

## 2021 Palm Sunday Communion March 28<sup>th</sup>

**Welcome to worship on this Palm or Passion Sunday. St. Mark's Lutheran will have a Good Friday there will be in person worship at 6:00pm and Easter morning you may come to in person worship at 8:30 or 10:30am We will continue with masks and social distancing. Please register.**

**We begin our worship receiving forgiveness as we confess our sins.**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

Fountain of living water, **pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.**

Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are † forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus. Amen.

### 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.

### First Reading is from Isaiah 53: 3-6

<sup>1</sup>Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup>For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup>He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. <sup>4</sup>Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. <sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

## **Psalm 31**

<sup>9</sup>Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.

<sup>10</sup>For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.

<sup>11</sup>I am the scorn of my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to my acquaintances; when they see me in the street they avoid me.

<sup>12</sup>Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.

<sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, “You are my God.

<sup>15</sup>My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

<sup>16</sup>Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.”

Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit.

## **The Second reading is from Philippians chapter 2:5-11**

<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.

## **The Holy Gospel according to Mark 15:1-32      **Glory to you O Lord****

<sup>1</sup>As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup>Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” He answered him, “You say so.” <sup>3</sup>Then the chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup>Pilate asked him again, “Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.” <sup>5</sup>But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed. <sup>6</sup>Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. <sup>7</sup>Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. <sup>8</sup>So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. <sup>9</sup>Then he answered them, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” <sup>10</sup>For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. <sup>11</sup>But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. <sup>12</sup>Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” <sup>13</sup>They shouted back, “Crucify him!” <sup>14</sup>Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him!” <sup>15</sup>So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. <sup>16</sup>Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s

headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. <sup>17</sup>And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup>And they began saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>19</sup>They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup>After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. <sup>21</sup>They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. <sup>22</sup>Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). <sup>23</sup>And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup>And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. <sup>25</sup>It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup>The inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” <sup>27</sup>And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup>Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup>save yourself, and come down from the cross!” <sup>31</sup>In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup>Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also taunted him. The word of the Lord

**Praise to you O Christ**

### **Sermon Mark 15:1-32**

We approach Passion/Palm Sunday with a long season of suffering behind us. Reflecting on Jesus’ passion at this point in our nation’s history might be the last thing that any of us want to do, especially with the many other “passion” narratives our collective ears and hearts have been forced to ingest from racial injustice, mass shootings and collective scandals.

The words of this week’s psalm penetrate our minds and hearts:

my eye wastes away from grief,  
my soul and body also.  
For my life is spent with sorrow,  
and my years with sighing;  
my strength fails because of my misery,  
and my bones waste away (Psalm 31:9-10).

The Passion/Palm Sunday liturgy invites us to turn our eyes upon Jesus’ passion, and to meditate upon this “man of suffering” who is “acquainted with infirmity” (Isaiah 53:3). Are we desensitized by the suffering of Jesus? He is another human being along with countless others crushed by the cruelty of human violence. We can identify with the reasons for his suffering even 2000 years later: betrayal, abandonment, arrest under false charges, unfair justice system, physical abuse, and mob “justice.”

According to Mark, Jesus is not only a victim. Jesus’ death was an apocalyptic occurrence. The Greek word, *apocalupsis*, simply means “revelation.” The suffering of Jesus was revelatory in several ways. It exposed things around him for what they really were, starting with his closest relationships. Jesus’ disciples and friends were unable to stick with their teacher in his hour of greatest need. His suffering revealed the fragility of his friends’ loyalty and

courage. His death also exposed the profound cruelty of those with social and governmental power. In Jesus' suffering we can see the dangerous synergy that can occur between corrupt state power and "mob" justice. The trial of Jesus exposed how the legal system of the time could be manipulated to serve corrupt interests.

To a small number of people Jesus' suffering also revealed his messianic identity, the coming king. The woman who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume recognized Jesus coming death in a way that nobody else in the room could (Mark 14:1-9). And when Jesus took his last breath, an unnamed Roman centurion puts everything together: "Truly, this was the Son of God!" (15:39). Jesus' messianic identity became clear the moment of his death and to the most unlikely people.

Jesus' death was also apocalyptic or a revelation in another way. It marked a new chapter in God redeeming the world. This turning of the page is felt in the darkening of the sky and the tearing of the temple curtain. Jesus' passion week takes place over eight days including the Passover. The order of events Mark presents reminds of the exodus, the literary backdrop for the story. When darkness falls across the land in Mark 15:33, we are reminded of the plague of darkness (Exodus 10:21-39) followed by the death of the firstborn in Egypt (Exodus 11:1—13:16). Jesus' own suffering is part of a larger story of revealing liberation of the death of the divine Son in place of the firstborn of Egypt.

The Passion of Christ in the Gospel of Mark makes the mysterious claim that the spilled blood of Jesus contains the gift of a new covenant. As we move from Lent to Holy Week, we set down our Lenten crosses and look toward the cross of Christ, where we find the clearest expression of God's love, compassion, and hope for the world. Amen.

### **Assistant Prayers of Intercession**

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

In Jesus you came among us as a suffering servant. Give your church humility. Redeem your people from pride and the certainty that we always know your will. Heal us and empower us to confess Christ crucified. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Jesus was handed over to the powers of this world. In all nations, instruct the powerful, that they would not exploit their power but maintain justice. Sustain soldiers, and guide those who command them, *especially Logan, JJ, Bryan, Dustin, Brad and Travis* that they serve those in greatest need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

On the cross Jesus joined all who feel forsaken. Abide with those who are condemned to death. Defend those who are falsely accused. Console and strengthen those who are mocked or bullied. Accompany all who suffer *especially those sick with the covid 19 virus, Brad Shippert and those in treatment, those in care faculties that we know Sibyl, Tammy, Trudy, Jessica, Hazel, Jeanne, Linda, Ed and Marian.*); grant respite and renewal.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You called followers to tend Jesus' body in death. Sustain hospice workers and funeral directors. Bless this congregation's ministries at times of death to support those in grief.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You inspired the centurion to confess Jesus as your Son. We praise you for the faith you have given to people of all places and times. Give us also such faith to trust the promises of baptism and, with them, to look for the resurrection of the dead.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**P: Offering Prayer**

Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**P: Words of Institution**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

**The Lords Prayer We pray as Jesus taught**

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.

**Invitation**

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Take your bread/cracker

The body of Christ given for you

Take you juice/wine/water      The blood of Christ shed for you

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

**Prayer after Communion**

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Blessing**

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. Amen.

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**