

March 28, 2021 ~ Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday

Welcome

Prelude

Call to Worship (from Psalm 118.1-2, 19-29)

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

Let the people say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

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

Leader: Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

People: Open to us the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

Leader: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

People: 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.

Leader: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord.

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

Opening Prayer

Proclamation of the triumphant entry into Jerusalem

Mark 11.1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and 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. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

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

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Then 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.

*Hymn #196 - *“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”*

Holy Vessels

Responsive Chorus #406 - *“We Are Standing on Holy Ground”*

***We are standing on holy ground, and I know that there are angels all around;
Let us praise Jesus now; we are standing in his presence on holy ground.***

Invitation to Confession

Prayer of Confession

(Based on Psalm 31)

Be gracious to us, O Lord, for even as we gather to sing Hosanna, we are weary in soul and body.

For we know sorrow and sighing; our strength fades each day.

But we trust in you, O Lord; we say, “You are my God.”

Our times are in your hand; deliver us from the hands of others.

Let your face shine upon us; save us in your steadfast love.

(A time of silent, personal prayer)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Response #423 - *“Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”* (v.1)

***Create in me a clean heart, O God; create in me a clean heart, O God;
create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.***

Community at Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer ~ *in unison*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.

Amen.

Introduction to the Reading of the Passion of Jesus Christ According to the Gospel of Mark

Special Music

TBA Leigh Emmett

Mark 14.1-25

It 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; for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

While 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. But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. 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."

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

On 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?" So 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, and 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?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And 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." They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is

dipping bread into the bowl with me. For 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.”

While 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.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.”

**Hymn #517 - “Here, O Our Lord, We See You”*

Mark 14.25-72

Then Jesus said, “Truly 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.”

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”

Peter said to him, “Even though all become deserters, I will not.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.” And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.” He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He 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. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

Immediately, 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. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled."

All of them deserted him and fled.

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

They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter 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. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, "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.'" But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus 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.'"

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some 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.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." But 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. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." But 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." But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." At 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.

**Hymn #834 - "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"*

Mark 15.1-47

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. Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

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

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

They 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. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.

And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In 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. Let 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.

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At 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?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And 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." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now 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!"

There 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. These 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.

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph 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. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then 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. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body was laid.

***Hymn #228 ~ "Were You There?"**

***Affirmation of Faith**

Philippians 2.5-11

Christ Jesus, 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. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Distribution of the Palms

*Hymn #826 ~ *“Lift High the Cross”*

*Benediction

*Choral Response #748 ~ *“Go with Us, Lord”*

*Go with us Lord, and guide the way through this and every coming day,
that in your Spirit strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.*

Postlude

CCLI#2342595/20863950 CVLI#504305417

All Glory, Laud, and Honor 196

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re-deem-er, King,

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,

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!

These stanzas for Palm Sunday have been selected and translated from a much longer Latin poem written by a bishop who was the leading theologian in Charlemagne's court. They are sung to a 17th-century German chorale, as adapted for these words in the mid-19th century.

406 We Are Standing on Holy Ground

Holy Ground

G D A D G D Em
 We are stand - ing on ho - ly ground,
 D G F#m F#m7 B7
 and I know that there are an - gels all a -
 E Gm D A7 D G
 round; let us praise Je - sus
 D Em F#m7 G D G
 now; we are stand - ing in his
 D Em7 D G D
 pres - ence on ho - ly ground.

The phrase "holy ground" resonates with the experience of Moses at the burning bush, where he had an encounter with God (Exodus 3:5; also quoted in the martyr Stephen's sermon, Acts 7:33). The reference to angels may recall Jacob's vision (Genesis 28:12-17) or Hebrews 12:22.

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God 423

(Psalm 51)

Capo 5: (F) (Gsus) (G) (C) (Em7) (F) (A7)
B \flat Csus C F Am7 B \flat D7

1 Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God; cre -
 2 Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence; 7
 3 Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion; re -

(D) (D7) (G) (Dm)
G G7 C Gm

ate in me a clean heart, O God; cre -
 cast me not a - way from your pres - ence; 7
 store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion; re -

(E) (E7) (Am) (E7) (Am)
A A7 Dm A7 Dm

ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
 cast me not a - way from your pres - ence 7 and
 store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -

(Dm7) (Em) (G) (C) [(Em)]
Gm7 Am C F [Am]

new a right spir - it with - in me.
 take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.
 hold me with your free Spir - it.

The text here comes from Psalm 51:10-12, three verses that illustrate the pattern of parallels often found in Hebrew poetry. The first verse here centers on positive actions, the second on avoidance of negative actions, and the third on providing an improved spiritual condition.

Here, O Our Lord, We See You 517

1 Here, O our Lord, we see you face to face.
 2 Here would we feed up - on the bread of God,
 3 This is the hour of ban - quet and of song;
 4 Too soon we rise; the sym - bols dis - ap - pear.
 5 Feast af - ter feast thus comes and pass - es by,

Here would we touch and han - dle things un - seen,
 here drink with you the roy - al cup of heaven;
 this is the heaven - ly ta - ble for us spread.
 The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
 yet, pass - ing, points to that glad feast a - bove,

here grasp with firm - er hand e - ter - nal grace,
 here would we lay a - side each earth - ly load,
 Here let us feast and, feast - ing, still pro - long
 the bread and wine re - move, but you are here,
 giv - ing sweet fore - taste of the fes - tal joy,

and all our wea - ri - ness up - on you lean.
 and taste a - fresh the calm of sin for - given.
 the fel - low - ship of liv - ing wine and bread.
 near - er than ev - er, still our shield and sun.
 the Lamb's great brid - al feast of bliss and love.

These stanzas are selected from a ten-stanza hymn written in 1855 to serve as a monthly post-communion reflection for the members of St. Andrew's Free Church, Greenock, Scotland. They are set to a tune named for both a coastal town and a large bay in northwest England.

834 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me
2 When my way grows drear, pre - cious Lord, lin - ger

stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
near; when my life is al - most gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I

light; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.
fall; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

This black gospel song, like much hymnody, sprang out of the author's deep personal loss (the death of his wife and newborn son), yet it has brought solace to many. He thought his fingers were playing new music, but they unlocked a deep memory of a tune almost a century old.

228

Were You There

1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? (Were you
 2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you
 3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side? (Were you
 4 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine? (Were you
 5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? (Were you

there?) Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
 there?) Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 there?) Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 there?) Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
 there?) Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

O! Some-times it caus - es me to

trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble. Were you

Few hymns from any culture have captured the pathos of Jesus' crucifixion as movingly as this African American spiritual. Its emotional climax (and highest pitch) comes in the great "O!" at the center of each stanza, a moment that moves beyond anything words can convey.

there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? (Were you there?)
 there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)
 there when they pierced him in the side? (Were you there?)
 there when the sun re - fused to shine? (Were you there?)
 there when they laid him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

Opt. 6 Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

In the Darkness of the Morning 229

Dm

1 In the dark - ness of the morn - ing, just be -
 2 Days be - fore, she faced his suf - fering; she stayed
 3 As she wept, the warmth of sun - rise filled the
 4 Asked the man, "Why are you weep - ing?" in a
 5 "Mar - y!" said the smil - ing strang - er as her

A Dm Gm

fore the hint of dawn, Mar - y Mag - da - lene dis -
 with him as he died. See - ing now his tomb was
 wait - ing world with light. Then she turned and saw a
 voice she vague - ly knew. "He is gone, and I must
 vi - sion was re - stored. She cried "Teach - er!" and she

F Dm Gm Am Dm

cov - ered Je - sus Christ, her friend, was gone.
 emp - ty, she re - mained out - side and cried.
 strang - er, though her tears ob - scured her sight.
 find him," she re - plied as morn - ing grew.
 touched him: Je - sus Christ, her ris - en Lord.

The moving Easter morning encounter between Mary Magdalene and the risen Christ, described in John 20:1-18, gives evidence of the importance of women in Jesus' life and ministry. As the first witness to his resurrection, Mary Magdalene became "the apostle to the apostles."

Lift High the Cross

826

Refrain

Descant

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name. *Fine*

till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Sav - ior trod,
 2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied
 3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
 4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

to Refrain

the Lamb vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.
 your death has brought us life e - ter - nal - ly.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry.

This majestic hymn celebrates the paradox that for Christians a means of painful death has been transformed into a symbol of renewed life; a sign of defeat has become an emblem of victory. With the cross traced on our foreheads at Baptism we are marked as Christ's own forever.

Go with Us, Lord

748

Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and

ev - ery com - ing day, that in your Spir - it

strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.

*May be sung as a canon.

This very accessible sung prayer was created by the director of children's ministry at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, for use by their children's choir, but it is suitable for people of all ages. The familiar tune makes it easy to learn and to memorize.