

elestine

Lutheran Church

# April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Passion/Palm Sunday

Reaching Out in Christian Love to All 1375 Highway 210 P.O. Box 189 Huxley, IA 50124

### **Pastor: Eric Klimpel**

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## Passion/Palm Sunday Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

In this service of Palms and Passion, we listen to Jesus say from the cross, "It is finished," and we ponder the meaning of these words.

\*=Stand as you are able **Bold Print** = congregation responds **ELW**=Red Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Prelude Ringing of the Bell

**GATHERING** The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

#### **\*ACCLAMATION**

(ELW P. 256)

The presiding minister begins (repeated one or more times):

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

#### \*PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Luke 19:28-40

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter.

#### Glory to you, O Lord.

Entrance into the final days

<sup>28</sup> After he had said this, [Jesus] went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

<sup>29</sup> When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" <sup>32</sup> So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup> They said, "The Lord needs it." <sup>35</sup> Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying,

"Blessed is the king

who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,

and glory in the highest heaven!"

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." <sup>40</sup> He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** 

### \*BLESSING OF PALMS (ELW p. 256)

The Lord be with you.

## And also with you.

Let us pray. A brief silence is kept.

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.

If <u>weather permits</u>, we will go outside to process around the church. We will then enter the sanctuary via the center aisle and move into our pews to the hymn "Hosanna! Hosanna!" If <u>bad weather</u>, then leave the pews via into the center aisle and put palms in chancel area. Then proceed back to your pew via the side aisle.

#### "Hosanna, Hosanna"

Sr. Choir & Children's Choir

AUTHORS Timothy Mayfield; CCLI SONG #2371966; CATALOG Harold Flammer Music; COPYRIGHTS 1997 Harold Flammer Music (Admin. by Hal Leonard LLC) (Admin. by Tom Cat Music); Reprinted under CCLI #2551458

#### Words That Last Forever Litany

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

### "It is finished!"

The word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

#### "It is finished!"

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

#### "It is finished!"

The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

### "It is finished!"

"The word that goes forth from my mouth shall not return to me empty," says the Lord. "It shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

### Extinguish the Passion Candle – Finished!

### \*GREETING

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

## And also with you.

### **\*BLESSING OF THE QUILTS & LENT DONATIONS**

Gather participants in close to lay hands on the quilts/donations. In larger settings, invite participants to extend their arms out in front of them as an act of blessing.

God, you have called us to go and do likewise as we reach out to our neighbors around the world. Send forth your Spirit today as we call upon you to bless our work and make it holy.

### Jesus, teach us to love our neighbors.

God, we give you thanks for those who have generously shared their resources in order to make these quilts and lenten donations possible. Move us by their example to live generous lives.

### Jesus, teach us to love our neighbors.

Thank you, God, for the hands that have made and assembled these quilts and donations. May each compassionate touch be known to those who receive them as an expression of your love.

#### Jesus, teach us to love our neighbors.

God, we lift before you the staff and partners of LWR and local food pantries and LSI who will distribute these quilts and donations around the world. Give them strength and encouragement to do this important work and guide them as they reach our neighbors who are the farthest away.

Jesus, teach us to love our neighbors. Finally, God, we pray for our neighbors around the world who will receive these quilts and donations – neighbors we have never met, neighbors who are far away, neighbors who, like us, long for your grace and mercy. May these quilts and donations wrap our neighbors in love and fill them with the hope and peace that is only found in you.

Amen.

Empowered by God's unconditional love in Jesus, go and do likewise, continuing to show mercy to neighbors near and far, in the name of the Father, the Son +, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

## \*PRAYER OF THE DAY:

As we now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, let us pray.

Almighty God, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. Your Word cried "Light!" into darkest chaos as your Spirit brooded over the turbulent waters. Pray, bring to completion in all of your children that which you began in the suffering and death of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**WORD** *God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.* 

# FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1-2:3

When the world was brought into being through the voice of God, God created humankind in his own image.

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup>the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." <sup>7</sup>So God made the

dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup>God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup>to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." <sup>21</sup>So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." <sup>23</sup>And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. <sup>24</sup>And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

<sup>27</sup>So God created humankind in his image,

in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup>God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." <sup>29</sup>God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup>And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup>God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. <sup>1</sup>Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. <sup>2</sup>And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. <sup>3</sup>So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

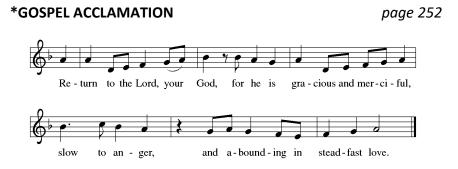
The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

### SECOND READING: Philippians 1:2-6

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

<sup>2</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ..

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.



### \*GOSPEL: John 17:1-14

The Holy Gospel according to John the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter.

#### Glory to you, O Lord.

On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus prays to his heavenly Father, asking that those who continue his work in this world will live in unity.

<sup>1</sup>After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son

may glorify you, <sup>2</sup>since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup>And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup>I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup>So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. <sup>6</sup>I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup> for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. <sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup>But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** 

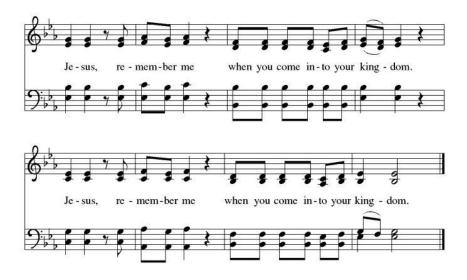
#### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children will leave to go to Children's Church Preschool/Kindergarten – room beside nursery in north fellowship hall 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – Upstairs to the left 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grades – Upstairs to the left 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades – Downstairs

#### REFLECTION HYMN: "Jesus Remember Me" ELW 6

ELW 616 (3 xs)

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#### SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Ah, Holy Jesus" ELW 349 Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844–1930, alt.; Music: Johann Crüger,

1598–1662; public domain.

#### Ah, Holy Jesus

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#### \*APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### \*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Response: God, in your mercy, receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

Amen.

### \*PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

**MEAL** *God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.* 

### OFFERING

### **\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

#### \*DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

#### **\*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

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.

Amen.

#### \*LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray. 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 TO COMMUNION**

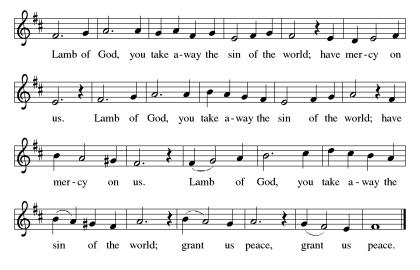
Taste and see that the Lord is good.

#### COMMUNION

If you wish to kneel at the rail after accepting communion to pray, feel free to go up and then exit via the side aisles as normal.

#### **COMMUNION SONG:**

(Page 154)



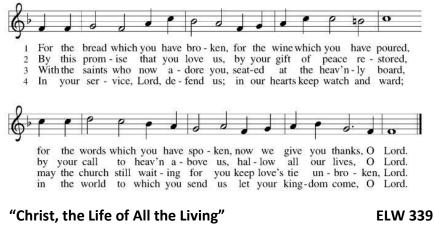
#### **COMMUNION HYMNS:**

#### "For the Bread Which You Have Broken"

**ELW 494** 

Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855–1930, alt.; Music: *Gross Catolisch Gesangbuch*, Nürnberg, 1631; arr. William Smith Rockstro, 1823–1895; Text © 1925 Robert Jeffreys Jr., admin. Augsburg Fortress; Reprinted under OneLicense.net 1-708142 All rights reserved.

#### For the Bread Which You Have Broken



Text: Ernst Christoph Homburg, 1605–1681; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Music: *Das grosse Cantional*, Darmstadt, 1687; public domain.



### **\*TABLE BLESSING**

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

Amen.

## \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**SENDING** God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**Lent & Easter Offering:** Ballard Clothing and Food Pantry update from *Mike Brixius* 

### **\*HOLY WEEK BLESSING**

As we begin our Passion journey from death to life, we reflect on Jesus' path to the cross and give thanks for God's mercy and grace along the way.

We enter Jerusalem this day with shouts of Hosanna! Over the merriment and celebration comes a looming shadow of the cross.

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Our Lord eats the Passover one last time with his followers.

**Do this in remembrance of me.** Jesus struggles in prayer with God on the Mount of Olives seeking strength and help for what he must do.

Father, if it is possible then let this cup pass from me, but let your will, not mine, be done.

Jesus is betrayed and the darkness gathers around him as he dies at Golgotha.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

From the silence of the tomb comes a voice of hope, a promise of life in the midst of death.

#### Something is happening.

O God of mercy and might, 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, and may the merciful God, who sent his Son to be Savior of the world, direct you to follow him as King in faith and faithfulness, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever.

Amen.

# \* SENDING SONG "Blessing Honour And Glory" W&P 21

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Children are dismissed to go downstairs for:



CHILDREN'S MUSIC WITH NELS



#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you. Thanks be to God.

## Ringing of the Bell

### Postlude

For streaming and printing:

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# Those Serving in Today's Service

Pastor: Eric KlimpelAccompanist: Mindy DeVriesYouth Liaison: Nels DovreLector: Lyle MartinAcolytes: Trice Elliott; Samantha EwingTechnicians: Brent Emerson, Brayden DeVries, Owen Williams

### This Week at Palestine

Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 *Passion/Palm Sunday* 8:30 a.m. Choir 9:00 a.m. Children's choir joins Sr. Choir 9:30 a.m. Worship *Music with Nels Cookie Sunday* First Communion class 5:30 p.m. Theology on Tap Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 10:00 a.m. Area pastor's study (Pastor) 1:00 p.m. Cedar Worship Madrid (Pastor) 7:00 p.m. Bible Study via Zoom Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 12:30 p.m. Prayer Support Group 1:00 p.m. Quilters 2:00 p.m. North Polk Ministerial Mtg (Pastor) No Confirmation 7:00 p.m. Gethsemane Prayer Service Thursday, April 17th, 2025 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service; Holy Communion; First Communion Friday, April 18th, 2025 2:00 p.m. Passion of the Christ movie 5:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross 7:00 p.m. Good Friday Service Saturday, April 19th, 2025 Easter Vigil (pick up devotionals from church) Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 *Easter* 7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service; Holy Communion) Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Worship; Holy Communion Easter Egg Hunt Lectionary texts: Exodus 15:1-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Cor 15:1-11: John 20:1-18 Thank you for your Gifts for Ministry: Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025: Attendance: 117 General: \$8.660.00

General: \$8,660.00 Food Pantry: \$69.65 Sign: \$5,000.00 Benevolence: \$45.00 LSI: \$256.65 Sound System: \$5,000.00

THANK YOU!!! We celebrate your generosity and thank you in advance for your support.



Palestine will accept your offering!

- 1. Bring to worship service with you and place in offering plates.
- Mail check to: Palestine Lutheran Church PO BOX 189 Huxley, IA 50124
- Give online through Easy Tithe. Go to our website <u>www.plchuxley.com</u> and click on the bright red ONLINE GIVING tab on the right located above our "Reaching out in Christian love to all" statement.
- 4. Text GIVE to 515-207-6435.

Thank you. Continue to pray and know God is with us.



Wednesday, April 16 <sup>th</sup>	Gethsemane Prayer Service @ 7 p.m.
Thursday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Maundy Thursday @</i> 7 p.m. w/ Holy Communion
Friday, April 18 <sup>th</sup>	Passion of the Christ movie @ 2 p.m. Stations of the Cross 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. <i>Good Friday</i> @ 7 p.m.
Saturday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	Candlelight Vigil - devotionals available
Sunday, April 20 <sup>th</sup>	<ul> <li>-7 a.m. Sunrise Service w/ Holy Communion Breakfast</li> <li>9:30 a.m. Festival Service w/ Holy Communion</li> <li>Easter Egg Hunt</li> </ul>

Lent Mid-Week and Family Home Devotional Offerings (collected over 40 days for Palm Sunday (April 13<sup>th</sup>)



THAT EMPOWER REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS



INTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

Monetary donations for midweek to support LSI. Make note in memo section of check "LSI".

STEM

# **Holy Week and Special Offering**

We will be collecting Donations of Food (per list below) & Special Monetary Donations from April 13<sup>th</sup> – April 27<sup>th</sup> to help serve both the Food Pantry & the Ballard Clothing & Food Pantry.

# Huxley & Kelley "Cupboard" Food Pantry.

Over the past year, the pantry has served 2400 people. The pantry is located at 503 E  $1^{st}$  Street (behind the south Casey's).

# Ballard Clothing & Food Pantry

Located at 602 N Main Ave., Suite 105, Huxley. Free to anyone in the Ballard Community.



# Targeting the Most Popular Choices:

- Chef Boyardee Beef Ravioli (canned)
- Dinty Moore Beef Stew (canned)
- Chicken Breast Chunk (can)
- Carrots -sliced and diced (canned)
- Baked beans/pork and beans (canned)
- Manwich (canned)
- Helper meals (boxed)
- Pears (canned and cups)



THEOLOGY ON TAP Ouestion freely. Think deeply. Drink a little.

Join us TODAY, April 13<sup>th</sup> 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. @ Fenceline Beer Lab in Huxley



We will be recognizing five people on Maundy Thursday for their first Holy Communion!

**Carter Ray DeVries**, son of Russ and Mindy DeVries Carter's sponsors are Mackenzie Tallman and Nick Tallman.

Holden Jae Elliott, son of Jonathan and Megan Elliott Holden's sponsors are Cari Carlson and Lyndsey Carlson.

Priya Ann Roelfs, daughter of Tyler and Sarah Roelfs Priya's sponsors are Cory Gudmonson, Lenise Kollasch, and Casey Roelfs.

Benjamin Allan Williams, son of Matt and Erika Williams Benjamin's sponsors are Tara & Troy Schini.

**Brooks Newland Wuebker,** son of Adam and Molly Wuebker Brooks' sponsors are Chase Kruse and Matthew Kruse. Welcome to Worship! We're glad you're here (physically or virtually), guests and members alike, and pray that you will find in our worship an opportunity to praise God and hear God's Word.

### Remember Us (based on Luke 22)

On this Sunday of the Passion, the gathered church remembers the final days of Jesus' life. Once the celebratory palm branches are set down, the mood shifts as the somber tones of betrayal and crucifixion take over. The Lukan narrative draws us into the details, and we remember the extent of God's passion for us as Jesus enters into the depths of suffering through divine selfless love poured out for the sake of the world.

There is power in remembering. To be sure, this is an exercise of memory and recall for us. Yet Holy Week is much more than that. In our remembering of Jesus' passion, our reality is re-membered with God's reality. Like members of a body, we are re-membered onto Christ, formed into one through the Spirit, and drawn into the reality of God's saving love. Through scripture, song, and prayer, the liturgy of this day re-members us as God's people as we bear witness to Jesus' remembrance of us.

In the culminating moment of the crucifixion, only Luke's gospel reports the exchange between the two criminals and Jesus. The one criminal chastises the other before he addresses the crucified Jesus, saying, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). The request is for more than an act of recall; the criminal is seeking to be re-membered in the dominion of God, seeking a fusion of realities—his with Jesus'. Without hesitation, Jesus responds, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (v. 43). The criminal will be *with* Jesus, re-membered to Jesus.

This Sunday we remember Jesus' passion as together we are joined to God's loving action for the world. Jesus' last breath on the cross is the moment when our reality is re-membered with God's, for Jesus remembers us, and paradise's reign is realized.