



Palm/Passion Sunday March 28, 2021

Woodstock Presbyterian Church

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

You are invited to stand, with a leafy branch if you have one available.

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: The story of faith is a story of courage.

All: It took courage for John the Baptist to prepare the way.

One: It took courage for Mary to say, "Here I am. Use me."

All: It took courage for the disciples to drop their nets and follow Jesus.

One: It took courage for the paralyzed man's friends to lower him through the roof.

All: It took courage for Peter to walk on water.

One: It took courage for Zacchaeus to give half of his possessions to the poor.

All: It took courage for Jesus to enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

One: Faith has never been easy. It is a journey of courage.

All: Again and again, God, show us the way.

One: Let us worship a brave and courageous God.

***LITANY OF PALMS**

Psalm 118:26

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

Hosanna in the highest!

***Hymn #196 All Glory Laud and Honor**

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All Glory, Laud, and Honor

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN 7.6.7.6 D

Theodulph of Orleans, c. 820

Trans. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1859

Melchior Teschner, 1614

Arr. William Henry Monk, 1861

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or To Thee, Re-deem-er, King!

Fine

To whom the lips of chil - dren Made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1. Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, Thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2. The peo - ple of the He - brews With palms be - fore Thee went;
 3. To Thee, be - fore Thy pas - sion, They sang their hymns of praise;
 4. Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; Ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Repeat Refrain

Who in the Lord's name com - est, The King and bless-ed One.
 Our praise and prayers and an - thems Be - fore Thee we pre - sent.
 To Thee, now high ex - alt - ed, Our mel - o - dy we raise.
 Who in all good de - light - est, Thou good and gra-cious King!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO CONFESSION

Glennon Doyle, a famous author and writer, frequently uses the phrase,
“We can do hard things.”
It’s one of her many mottos in life.
As a result, this declaration, “We can do hard things,”
Has become an anthem for so many.
You can buy these words on poster prints, on greeting cards, and even on coffee mugs.
These five simple words aren’t particularly radical,
So when I stop to think about why they have caught hold for so many,
I can only assume that it is because life and faith require courage.
Vulnerability requires courage.
Relationships require courage.
Advocacy and justice require courage.
Facing our privilege requires courage.
Faith requires courage.
Even confession requires courage.
So friends, let us do hard things.
Let us confess together, trusting that God is always there,
Cheering us on, in every courageous act.
Let us pray. . .

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of palm branches and hallelujahs:
We confess—we love a good Palm Sunday celebration.
We love the sound of a joyful parade.
We love shouting, “hallelujah!”
We love that Palm Sunday means Easter is just around the corner.
We love good news.
However, if we slow down and pay attention,
We know that Palm Sunday was not a walk in the park for you.
There was risk. There was fear. There was the threat of violence.
You were leading a peaceful protest against an unjust empire,
And the whole world knew it.
Forgive us for glossing over the courage this day took.
Remind us that the story of faith is a story of courage,
And even we can do hard things.
With hope we pray. Amen.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HEARING THE WORD

READING: John 12: 1-19

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus’ feet, and wiped them^[a] with her hair.

The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii^[a] and the money given to the poor?" ⁶ (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it^[a] so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

⁹ When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹ since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

¹² The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—
the King of Israel!"

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!"

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. ¹⁷ So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify.^[a] ¹⁸ It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. ¹⁹ The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"

SERMON: Again & Again, We Draw on Courage

READING: JOHN 19

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*HYMN OF RESPONSE & AFFIRMATION #215 What Wondrous Love is This
PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

Dear people of God,
God sent Jesus into the world,
not to condemn the world,
but that the world through him might be saved,
that all who believe in him
might be delivered from the power of sin and death
and become heirs with him of eternal life.

Let us pray for the one holy catholic
and apostolic church of Christ throughout the world:
for its unity in witness and service,
for all church leaders and ministers
and the people whom they serve,
for all the people of this presbytery,
for all Christians in this community,
for those about to be baptized
that God will confirm the church in faith,
increase it in love,
and preserve it in peace.

Silence.

Eternal God,
by your Spirit the whole body of your faithful people
is governed and sanctified.
Receive our prayers
which we offer before you
for all members of your holy church,
that in our vocation and ministry
we may truly and devoutly serve you;
through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth,
and for those in authority among them:
for the President of the United States,
and the Congress and Supreme Court,
for the members and representatives of the United Nations,
for all who serve the common good,
that by God's help

they may seek justice and truth,
and live in peace and concord.

Silence.

Almighty God,
kindle, we pray, in every heart
the true love of peace,
and guide with your wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth,
that justice and peace may increase,
until the earth is filled
with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us pray for all who suffer
and are afflicted in body or in mind:
for the hungry and homeless,
the destitute and the oppressed,
and all who suffer persecution, doubt, and despair,
for the sorrowful and bereaved,
for prisoners and captives
and those in mortal danger,
that God will comfort and relieve them,
and grant them the knowledge of God's love,
and stir up in us the will and patience
to minister to their needs.

Silence.

Gracious God,
the comfort of all who sorrow,
the strength of all who suffer,
hear the cry of those in misery and need.
In their afflictions show them your mercy,
and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them,
for the sake of him who suffered for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us pray for all who have not received the gospel of Christ:
for all who have not heard the words of salvation,
for all who have lost their faith,
for all whose sin has made them indifferent to Christ,
for all who actively oppose Christ by word or deed,
for all who are enemies of the cross of Christ,
and persecutors of his disciples,
for all who in the name of Christ have persecuted others,

that God will open their hearts to the truth
and lead them to faith and obedience.

Silence.

Merciful God,
creator of the peoples of the earth and lover of souls,
have compassion on all who do not know you
as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ.
Let your gospel be preached with grace and power
to those who have not heard it.
Turn the hearts of those who resist it,
and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray;
that there may be one flock under one shepherd,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us commit ourselves to God,
and pray for the grace of a holy life,
that with all who have departed this life
and have died in the peace of Christ,
and those whose faith is known to God alone,
we may be accounted worthy
to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord,
and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence.

Eternal God of unchanging power and light,
look with mercy on your whole church.
Bring to completion your saving work,
so that the whole world may see
the fallen lifted up,
the old made new,
and all things brought to perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

TAKING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING HYMN #228 Were You There

*WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: Friends, whether you are standing at the door of a deeper faith journey,
Unsure of what comes next,
Or running your way through that threshold,
You are claimed, forgiven, and loved by God.

All: Again and again, we are forgiven.

Again and again, we are loved.

Again and again, we are invited in.

One: Thanks be to God for a love like that.
if you hear nothing else today, hear this:
God is here. God sees you. God knows you. God meets you at the edge of every new
beginning,
And God calls you beloved.

All: We are washed by the water.

We are called beloved.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

One: Siblings in Christ,
We confess with gratitude because we know that God already has heard and forgiven us.
No matter what we have done or left undone, we are held in God's hand.
So rest in this good news:

All: God invites us in.

God meets us where we are.

God hears our prayers.

God forgives us.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

One: Friends, despite our wonderings,
Despite our distractions,
Despite wrong turns time and time again,
We are known and loved by God.
Like a lighthouse keeper by the sea,
God will never stop waving us home.
So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

All: Our fragile bones are held by the Great Creator.

Our fragile hearts are loved by the Great Creator.

Our tender spirits are forgiven by the Great Creator.

One: Today is a new day.

**All: Again and again, we are forgiven;
Again and again, we are reformed.**

One: Family of faith,
Even when we gloss over the truth,
Even when our courage fails us,
Even when we doubt that we can do hard things,
God believes in us. God loves us. God forgives us.
Hear and believe this truth:

**All: We are known.
We are loved.
We are forgiven.
Again and again and again. Amen.**

***REFRAIN**

**As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again,
Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.
Amen.**

***POSTLUDE – “Go in Peace”, played by Heartstrings Dulcimer Group**

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Heartstrings Dulcimer Group

Katie Grant, piano

Credits:

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