rejoice. Give us the strength to never forget your divine image in everyone we meet this week, even when we are swept up by the crowd. Amen.

Opening Prayer:

Holy Brother, you have come in God's name and for our sake. You have entered our souls in moments of shouted Hosannas and waving cloaks. And you have come just the same to our late nights and our confused hearts. Come to us again, Dear One, and let us follow you. Let your name be on our tongues and in our hearts. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Mercy or mercies, where you go we have often been afraid to follow. Sometimes the sorrows of our lives blind us to the pain in the lives of others. Even yours. When we are spent with sorrow, when our years are filled with sighing, when our souls waste away, when we can barely speak your name; we find it hard to trust your presence, though you have already made yourself humbled and broken, just like us. Help us place our trust in you, no matter the cost. Our times are in your hands. Give us the courage and the strength to say by your side. Amen.

Words of Assurance

God sustains the weary with a word, and so shall God sustain us. The Holy One who helps us will not let us be put to shame. Christ stands with us, bringing the grace of our longing.

Read Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

² Let Israel say:

“His love endures forever.”

It is better to take refuge in the LORD
than to trust in princes.

¹⁰ All the nations surrounded me,
but in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

¹¹ They surrounded me on every side,
but in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

¹² They swarmed around me like bees,
but they were consumed as quickly as burning thorns;
in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

¹³ I was pushed back and about to fall,
but the LORD helped me.

¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and my defense^[a];
he has become my salvation.

¹⁵ Shouts of joy and victory
resound in the tents of the righteous:

“The LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!

¹⁶ The LORD’s right hand is lifted high;
the LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!”

Prayers of the People:

God of Grace: On this day we praise you for all that your gracious Son said and did during his last week on earth; for his humility, which preferred service to rule; for his boldness in the face of mortal enemies; for his touching sorrow over Jerusalem; for his gifts of bread and wine to be shared in remembrance of the gift of his life; for his words of faith and forgiveness even while dying in agony on the cross.

Long ago, on the first Palm Sunday, the children Jesus loved greeted him with squeals of joy. We pray for the children today; for children orphaned; for children born unwanted and unloved; for children abused. Arouse our consciences, righteous God, about the fate of children who are being carelessly made to endure suffering. And energize us, we pray, to help at least one child in need of help.

On this first day of our Lord's last week on earth, we consecrate to you the services of worship we have planned for this Holy Week. Let your Spirit grasp us and reshape us through our self-searching, our grieving, our rejoicing. Let not this reliving of our Lord's passion and death leave us uninvolved or unchanged. Rather

let this week be for us an occasion for re-examining our priorities, achieving greater integrity, and moving into costlier discipleship.

In the name of our Savior and Lord, Jesus. Amen

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

Read the Lesson: Isaiah 50:4-9

The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,
wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

⁵The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears;
I have not been rebellious,
I have not turned away.

⁶I offered my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from mocking and spitting.

⁷Because the Sovereign LORD helps me,
I will not be disgraced.

Therefore have I set my face like flint,
and I know I will not be put to shame.

⁸He who vindicates me is near.
Who then will bring charges against me?
Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?
Let him confront me!

⁹It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me.
Who will condemn me?

They will all wear out like a garment;
the moths will eat them up.

Read the Epistle Lesson: Philippians 2:5-11

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

- ⁶ Who, being in very nature^[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature^[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Mark 11:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’”

⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna!^[a]”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”^[b]

¹⁰ “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Message

We are called to have a Jesus attitude of earthly humility throughout our lives here on earth so that we may experience eternal exaltation. This call is heard as Paul begins in verse five telling us that our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. The first thing we need to do is to find out what Jesus' attitude was by looking at who he was.

At the beginning or creation of the world, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit who made the heavens and the earth and this same Jesus in our text was part of the Triune God: three persons and one God. Yet for a time this One who created the heavens and the earth gave up that divinity, and He took on the form of a servant. Jesus became nothing. He, who was rich and already sat in heaven and was exalted, gave it all up and became poor for our sins and lived here on earth.

In verse seven we heard that Jesus made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Jesus was made to look like you and I. Jesus had real flesh and blood. Jesus lived here on earth having the same feelings. When His friend Lazarus died, Jesus wept. When Jesus was on the cross for those long hours, He was thirsty. At night Jesus was tired and during the day He was hungry.

Jesus was no different from mankind except Jesus was without sin. Jesus was no different except He did obey. Verse eight tells us that being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death; even death on a cross. This was a torturous death, a death full of suffering, and a death that brought him down in humility.

Christ came and died for us. Jesus sacrificed Himself for His enemies, and He sacrificed Himself for His disciples. Jesus sacrificed Himself for each one of us out of love. It really was of no benefit at all to Jesus Himself to personally live here, to come down from His throne of grace and to be humiliated. Jesus gained nothing for Himself by suffering and dying, but you and I have gained everything. We gained forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

It was only God's grace, Jesus' undeserved love for us sinners that made Him give up everything He had for us. Jesus became poor. He didn't use His power and went to the cross, because He wanted to see us inherit heaven. Jesus' attitude was: "I don't care how much I have to give up for myself; I'm even willing to die on a

cross so my created people will go to heaven.” The attitude of Jesus was a deep concern not for Himself, but for mankind. Jesus’ attitude was of humility.

As we travel through this Lenten season we should recall how Jesus showed to His disciples and us the full extent of His love. When Jesus was in the upper room with His disciples just before He was to be betrayed by one of His disciples, just before He was to be put on the cross after facing a mockery of a trial, Jesus washed His disciples’ feet in humility. Jesus did that for an example for us to live our lives in humility. In the account in the Gospel of John we are told he said: "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet" (JOHN 13:14). We are to be like Jesus and live our lives in humility.

As believers we are to be concerned about others. We are to figuratively wash the feet of others. This is earthly humility, which the world scoffs at and dismisses. As Christians we are to be less concerned about ourselves and more concerned about those around us. As we do that, we forget to worry about our own lives. We forget to be concerned about ourselves and we forget to worry about earthly matters. We take up lives of service.

What was Jesus’ reward for having the attitude of humility and being obedient? Let us hear the last three verses of today’s Epistle Lesson again: “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” So as we look to Jesus we discover that He was humbled to death on the cross and was raised up to sit on the throne of God, exalted forever.

Believers are reminded to have a Jesus attitude. We are to act like Jesus who walked humbly in this life. Then ultimately each one of us will be exalted eternally. Sometimes we may be exalted in this life, but always in heaven is our eternal exaltation in the presence of our loving Lord.

We know that our future is certain. No matter what we face in this life, no matter what trouble or heartache, no matter what sorrow or danger or illness, and no matter what we face, the Lord as He raised Jesus from the dead promises us a resurrection and eventual eternal exaltation.

There are very few people of the world, who live in humility wanting to serve others because they are so busy serving themselves. We too can easily fall into that sin from time to time. There are few that realize that there is joy in this life of

service. They do not know of God's Love and Grace, of Christ's sacrifice on the cross so that our sins may be forgiven. For us it should be important to be like Jesus. Our faith produces a life of service in humility, and it also produces a life of joy and thanksgiving and exaltation. The Lord promises us: "Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him" (2 TIMOTHY 2:11,12a). That is God's divine promise that as we are like Jesus or have a Jesus attitude in humility, we will also be exalted in eternity.

Life isn't about whether only we win the prizes of life. We aren't in the race all by ourselves. It's about how we help others grow in faith and love. Jesus chose not to use His abilities to save himself from the cross, so we could have eternal salvation. No matter how many abilities you have, never be selfish about them. Be willing to use them to help others come to faith in Christ and stay in that faith. Have the same generous attitude and humility of Jesus. Amen.

Benediction:

People of God, go together into this hard and holy week. Trust in God. Be filled with the Spirit. Walk with Christ to the end. For Christ's times are in our hands now, as ours have ever been in his. Amen.