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**Palm Sunday / Sunday of the Passion**

“He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” *Philippians 2:8b*

**AS WE GATHER**

Today’s processional Gospel looks at the first day of Holy Week, and the Passion carries us on to Jesus’ tomb. Throughout the entire week, and since His transfiguration, our Lord has moved toward the cross step by step. Despite opposition from crowds and His circle of friends, He has been determined to love us to death so that He might open heaven to us by the grace of God. Zechariah had written about the procession centuries earlier, and Paul proclaims that God the Father has exalted Jesus for His steadfast commitment to our salvation. But this is no mere history! We also are called to follow, to live through each day, step by step, faithful under various circumstances yet confident of mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

**+ PROCESSION OF PALMS +**

**GREETING**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**People: Hosanna to the Son of David.**

**PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray. Help us, Lord our God, so that it may be with joy that we begin our contemplation of all the mighty things You have done to give us eternal life; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 12:12-19

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twelfth chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

Pastor: The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,  
 “Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”  
 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and had been done to Him. The crowd that had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet Him was that they heard He had done this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SENTENCES**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**PRAYER**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, heavenly Father. Today we especially thank You for the love You showed as Your Son redeemed us. Step by step our Savior followed Your will so that by His glorious death He would redeem us and draw us to Himself. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, those who greeted Him cut palm branches to lay before Him.

**People: We ask that You bless these palms and all who bear them this day. Grant that we may always hail Him as our Lord and King;**

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN** *“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”* (*LSB* 442)

Pastor: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**People: Hosanna in the highest.**

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Today is the beginning of Holy Week. During it we shall recall how our Savior gave His life so that our sins may all be forgiven, and heaven opened to us.

**People: Even during worship, our minds wander to other concerns.**

Pastor: These concerns are already known to God. Give them into His loving hands for resolution, but turn your hearts and minds to focus on our Lord’s step-by-step determination to free us from every sin. Confident of the forgiveness He won through His glorious death and resurrection, let us then admit our sinful condition to Him and to one another.

**People: I confess to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in my thinking, speaking, and acting. I am mired in sin and incapable of saving myself. Heavenly Father, for Jesus’ sake and because of His sacrifice for us fallen creatures, we beg You to forgive, strengthen, and turn us to Your will so that we may follow our Savior in loving service to You and to one another.**

Pastor: As a called and ordained servant of Christ, who gave Himself over to death that we might have eternal life, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**COLLECT OF THE DAY** *(bulletin insert)*

**OLD TESTAMENT** Zechariah 9:9-12 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**INTROIT** *(bulletin insert)*

**EPISTLE** Philippians 2:5-11 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**PASSION HISTORY** Mark 14:1—15:47 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN** *“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”* (*LSB* 427)

**SERMON “*The Hour Has Come”***

# THE NICENE CREED *(LSB*,back inside cover)

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

*(after each petition):* Pastor: … let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS**

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**PEACE OF THE LORD**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However, if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“The Lamb”* (*LSB* 547, vs. 1-4)

*“Go to Dark Gethsemane”* (*LSB* 436)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“Ride On, Ride On in Majesty”* (*LSB* 441)

**Maundy Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Divine Service**

**Good Friday - 7:00 p.m. Tenebrae**

**Saturday - 5:00 p.m. Vigil**

**Easter Sunday - 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Services of the Word**