

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SUNDAY WORSHIP

5 April 2020

Prayer of Preparation

We rise, O God, awakened by your Word, to live another day. Lead us in your path. Show us the steps to take toward greater faith. Hold us in your care as we move through this Holy Week where the shadows deepen even in the daylight. Hosanna! Save us now, dear God! Amen.

Welcome and Chiming of the Trinity

Call to Worship from Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

**This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.**

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

**The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.**

This is the Lord’s doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

**This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!

O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!

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

We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The Lord is God,
and he has given us light.

**Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.**

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.

**O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.**

Hymn 196 vv. 1-2 “All Glory, Laud, and Honor”

Refrain:

All glory, laud, and honor
to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring!

1 Thou art the King of Israel,
thou David’s royal Son,
who in the Lord’s name comest,
the King and blessed One. (Refrain)

2 The people of the Hebrews
with palms before thee went;
our praise and prayers and anthems
before thee we present. (Refrain)

Call to Confession

Let us face this day of palms and Jesus’ passion with honesty, confessing our sin before God.

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, sure of your faithfulness even in your dying, comforted by your compassion toward your people in every age, we beg your mercy for our imperfect gratitude. We have looked to you for paltry favors, when you have given everything. We have withheld from your people, our neighbors, and from your creation, our Earth, the care and tending they deserve. We have rejected the cornerstone you sent to build a people of righteousness even here, today. Forgive our failings. Heal what we have broken, nurture what we have neglected, and lead us to your vision, so that we may know the peace of wholeness in you.

Assurance of Pardon

Your God has come to you, humble, in the form of a servant, to free you from the weight of sin and death. Jesus’ obedient suffering has released you. Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the one who is exalted beyond what we can comprehend: Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Summary of the Law

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”
Matthew 22:37-39

Prayer of Illumination

Let your Word, O God, break open our hearts this day through the power of the Holy Spirit, that we may enter into the coming Holy Week with the same mind that was in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

New Testament Lesson

Matthew 21:1-17

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

“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.”

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

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.” Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, “It is written,

‘My house shall be called a house of prayer’;
but you are making it a den of robbers.”

The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became angry and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read,

‘Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies
you have prepared praise for yourself?’”

He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Maren Sonstegard-Spray

Hymn 196 vv. 3-4 “All Glory, Laud, and Honor”

Refrain:

**All glory, laud, and honor
to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring!**

**3 To thee, before thy passion,
they sang their hymns of praise;
to thee, now high exalted,
our melody we raise. (Refrain)**

**4 Thou didst accept their praises;
accept the prayers we bring,
who in all good delightest,
thou good and gracious King! (Refrain)**

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Our Savior comes to us humbly, riding a donkey and proclaiming a message of peace. Let us pray for the church, for Earth and all its creatures, and for all people in need, saying, God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That Christians will find unity, purpose, and hope in this time of separation, discovering a new way of being church, following the way of Jesus. This day and every day this week, let us ask, "Jesus, what would you have me to do today?"

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That all ends of the earth would have safety, shelter and peace in this time, that nations would work together and learn from one another for the sake of our common good. We know, O God, that your loves extends to our neighbor next door and to people we will never meet – we pray for the health of all, we pray for friend and enemy.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That all leaders, of church and of state, prefer humble service to empty power. Guide our state and national leaders in wisdom, that they may use resources wisely and protect the most vulnerable in our midst.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach us to live with gratitude for the gifts of nourishment, shelter, safety, connection, trust, patience, and hope with the courage and wisdom to change whatever fails to be life-giving in our lives.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those most affected in this time, children who do not have food in their homes, those who have lost jobs and cannot pay their rent, those working harder than ever without adequate rest, those who have a loved one who is sick and they cannot be with them. We pray, O God, for courage, endurance, relief, and peace. May we all draw strength from the name that is above every other name.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful witnesses who have gone before, grandparents and great grandparents of the faith, who faced greater fears than we are facing now, who lived in trust and hope and did not lose faith. Their faith guides and nourishes our own. We pray that all who mourn today will be comforted for we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our creator, you show us, your daughters and sons
the way to freedom and grace through the gentle obedience of your Son,
Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together, Our Father . . .

Benediction