



Palm/Passion Sunday
Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church
April 2nd, 2023

Seeking: Where Are You Headed?

When we look deeper into the context of this story, we uncover how two parades are occurring at once. Jesus' unconventional and unexpected entry into the city parallels the extravagant parade of Pilate, the Roman governor. As both leaders enter the city for the Passover, they embody different directions. Pilate commands military dominance and imperial power; Jesus ushers in the kingdom of God and the way of peace. Within the chaos and commotion of this scene, which leader will you follow? Jesus' journey to the cross should always catch us off-guard. As dismayed as the disciples, we ask, "Jesus, are you really headed this way, straight to your death?" Many of our weekly questions throughout the season so far have helped us prepare spiritually for Holy Week. Now we examine if our beliefs have changed our behaviors. Has your path changed? In the midst of opposing forces, which way will you go?

Opening Litany

A: Where is he going?

B: Isn't he from Nazareth?

C: Can anything good come from Nazareth?

D: Is he headed to Jerusalem?

A: Do you think Jerusalem is safe?

B: Does he know that Pilate is here?

C: Where is he going?

D: Does he know the city is dangerous?

A: Does he see the Pharisees watching?

B: Is this the one we've been waiting for?

C: Could this be the Messiah?

D: Where is he going?

A: The crowds are singing, "Hosanna!"

B: Should I lay down my cloak?

C: Is this the beginning of the end?

D: Should we follow?

A: Should we watch?

B: Should we sing, "Hosanna"?"

C: Stay awake!

A: He's on the move.

B: Where is he going?

C: Listen.

D: Where is he going?

A: Watch.

B: Where is he going?

C: Stay close.

D: Where is he going?

A: Sing, "Hosanna."

All voices: Hosanna! Amen.

Parade of Palms

Sunday School Sings

Gathering Hymn

All Glory, Laud, and Honor (Verse 1&2)

ELW #344

Call to Confession

For today's prayer of confession we are going to read the Palm Sunday story together. As we read through the story, we will pause to admit the places where we so often and so easily could change the narrative. So read with me, trusting that no matter what we do or don't do, this story ends with love. Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession-Featuring Matthew 2:1-11 NIV (Brief Silence)

L: As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

C: God, forgive us for the times when we do not trust your word and do not follow where you lead. We long to be the ones who can go into the village ahead of you. Forgive us when we play it safe.

L: This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

C: God, forgive us for forgetting that you are always coming toward us. You are drawing near, like a king on a donkey. Help us find you in our midst.

L: The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

C: Creator God, forgive us for the moments when we choose greed over generosity, or when we choose our self-image over our loyalty to you. Give us the courage to be unabashed in our faith. Give us the strength to throw our coats on the road.

L: The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

C: Son of David, give us the conviction to shout your name from the rooftop. Give us the wisdom to sing, "Hosanna!"

L: When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

C: With hope in our hearts we pray to you, Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

L: Family of faith, there will be days when we withhold our praise. There will be days when we dare not follow. There will be days when we ignore God's call, when we choose comfort over courage,

and ourselves over others. But even on those days, even on our worst days, we belong to God. Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:


C: Nothing can separate us from God's love. We are loved, forgiven, and sent out to serve. Hosanna! Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

L: Holy God, **C: Sometimes it's hard to hear you over the hosannas. Sometimes it's hard to hear you over the noise of city streets. Sometimes it's hard to hear you over our racing thoughts, our mental to-do lists, or our desire to fit in. Sometimes it is hard to hear you in this noisy world. So just as you stopped traffic in Jerusalem, stop traffic here. Pause the rush. Open the gates. Dwell among us, until your Word is all we can hear. We are listening. We are laying down our cloaks. Amen.**

Word

The Passion Of Our Lord: According to Mark (Booklet)

 *The Congregation will read the part of the people, which is in **BOLD** type and marked by a leaf symbol.*

Special Music

Mary's Song – Julie Johnson

Affirmation of Faith

C: We believe in a God who walks headfirst into the world's suffering, who lights a candle in the darkest night, who pulls back the curtain so we can see the stars. We believe in a God who does not shy away from the truth, who is bold in seeking justice, and humble in taking power. We believe in a God who sees our hurt and wraps love around it, cocooning us in hope, tethering us to one another. We believe in a God who is always carrying us from the pain of the world into the hope of a new day. That is where God is headed. That is where we follow. May it be so. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Response: **Receive our prayer.**

Offering

Offering Song

Give Thanks

Gray #170

Offering Prayer

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

Holy Communion

***Words of Institution**

Pg. 207

***Lord's Prayer**

Pg. 208

Invitation to the Table

Communion Distribution (All Are Welcome to Receive Communion Here at GA Church)

Post Communion Blessing

Post Communion Prayer

God of manna and mustard seeds, we came to this Table hungry and we leave feeling full—full of hope, full of promise, full of what could be. For we not only found glimpses of you at this Table, but we caught a glimpse of the way things could be: in a meal where all are welcomed and all are fed. Is there anything holier than that? So thank you for nourishing our curiosity alongside our spirit and our conviction. May we always seek you the way you seek after us. With grateful hearts we pray, **Amen.**

Sending

Benediction

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking. Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.

Sending Hymn

All Glory, Laud, and Honor (Verse 3&4)

ELW #344

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve in Love.

**C: To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.
Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Bulletin Donated: Hosanna In The Highest!

Mission Statement of Gustaf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.

Matthew 22:39 ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament.

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