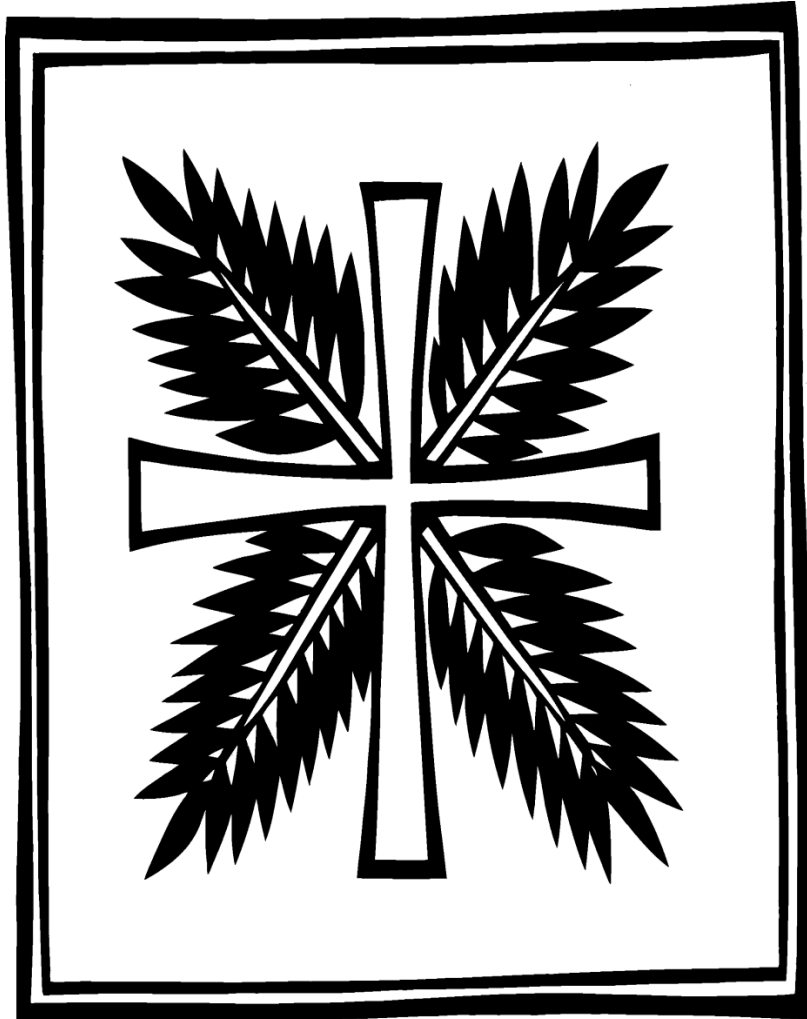


Messiah Lutheran Church Mechanicsville, Virginia



March 28, 2021
Palm Sunday

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*To share the Good News of Jesus Christ
and to invite all to join us in faith, worship, and service.*

The service will be livestreamed at 10:45 am on Messiah's FB page, and that video will be available later on the church website, messiahmech.com and YouTube, Messiah Lutheran Church Mechanicsville, VA Digital. There is no pre-recording of the service on YouTube this week. Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/MessiahMech/>

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

8154 Atlee Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Pastor: The Rev. Ryan Radtke

Church: (804) 746-7134; Email: MessiahMech@gmail.com; Website: MessiahMech.com

Palm Sunday

March 28, 2021

ACCLAMATION

P: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

C: *Hosanna to the Son of David.*

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Mark 11:1-11

P: The holy gospel according to Mark.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.' " ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

BLESSING OF PALMS

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Let us pray: 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

C: *Amen.*

PROCESSION

L: This season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday. We confessed our sin. We remembered our mortality, our need for salvation, with the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." We expressed our desire to repent, to return to God. And then our journey, our pilgrimage, of Lent began. The ashes on our brows were made from palms that were burned. Gather your palms now, and ready your hosannas.

C: *Hosanna in the highest!*

L: Through the powerful gift of baptism, God joins us to the death and resurrection of Christ, and marks us with a new cross. Through baptism we move from the fear of death to the promise of life. We pass from the stain of sin to pure forgiveness. Only through God's grace, poured out in these waters, can we reverse course and move from ashes back to palms, from sorrow and guilt to new and glad Hosannas once more. Remember your baptism, and know freedom and joy!

C: *Hosanna in the highest!*

L: We gather with Hosannas under the shadow of the cross. It is because of this shadow that we cannot jump straight from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. Under this shadow Hosannas will fade and Crucify-s will ring out. Under this shadow, in the days to come, we will tell the story of your Passion and complete our Lenten pilgrimage once more. In the wake of Ash Wednesday, and trusting in the promise of baptism, we come forward to worship. Under this shadow we offer our praises and palms, thankful for your guidance and care. We offer ourselves in service to you and in love for one another. Gracious God, accept our worship today, and throughout this Holy Week.

C: *Hosanna in the highest!*

L: Wave your palms and welcome our Lord as we lift our voices in songs of praise!

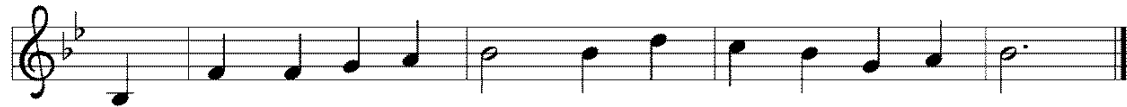
PROCESSIONAL HYMN

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain




All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
- 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
- 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,



Refrain

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: 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.

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. Amen

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Lector

A reading from Isaiah.

The image of the servant of God is one of the notable motifs in the book of Isaiah. Today's reading describes the mission of the servant, whom early Christians associated with Jesus. Like Jesus, the servant does not strike back at his detractors but trusts in God's steadfast love.

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he awakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

⁶I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.

⁹It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 2:5-11

Lector

A reading from Philippians.

Christ did not act to attain status and glory but was obedient to God even to the point of death. Following Christ's example, we do not seek personal status or glory but care for others as God cared for us in Christ's death.

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰so that at the name of 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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 14:1--15:47

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

The passion story in Mark's gospel presents Jesus as one who dies abandoned by all. He shows himself to be the true Son of God by giving his life for those who have forsaken him.

¹It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; ²for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

³While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. ⁴But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? ⁵For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. ⁶But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. ⁷For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. ⁸She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. ⁹Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

¹⁰Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

¹²On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, ¹⁴and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹⁵He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." ¹⁶So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁷When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." ¹⁹They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" ²⁰He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. ²¹For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

²²While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.'

²⁸But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." ²⁹Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not." ³⁰Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." ³¹But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.

³²They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. ³⁴And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." ³⁵And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." ³⁷He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? ³⁸Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of

Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴³Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. ⁴⁴Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? ⁴⁹Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." ⁵⁰All of them deserted him and fled.

⁵¹A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, ⁵²but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

⁵³They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. ⁵⁴Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. ⁵⁵Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. ⁵⁶For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, ⁵⁸"We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.' " ⁵⁹But even on this point their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" ⁶¹But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" ⁶²Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.' "

⁶³Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

⁶⁶While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." ⁶⁸But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. ⁶⁹And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." ⁷⁰But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." ⁷¹But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." ⁷²At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

^{15:1}As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ²Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." ³Then the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

⁶Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. ⁷Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. ⁸So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. ⁹Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. ¹²Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" ¹³They shouted back, "Crucify him!" ¹⁴Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" ¹⁵So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. ¹⁷And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. ¹⁸And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. ²⁰After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. ²²Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). ²³And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. ²⁴And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

²⁵It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³²Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

³³When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

³⁵When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah."
³⁶And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down."
³⁷Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.
³⁸And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.
³⁹Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

⁴⁰There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome.
⁴¹These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

⁴²When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,
⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.
⁴⁴Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time.
⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph.
⁴⁶Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.
⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was laid.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

SERMON

Pastor Ryan Radtke

"Hosanna!" doesn't mean "Hooray!" "Hosanna!" doesn't mean "Yippee!" The crowds that were greeting Jesus as he entered Jerusalem at what would become the start of a Holy Week, as they laid down cloaks and branches, as they offered a royal welcome – what they were really saying when they shouted "Hosanna!" was "Save us!" Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, the one from the line of David! Please, save us, all the way to the highest heaven!

Now imagine: in the span of just five days, the shouts echoing in Jerusalem's streets had gone from "Hosanna!" – "Save us!" – to "Crucify him!" The motion had gone from laying down cloaks and branches on the ground so that Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, the Son of David, would receive the royal-est of welcomes, so that his feet would never even flirt with touching the common dust of the road...to a cross being raised, and Jesus nailed to it, royally mocked as "the King of the Jews," so that his feet would never walk on any streets ever again.

Imagine that: just five days.

And within those five days Mark's account of the Passion begins. And it begins, of all places, in the house of a leper. It begins with an unnamed woman breaking open a jar of costly ointment, myrrh from the manger in its reprise, anointing Jesus beforehand for his impending burial. And while others grumble at the waste of such a gesture, Jesus says that she has performed a good service for him, because "you

will not always have me." "Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

Imagine you had only five days, with the tide turning from Hosanna! to Crucify! What would be told in remembrance of you?

Would you also anoint Jesus, declare him king and savior, no matter the cost? Would your honoring acts include you in the proclamation of the good news, regardless of if your name was recorded?

Would you betray? Trade the whole-self following of Jesus for something a little more instantly gratifying? He wasn't what you expected anyway; time to cut your losses?

Would you prepare for a meal with Jesus, the new Passover Lamb, who empties himself and humbles himself, to deliver you from slavery to sin? Would you prepare a seat at your table for the Lord, and for others, like lepers and extravagant anointers?

Would you receive the body, the blood, the covenant, given for you? Would you become what you receive?

Would you bluster when confronted with sin, harrumphing out a "Surely, not I?"

Would you slumber when Jesus asks you to stay with him, and pray with him, and remain with him? Would you slumber when Jesus asks to you abide with others in their times of crisis and need?

Would you offer a kiss of friendship with lying lips?

Would you flail about with swords and lop off others' ability to hear what Jesus has to say?

Would you try to arrest Jesus' ministry, prevent him from doing what he had come to do, finding it all just too scandalous?

Would you desert? Would you flee? When the rubber hits the road, scattering the palms, would you stay or go? Be exposed, laid bare, as a whole-hearted disciple, or head for the hills?

Would you distort Jesus's words? Explain away Jesus's mission? Diminish Jesus's gospel?

Would you deny your association with Jesus, keep your faith clandestine and convenient, not risk the trouble of association, not speak up until the moment is far, far past?

Would you regret what you did, or didn't do, said, or didn't say, during your five days?

Would you swap out Jesus for an edgier savior, a tougher savior?

Would you bear a cross only under compulsion?

Would you mock, and abandon compassion?

Would you spectate only?

Would you succumb to it all?

Or. Would you be like the Centurion, affected? Would you recognize, with astonishment, as the sky went dark, as the curtain was rent, as God's true love was let loose into the world? Would you declare and testify and proclaim: "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Would you attend, like the women, following and providing, doing all that you could, even when there was nothing in your power to do, staying close regardless of all your other woulds and coulds?

Would you be so bold as to carry Christ's body as your own?

We know what Jesus would do, and did. We know the lengths to which God would go, and went. We know the things the Spirit puts into motion, and still stirs. We know what happens in these five days. And we know what happens in the three days afterwards.

We know that in these days of Passion Christ took on the qualities of the suffering servant prophesied by Isaiah: sustaining the weary, suffering abuse, turning to the Lord God alone for help.

We know that Jesus inspired the Christ-Hymn Paul includes in his letter to the Philippians: "who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross."

We know that Jesus took on the role of Passover Lamb and scapegoat. We know that Jesus instituted a new covenant, in his own body and blood, for you, and for me, for the forgiveness of sins, in the simplicity and familiarity and nourishment and fellowship of a meal. We know that in tortured prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus said, "not what I want, but what you want." We know that palms and Hosannas gave way to a cross. For us.

We know what Jesus would do, and did, for us. But imagine, in those five days, what would be told in remembrance of you.

When Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "You say so." Pilate's reply? He gave in to the pressure, he punished a man he knew to be innocent, and he hung a mocking sign on the cross; that was his response.

In these five days, at the close of another Lenten passage, we are confronted: in our lives, is Jesus King? Jesus says to us: "You say so." What do our words, our actions, say? To Jesus? To the world? How do our woulds and coulds play out? Nameless woman with costly ointment? Lepers opening our homes? Centurions with nothing to gain by our witness? Constant supporters at Jesus' side every step of the way? Mockers? Flawed disciples? Layers of palms? Shouters of Hosanna? Screamers of Crucify? Forgiven sinners? Evangelists and apostles? Passersby compelled to carry a cross? Humble servants bearing cruciform wounds of our own?

Whoever you are...however your woulds and coulds play out, in these five days or any others...this is the story of God's love for you, for me, for all of us, to and through the cross. We dwell in this saving Passion in these five days to come; we wait with the world for the three days after; and next week, on the new first day, we approach the tomb. And we see how God answers our Hosannas. May God be with you in this Holiest of Weeks. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

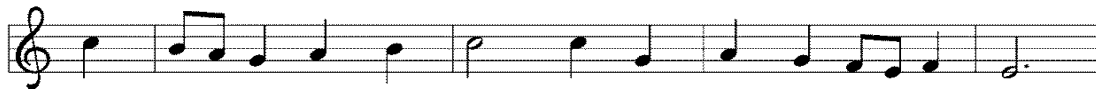
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded



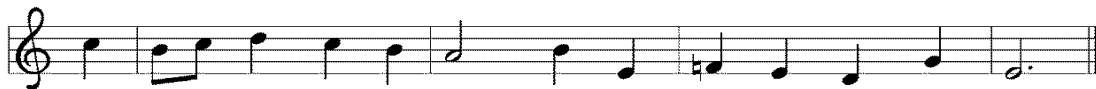
1 O sa - cred head, now wound - ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2 How pale thou art with an - guish, with sore a - buse and scorn;
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear - est friend,
4 Lord, be my con - so - la - tion; shield me when I must die;



now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown;
how does thy face now lan - guish, which once was bright as morn!
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?
re - mind me of thy pas - sion when my last hour draws nigh.



O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine!
Thy grief and bit - ter pas - sion were all for sin - ners' gain;
Oh, make me thine for - ev - er, and should I faint - ing be,
These eyes, new faith re - ceiv - ing, from thee shall nev - er move;



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call thee mine.
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.
for all who die be - liev - ing die safe - ly in thy love.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, d. 1250; tr. composite

Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, German melody, c. 1500; adapt. Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.

C: Amen

P: In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin, and receive God's promise of mercy.

P: God at the margins,

C: We have wandered far from your home; again and again, we lose our way. We turn inward, afraid of the world around us. We forget that you have saved your people before and promise to do so again. Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces toward the future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your love overflows. Amen.

P: Receive good news: God turns to you in love. "I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live," says our God. All your sin is forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ, who is the free and abounding gift of God's grace for you.

C: Amen.

PRAYERS

A: Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need. *[Brief silence]*

A: In Jesus you came among us as a suffering servant. Give your church humility. Redeem your people from pride and the certainty that we always know your will. Heal us and empower us to confess Christ crucified. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great

A: In creation, life springs from death. Redeem your creation awaiting resurrection: restore lost habitats and endangered species. Create new possibilities for areas affected by climate change (especially), grant relief from natural disasters (especially), and nurture new growth. Hear us, O God. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Jesus was handed over to the powers of this world. In all nations, instruct the powerful, that they would not exploit their power but maintain justice. Sustain soldiers, and guide those who command them, that they serve those in greatest need. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: On the cross Jesus joined all who feel forsaken. Abide with those who are condemned to death. Defend those who are falsely accused. Console and strengthen those who are mocked or bullied. Accompany all who suffer (especially); grant respite and renewal. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You called followers to tend Jesus' body in death. Sustain hospice workers and funeral directors. Bless this congregation's ministries at times of death: those who plan and lead funerals, those who prepare meals, all who offer support in grief. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: You inspired the centurion to confess Jesus as your Son. We praise you for the faith you have given to people of all places and times. Give us also such faith to trust the promises of baptism and, with them, to look for the resurrection of the dead. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God, you are life. We pray for our world, our country, our community, and our church as we face the challenges of coronavirus. We pray for those who grieve the loss of loved ones, for the sick and their families, for those fearful of an unknown future. We pray for the millions of unemployed, for children and others at home - that they be safe from abuse. We pray for those who are alone and isolated during this time that they may feel your loving presence. We pray for all

the hospital and health care workers, and all first responders, that they receive needed supplies and be kept protected in the work they do. We pray for those making decisions about how to live into the future and when that will happen. Keep us all in your care as we wait for a new day. Hear us, O God.

C: *Your mercy is great.*

A: God of all families, you have given us families to be sanctuaries of blessing, comfort, and love for each other. Under your protection fill us with harmony, hope, and health. We pray this week for the Warmbrod, Weaver and Whirley families as well as our Messiah family. Guard all of our hearts that we may display love instead of hate, anger, or bitterness. Lead us all to be grateful for your abiding love and enable us to glorify you by sharing that love with others. Hear us, O God.

C: *Your mercy is great.*

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: *And also with you.*

THE GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: *Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them to the Lord.*

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

C: *It is right to give God thanks and praise.*

PREFACE

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life. And so, with all the choirs

of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**C: *Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all. 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. Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: *Amen.*

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C: *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

P: Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. C: Amen

A SHORT LITANY AS HOLY WEEK BEGINS

L: Today we have cheered you on as our champion and hailed you as our hero.

C: Forgive us tomorrow when our enthusiasm wanes.

L: Today we have entrusted you to rescue us from our pitiful circumstances.

C: Forgive us on Tuesday when we decide we can take care of ourselves.

L: Today we have made you the centerpiece of our very existence.

C: Forgive us on Wednesday when we forget to remember who you are.

L: Today we have called out to you loudly by name.

C: Forgive us on Thursday when we pretend that we've never met you.

L: Today we have stared at you with the star struck eyes of fans and groupies.

C: Forgive us on Friday when we avert our eyes because it's too painful to see you on the cross.

L: Today we have expressed our unsuppressed hopefulness in the future you have in store for us.

C: Forgive us on Saturday when we believe all is lost.

L: Today we have been boldly certain of the earthly ways you will redeem us.

C: Restore us on Sunday when we are startled and awed by your rising.

BLESSING

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING SONG

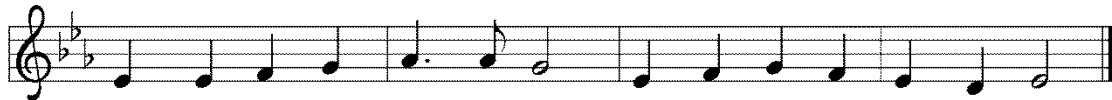
Go to Dark Gethsemane



1 Go to dark Geth-sem - a - ne, all who feel the tempt - er's pow'r;
2 Fol - low to the judg-ment hall, view the Lord of life ar - raigned;
3 Cal - v'ry's mourn - ful moun-tain climb; there, a - dor - ing at his feet,
4 Ear - ly has - ten to the tomb where they laid his breath - less clay;



your Re - deem - er's con - flict see. Watch with him one bit - ter hour;
oh, the worm-wood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sus-tained!
mark that mir - a - cle of time, God's own sac - ri - fice com-plete.
all is sol - i - tude and gloom. Who has tak - en him a - way?



turn not from his griefs a - way; learn from Je - sus Christ to pray.
Shun not suf - f'ring, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.
"It is fin - ished!" hear him cry; learn from Je - sus Christ to die.
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Sav - ior, teach us so to rise.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854
Music: GETHSEMANE, Richard Redhead, 1820–1901

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

(Text used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #11886-S)

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS – SUNDAY, March 28, 2021

Pianist: Debbie Walker
Lay Assistants: (1st Lay Asst.) Gladys Hubert (2nd Lay Asst.) Heather Williams
Lectors: LeRoy Albertson
Acolyte: Michael Sondor
Ushers: Chris & Michael Sondor; Roger Schroeder
Altar Guild: Dianne Absher & Anita Philp
Counters: Marilyn & Gordon Gunn

Announcements

PASTOR RYAN'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Ryan's office hours for this week are listed below. You can also reach Pastor Ryan via email at messiahmechpr@gmail.com or by phone at 507-360-7276 if you'd like to talk or set up an appointment.

Wednesday-Friday 11:00 am-4:00 pm

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Here is this week's information based on our 2021 budget.

- Contributions to the general fund averaged \$3,481.74 (down from \$3,536.26 through March 21, 2021).
- We are \$6,111.12 behind the year-to-date budget needs (increasing from \$5,002.12 the last time reported).
- We received a check for \$750 from Pacific Entertainment for the use of our parking lot for the filming of the movie, Dopesick.
- Weekly budget need is \$3,991.00.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Palm/Passion Sunday – 10:45 am

Maundy Thursday – 6:30 pm

Good Friday – 6:30 pm

Easter Festival Worship – 10:45 am

MCEF DONATION INFORMATION (CURRENT NEEDS)

Today it feels like summer is here and the clothing closets are doing the same. Please, only spring and summer clothing that is clean and usable, there is no space for winter clothing. Other needs include boy's new underwear (sizes S, M, M and L), small to medium sized men's jeans, men's short sleeved colored T-shirts, all sizes and tops for women in small and medium sizes. The linen closet is low on Double and King sheets (no stains or rips please). Food pantry needs include spinach, instant oatmeal and grits packages, pancake mix and syrup, toothbrushes (new) and jellies of any kind. Thank you for your continued support of your neighbors in need. Check out 4mcef.com for more information. The "Fun Raiser" at Chicken Salad Chick continues on the 3rd Monday of each month, mention that you support MCEF and 10% of the sale is donated to MCEF. Thank you for your support of your neighbors in need through MCEF.

PRAYER LIST TO BE RESET

The current prayer list will be reset on April 4 to begin the second quarter. Please contact Davina with names that need to remain on the list. Email her at MessiahMech@gmail.com or phone 746-7134 with your requests.

WHO WILL WIN THE GOLDEN HALO?

Lenten Madness is back and getting ready for Lent 2021. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women comprising the Church's Calendar of Saints, this unique Lenten devotion is now in its 11th year! Fashioned after NCAA March Madness, the format is straightforward: 32 saints are placed into a tournament-like single elimination bracket. Each pairing remains open for a set period of time and people vote for their favorite saint. 16 saints make it to the Round of the Saintly Sixteen; eight advances to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo.

Go to <https://www.lentmadness.org/about/> to learn more about Lenten Madness and to fill out a bracket go to <https://www.lentmadness.org/bracket/>. Be creative and have some fun while learning about some amazing people!

LENTEN STUDIES

Even though our two Lenten series have come to a close, you can still check out the videos and summaries for the Life Together (Apart) book series on the Messiah website, and watch the videos from our "Calmed Waters, Stilled Storms" ecumenical series (including the final video from our very own Pastor Ryan) at the following link on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqsHd3j1WGjZjGray4o76EA>.

INFORMATION ON VACCINATIONS

The Virginia Department of Health recently released a downloadable Virginia COVID Info Toolkit with information on vaccines and the vaccine registration system. You can access the information at: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine/patient-education/>. If you need to register for the vaccine, confirm your registration, or update your record, go to: <https://vaccinate.virginia.gov/>

NOW ACCEPTING REPAIR PROGRAM APPLICATIONS!

Thanks to a grant, Hanover Habitat for Humanity is able to serve low-income senior citizens in the 23111 or 23116 Zip Code in the Hanover suburban service area, or 'Old Mechanicsville.' Repair work will be for health and safety issues or code violations. However due to COVID, we will only be able to do exterior repairs at this time. If you or a loved one is in need of a repair in this area, please visit their website at <https://www.hanoverhfh.org/programs/critical-repair-program/> for more information and an application. Repairs will be based on a first come, first serve basis while funding is available.

LENTEN OFFERINGS

Many of our ministry partners have felt the effects of the Covid restrictions this past year. One who has felt it in particular are the good folks at Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center. We encourage you to give a special Lenten offering this year to Caroline Furnace. Just mark on your check, envelope, or electronic donation to Messiah that it's for the camp, and we'll send the collective offerings at the end of Lent. We pray that they'll be able to have a full load of campers soon, and we thank God for the amazing things that happen at camp!

SMALL GROUPS

If you'd like to have a small group or committee meeting at the church, please check out the Small Group Meetings and Cleaning Protocols. You can contact Davina when wanting to schedule a time for your group to meet and get the latest protocols. The only areas open at this time include the Fellowship Hall, the hallway to the restrooms, and the restrooms. All other parts of the building remain 'closed' for now. There are also copies of the forms at church on the kitchen counter for you to use at your meeting along with necessary cleaning supplies. Davina will maintain the completed forms in her office. Thanks for all you do! Stay well everyone!

UPDATED: REBUILD RVA GRANT PROGRAM

On October 28, the Governor's Office released information about an expansion of the Rebuild Virginia Grants. The grants are available to small businesses and non-profits. Unlike the last time round of Rebuild Virginia grants, the expansion specifically says that an organization can receive funding even if the organization received CARES Act Funding. Qualified recipients can receive a grant of up to three months' worth of expenses to help with salaries, mortgage, utilities, etc. The FAQs aren't as entirely clear, but when you combine the FAQs with the application guide (pg 4 in particular addresses what is excluded for those with CARES Act funding), it appears that most organizations in Virginia are eligible. This funding may prove particularly helpful for child care and preschool ministries that had issues with part-time employees and PPP Loan calculations. One potential hurdle for an application is the requirement for a DUNS number. The DUNS numbers appear to be standard practice in the for-profit world and almost unheard of in the non-profit world. It is possible for a church or non-profit to apply for a DUNS number, but the online process to get the number can be confusing.

VIRGINIA RENT AND MORTGAGE RELIEF PROGRAM (RMRP)

The Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP) is designed to support and ensure housing stability across the commonwealth during the coronavirus pandemic. Depending on availability of funds and household need, the RMRP may provide financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments for eligible households. This includes financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments past due beginning April 1, 2020 and onward. Financial assistance is a one-time payment with opportunity for renewal based on availability of funding and the household's need for additional assistance and continued eligibility. For more information please visit: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): www.dhcd.virginia.gov/rmrp.

SMILE! MESSIAH RECEIVES .5% DONATION WHEN YOU SHOP ON AMAZON!

Even though the most recent holiday shopping season is behind us, the Stewardship team would like to remind everyone to sign up and use Amazon Smile! Signing up is easy and does not interfere with Prime Membership benefits. Amazon donates .5% of eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Step 1: visit smile.amazon.com; Step 2: sign in with your amazon account credentials; Step 3: Search for "Messiah Lutheran Church Mechanicsville"; Step 4: Start SHOPPING! *please remember to bookmark smile.amazon.com for easy access every time you shop. You must add the "smile" for this program. Thank you all and happy shopping!