

Order of Worship for Sunday, March 28, 2021

Palm Sunday – The Power of Sacrifice: Joy before Sorrow

Listen at 814-422-6238. Watch online at www.PennsValleyParish.info

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: O give thanks to our God, who is good.

P: God’s steadfast love endures forever.

L: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

P: For Christ has opened the gates of righteousness, that we may enter.

L: He has emptied himself for love of us.

P: Christ took human form, that we might know we are known.

L: Holy One, you are our God,

P: and we give thanks to you.

L: We give thanks to our God, who is good.

P: God’s steadfast love endures forever.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Brother, you have come in God’s name and for our sake. You have entered our souls in the 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.

HYMN Hosanna, Loud Hosanna UMH 278

BLESSING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE A Joyful Celebration

JOYS AND CONCERNS - (The Lord’s Prayer “trespass”)

SELECTED SCRIPTURE Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, Mark 11:1-11

MESSAGE Joy before Sorrow

HYMN Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty UMH 64

COMMISSION & BLESSING

PASTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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BIBLE STUDY: The One Who Comes

Read Mark 11:1-11.

- Jerusalem would have likely begun to swell in population as crowds came to celebrate Passover. How would Passover being on their minds have contributed to the hopes they projected on to Jesus? [Passover recalls Israel's deliverance from the oppression of the Egyptians. This would reinforce the idea of a leader like Moses or even David freeing the people— in this case from Roman occupation.]
- This might be a familiar story to many, but perhaps the events of 2020 might allow us to see this passage with new eyes. Why do you think those in the crowd threw their cloaks and palm branches before Jesus? [Celebrating their hopes in a new day of freedom.]
- What did their shouts of "Hosanna" mean? [Save us!] How are the symbols of palm branches that we might wave in worship a symbol of our allegiance to Jesus as our king? [They remind us of the humble Messiah who defeated death through crucifixion and Resurrection.]
- Too often in the twenty-first century, we perceive a hard division between government and religion or faith and politics. There was no such division in Jesus' time. What this crowd was engaging in was both a religious and political protest for freedom and salvation. (If the Roman guards understood the actions of the crowd and the symbolism of Jesus' riding on a donkey, Jesus would likely have been arrested, and the crowd would have been handled swiftly.) How does the political unrest and the calls for police reform we witnessed in 2020 give us a bit of insight into the yearnings of those in the crowd on Palm Sunday? [The political oppression felt by Jews affected every part of their lives, including their religious observances. Rome's occupation was seen as an affront to God's justice. We too yearn for justice and freedom for all.]
- How will you observe Holy Week? What practices might help prepare you to celebrate appropriately the good news of Easter?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we too cry, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!" We yearn for the day when your salvation and justice will be the experience of all people. We continue to repent from when we have failed to be obedient and extend your love and grace. This week, as we remember again the sacrifice and mercy of Good Friday, give us a fresh experience of your amazing and world-changing grace that burst forth from the good news of Easter Sunday. Amen.