

Sunday, March 29, 2026

Palm Sunday

The Good News is... inspiring us to act

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Will you follow?

Will you lay down your coat?

Will you lay down something important?

Will you shout "Hosanna"?

Will you join the parade?

Will you sing, even if your throat is hoarse?

Will you cut down a palm branch?

Will you wave it in the air?

Will you follow the one riding on a donkey?

Will you let this good news inspire you to act?

We will. We will sing. We will pay close attention.

We will worship. We will follow.

Hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna in the highest.

KYRIE (Call Us Home, 3)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The very first Palm Sunday was a day of action. It was a day of movement, of crowded city streets, and cries of "Hosanna!" It was a day of peaceful protest and dreams for a better world. The first Palm Sunday was a day of peaceful, hopeful action.

So friends, on this Palm Sunday, let us join the saints before us in an act of faith.

Let us begin with an act of prayer, an act of honesty, an act of transformation.

Let us begin by drawing close to God and sharing the truth of our lives.

Let us begin with confession.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Friends, let us pray:

Jesus of Nazareth,

we know that you spent your days teaching and healing.

You marched through the streets and walked on water.

You laid hands on the sick and broke bread at crowded dinner tables.

Your good news was not confined to conversation.

It was not confined to the Temple.

Your good news was an act of love, alive in the world.

Holy God, we long for a faith like that.

Forgive us for the times when we confine our faith

to something we think about, as opposed to something we act upon.

Inspire us to love as you loved.

Inspire us to act.

With hope for tomorrow we pray, Amen.

Church family,

whether or not you wave your palm branch,

whether or not you live out your faith,

whether or not you allow this good news to inspire your actions,

God will never stop loving you.

Jesus will never stop marching for you.

The Spirit will never stop listening to you.

We are claimed, loved, and held in grace.

What good, good news. Amen!

GATHERING HYMN ELW 344 All Glory, Laud and Honor vs. 1, 4 & 5

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray:

Holy One, if we've heard this story before, the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, then help us to hear it again.

And if we've never heard this story before, if we've never heard the story of Palm Sunday or the cries of "Hosanna," then give us the wisdom to follow along.

Give us the wisdom to hear these words.

Give us the wisdom to take them into our hearts.

Give us the wisdom to act on their truth.

We are listening. Amen.

KIDS SERMON

HOPE FOUND AROUND US: A passage from *Ladder to the Light* by Steven Charleston

Let us listen for God's hope and grace as it comes to us from unexpected sources.

Our hearts and minds are open to the spirit.

When I asked the good people of the parish to name one cultural institution in which they still had complete confidence, they were silent. They were silent because they were unsure. They had lost faith in the classic sources of our shared confidence.

They did not have faith in our educational, economic, judicial, political, or health care systems. They had begun to doubt religious institutions. They felt our natural environment-the systems of the earth-were failing as well. In every category of confidence they were in crisis. They did not believe in the categories of leadership that once held their loyalty. They did not think the government would ultimately do anything to seriously alter their reality, a reality I describe in this book as darkness. I want to change that perception. Even if we do face darkness, that is never the final word. There is something we can do. We can regain our confidence, both in ourselves and in one another. We can hope. We can join together in community. We can learn from other cultures and grow stronger. In the end, we can overcome the darkness and shift the pendulum of history toward the light.

God, be in our understanding.

Let the Spirit be heard.

I invite you to stand in body or spirit as we prepare our hearts for the scriptures:

RETURN TO THE LORD (Call Us Home, 7)

HOPE FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURE

Let us listen for God's hope and grace as it comes to us in scripture.

Our hearts and minds are open to the spirit.

Mark 11:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent off two of the disciples with this instruction: "Go to the village straight ahead of you, and as soon as you enter it you will find tethered there a colt on which no one has ridden. Untie it and bring it back. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing that?' say, 'The Rabbi needs it, but will send it back very soon.' "

So they went off, and finding a colt tethered out on the street near a gate, they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, "What do you mean by untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them take it.

They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks across its back, and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And everyone around Jesus, in front or in back of him, cried out,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God!

Blessed is the coming reign of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple precincts. He inspected everything there, but since it was already late in the afternoon, he went out to Bethany accompanied by the Twelve.

The word of God for the people of God,

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 710 Let Streams of Living Justice

We will now take a moment of reflection, to listen to the spirit. This is also a time to prepare our hearts for the offering. We all have so much to share: time, talent, tithe. In the bulletins, there is a piece called Joyful Giving to share what you will give the community this week. Those slips can be placed in the offering basket.

TIME OF REFLECTION

OFFERING The Bread of Life (Call Us Home, 12)

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts we offer today, let us share your hope and grace with all the world. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**I have seen it alive in the world.
And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach,
I remember the one who welcomed the children
and led with nonviolence.
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.
I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world.
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

PRAYER SONG ELW 752 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of the peaceful parade,
God of the humble entry,
God of the people and the song,
we come to you today with the prayers of our hearts.
We come to you today because we know that you are a God who listens.
You are a God who walks with us.
You are a God who acts,
and for that, we are grateful.
So today, Holy One, we pray for guidance.
Like Jesus, we want to act upon our beliefs.
We want to allow the good news of the gospel to move through us.
We want to gather people together.
We want to move toward something good,
but we admit, we are often unsure of what to do.
We are unsure of the steps to take.
We are unsure of the road before us.
So today we pray—
give us strength.
Give us the strength to live like the crowds that day in Jerusalem.
Where they held palm branches,
may we hold a hand out to our neighbor.
May we hold open the door for each other.
May we hold onto hope.
Where they cried “Hosanna,”
may we cry out for justice.
May we cry out with joy.
May we cry out to you.
Where they laid down their coats,
may we lay down our resources—
our energy, our creativity, and our time—
so that we can build your promised day here.
We do not want to simply talk about our faith.
We want to act on it, so may this prayer be the first step.

May this prayer, and the earnestness in our hearts, move us closer to you, including our prayers for those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts, especially (PRAYER LIST)...

With cries of “Hosanna!” on our tongues, we join our voices together and trust in your eternal love, grace and peace.

Amen.

PRAYER SONG ELW 752 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

GREAT THANKSGIVING (Call Us Home, 13)

PREFACE

Truly it is right and joyous to offer thanks and praise to our Gracious God in all places and in all circumstances of life. But especially so on this day as we prepare our hearts for the mystery of salvation in Jesus’ great sacrifice. And so with all the saints and angels in heaven and on earth, we raise our voices with this never-ending hymn of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy (Call Us Home, 14)

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

CALL US HOME (Call Us Home, 16)

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, in the language or version of our hearts:

Heavenly God, giver of life, holy is your name. Your realm come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from

the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For you reign in power and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Distribution

Communion Hymns Lamb of God - Call Us Home
 ELW 491 Come, Let Us Eat

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Let us be strengthened to become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

Blessing

As you leave this place,
when you meet anger, speak with love.
When you meet fear, speak with hope.
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.
But no matter what, speak this good news.
For if you won't, then who will?
Remember, the good news of the gospel is
love and justice for all.
It is joy that surprises,
and nonviolence that transforms.

The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,
so go forth speaking, knowing the Creator, + Redeemer
and Sustainer are with you always.
Amen.

Sending Song W&P 46 Go in Peace and Serve the Lord (sing twice)

Dismissal

Go in peace, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.