

PALM SUNDAY
March 29th, 2026 – 9:30 AM

WELCOME



Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

✝ Preacher – Pastor Brian Griswold

✝ Officiant – Pr. Rudy Schneider

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: Hosanna

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest
Lord we lift up your name, With hearts full of praise.
Be exalted oh Lord my God. Hosanna in the highest.

Glory, glory, glory to the king of kings.
Glory, glory, glory to the king of kings.
Lord we lift up Your name, with hearts full of praise.
Be exalted, oh Lord, my God.
Glory to the King of Kings.

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.**

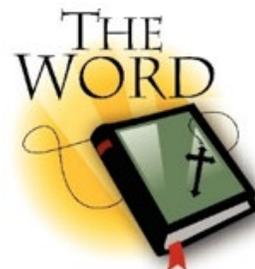
GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Philippians 2: 5 - 11

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and 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!**



Psalm 31: 9 - 16

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

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

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

¹²**Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.**

¹³For 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.

¹⁴**But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, "You are my God.**

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

¹⁶**Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."**



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

S 151b

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,
slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew 21: 1 - 11; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying 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. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵"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."

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The 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!"

¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Gospel of the Lord...**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

SERMON – Pastor Brian Griswold

OFFERING HYMN: ELW#758 – You Are the Way

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| 1 You are the way; to you alone
from sin and death we flee;
all those who search for God, you find
and by your grace set free. | 3 You are the life; the rending tomb
proclaims your conqu'ring arm;
and those who put their trust in you
not death nor hell shall harm. |
| 2 You are the truth; your word alone
true wisdom can impart;
you only can inform the mind
and purify the heart. | 4 You are the way, the truth, the life;
grant us that way to know,
that truth to keep, that life to win,
whose joys eternal flow. |

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

As we present our offerings today, we are reminded of your great love for us. Your love knows no bounds and is beyond measure. Help us to reflect your love in all that we do, including our giving. May these gifts be used to spread your love to others, bringing hope and healing to a world in need. Thank you for your love that never fails us. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

✠ We recognize those joining us via Facebook Live and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests submitted for our worship.

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *A brief silence.*

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud, with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud).* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

(Additional Petitions may be offered.)

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus the Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages, to save and to redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight.

He fulfilled all your will. He stretched out his hands in suffering, in order to free from suffering those who trust in you. As he was born to die, you raised him from death to life, so that we too would know that we shall be raised from death to life.

We therefore remember; On the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, and after breaking it and giving thanks to you, said, "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this often for the remembrance of me."

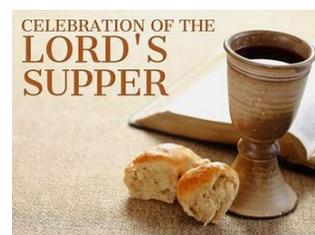
And in the same way, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this often, for the remembrance of me."

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. And unto that time, we come before you praying;

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 – Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!



COMMUNION HYMN 1: Create in Me

Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right Spirit within me.
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, Oh Lord,
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,
And renew a right Spirit within me.

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COMMUNION HYMN 2: Lord, Be Glorified

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| 1 In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In my life, Lord, be glorified today. | 3 In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In your church, Lord, be glorified today. |
| 2 In our song, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In our song, Lord, be glorified today | 4 In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In your world, Lord, be glorified today. |

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Closing Prayer - 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. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing - God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✝ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: ELW#660 – Lift High the Cross

- Refrain**
Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.
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|--|--|
| 1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God.
Refrain | 3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee.
Refrain |
| 2 All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
Refrain | 4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory! Refrain |

Dismissal: Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

Notes:
