

Worship on April 2, 2023 (CCLI: License Number #3156883)
(Welcoming Elder: Anne Neuman)

Palm Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 217 Ride on, ride on in majesty
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Time for our children and youth
- Praise song – BOP 215 Filled with excitement

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- First reading: Matthew 21:1-11
- Second reading: Psalm 31 (refrain 1)
- Third reading: Philippians 2:5-11
- Sermon: The operating force of your mind
- Communion + The Apostle's Creed

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 235 Alas, and did my Saviour bleed + At the cross

We Serve

- Benediction

As we come into the presence of our God, let us open our hearts and minds,
and focus on our Lord and King.

Responsive Call to Worship

L: Just as the Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness,

P: the Spirit sends us into places of uncertainty where we confront our weakness and insecurities.

L: Sometimes the wilderness is the city.

P: In the city, life can be a struggle where the vulnerable are victimized by unfamiliar structures.

L: Jesus rode into Jerusalem to reclaim the city for God.

P: By entering on a donkey, Jesus showed that he would rule with humility and compassion.

L: As the Church, we too bring care to those whom the city too often forgets.

P: We remember that many are lost and alone: refugees, the unhoused, sex workers, those far from home.

L: We cannot put the burden on the destitute to find their way through the urban maze.

P: We come in humility to serve those whose resources are few and whose needs are many.

Praise song – BOP 217 Ride on, ride on in majesty

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of majesty and mercy, we worship you today, as the Cross looms larger on the horizon.

We praise you for Jesus, the Ruler who came in humility to free us from captivity.

He came in mercy to free us from the sins we recognize in ourselves, and the sins we easily overlook. He came to show us the full extent of your mercy, love and justice.

So we praise you for your kindness and the strength you show to lift our burdens and shoulder them for us in Christ Jesus. We come in humility, knowing you have given us your all, and we can never offer enough for such overwhelming love. Receive our worship in Christ's name and for his sake.

God of mystery and mercy, your mercy and forgiveness is a mystery to us. We fail to show mercy to others when they fall short of our expectations. We keep silent rather than speak up when others are in trouble. We prefer what is easy to what is right, even though your Spirit draws our attention. We seek your forgiveness, O God, and ask that you make us more forgiving. Inspire us with the costly choices Jesus made as he moved toward the Cross, and give us the courage to follow him.

This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Friends in Christ, Who is in a position to condemn us? Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God's generous grace and amazing love.

May the peace of the Lord be with you. Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Prayer for children and youth

God of love and grace, at this time, we praise and worship you with our precious children and youth. Thank you for this time of prayer for our precious next generation. Come among us and stir our hearts with your presence. We are filled up with our own selves. We are full of our own desires. What we want for our children and youth might not the same as what you want from them. Lord Jesus, change our hearts and help us follow your steps. Open our hearts and open their hearts and help us follow you. Help us listen to your love. Help us understand your plans for our future generations. Gracious God, form and shape our children and youth with your love. May they build their lives on you, the firm foundation. Hold their hands and walk with them all through their lives. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Praise Song: BOP 215 Filled with excitement

Prayer for Illumination:

God of courage and comfort, as we follow the stories of Christ's journey to the Cross, inspire us with the courage to follow him even when others turn against him. And comfort us, knowing that you will walk with us through every challenge, just as you walked with Jesus who is your Living Word. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

First reading: Matthew 21:1-11

Second reading: Psalm 31 (refrain 1)

Third reading: Philippians 2:5-11

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: The operating force of your mind

Today's sermon title is **"The operating force of your mind"**

Today's Scripture readings contain two themes. Today is Palm Sunday which Jesus entered into Jerusalem. People were excited. They were facing the king! They thought Jesus would rescue them from Roman Empire's oppression. They needed some type of deliverance. That's why the crowd was shouting out Hosanna. **Hosanna is a prayer, "We pray to God! Save us! Deliver us!"** We need a Rescuer, Saviour. We want to be free from our political oppression, relational struggles, emotional breakdown, financial poverty, and so on. We can make up a long list of our practical needs.

In the hearts of crowd, they had desires for better if Jesus became the king. They imagined what Jesus would do. They put Jesus in the box of their thoughts and **accepted Jesus as their king for one job: set them free from their oppressions.**

That's why they shouted out, **Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Just before today's Philippians passage, Apostle Paul said this, **v1, "If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, 2 make my joy complete:"** Paul preached the gospel and the people in Philippi experienced God's presence and power. They experienced encouragement, comfort. So, Paul is telling them make my joy complete. Paul only took joy from the work of the gospel. Therefore, this means, please do this for the sake of the gospel. **For the sake of your own spiritual growth, please do this.** And then he goes on, v2-4, **"be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others."**

That is, v5, **"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,"**

NIV, **In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:**

NLT, **You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.**

ESV, **Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,**

KJB, **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:**

So, Paul is saying to the people of God, MSG, **"Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself."** And then Paul's explanation comes next about the mind of Christ.

Today is **Palm Sunday**, which Jesus entered into Jerusalem. It was a party. People went crazy. They loved Jesus. Jesus was welcomed. Jesus was a star. He was like a prince. In fairy tales,

what do princes ride on? A prince riding a white horse. It's like a Prince Charming. They never ride a donkey. **Donkeys are for luggage. (pic)**

When you were there when Jesus entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, you might think it's kind of awkward or funny. **Jesus on a donkey? (pic)**

This is very intentional. This shows Jesus' humility and gives the message of peace.

Imagine Jesus is riding on a white horse. Powerful, magnificent, muscular, and arrogant. Usually, they marched in riding a horse after a battle, a victory. A horse stands for victory. A horse was a symbol of war. But, donkey was a symbol of peace. This is why Jesus chose a donkey. Jesus wanted to show that he is the Prince of peace.

Isaiah 9, "6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."

God is the Lord of the hosts, the King of the armies. God has the angelic forces, the most powerful armies. But, Jesus is riding a donkey, not a horse. This image is very ironic and it gives us hope for peace.

Why did Jesus come to us? Isaiah proclaimed, **This child has been born for us, a son given to us.** Jesus came to us to die for us. Why did he have to die? To cleanse our sins. Think about the Old Testaments. Every time they come to God, they brought sacrifice for God. Why? As a gift to God so he could take good care of them? NO. God doesn't take bribe. It was to make peace. The purpose of the sacrifice was to make the peace between God and human. In other words, because of sin, people could not be with God because God is holy. To be holy means to be separated. God cannot be with sin because he is sinless. This is what holy means. But, he loves us. He longs for us. He wants to be with us. Therefore, **Jesus was given to us as a sacrificial animal to be slaughtered to cleanse us, to remove our sin before God, so we can make peace with God.**

This is the meaning of Jesus riding on a donkey. This shows that Jesus is the Prince of peace and he will bring God's Kingdom to us. **Who are we? We were sinful, but, now we are sinless because of the blood of Jesus poured out for us.**

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." When we go to God with our sin, there's no option but death because of our sin. We are to be separated from God forever. But, thanks to Jesus and his sacrifice shedding his precious blood for us, we become sinless and we are able to stand before the Holy God. Our God is this great. What Jesus did is this amazing.

So, this is the mindset of Jesus which we already have in our hearts. **Philippians 2:6, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Today, on **Palm Sunday**, Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly, riding a donkey, showing peace. Knowing who Jesus is and what he did with what kind of mind, as followers of Christ, as the people redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ, let us have the same mind of Jesus.

Today is also called **Passion Sunday**. Latin word “passio” means suffering or enduring. The Passion of Christ begins this week towards the cross on Friday. On Friday, Good Friday, Jesus died on the cross for us. He wanted us to have his life. Let us ponder upon what Jesus did and what kind of mind he had for us in this passion week.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Communion At The Lord’s Table This is the time for Communion at the Lord’s Table. Friends, if we are honest with ourselves and with God, we are all seeking something. Some of us long for a place to belong. Others seek permission to be who we are made to be. Some of us are hungry for connection, hungry for justice, or hungry for a glimpse of the Divine. No matter what it is your soul longs for, there is good news to be found here. Friends, this is the table Jesus prepared for us. We are the guests. He is the host. There is a seat here with your name on it. Thanks be to God for a love like that. We are welcomed here.

Let us confess our faith with the Apostles’ Creed.

The Apostles’ Creed (BOP 539)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say BOLD print together)

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: God of the lost and the found, surely it is right for us to give our thanks and praise to you; for day after day we look for you, and day after day we find you: in the laughter of children, in the sun rising over the horizon, in the flowers of spring. We are grateful that our seeking does not go unanswered. So, first and foremost, we come to you in prayer to say thank you that we are welcomed at your table. With all the people in the history, with all the hosts of the heavens, **we lift our hearts in joyful praise:**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: Loving Christ, we long to have the same mind of our Saviour Jesus Christ. We want to have the same operating force of our minds. How wonderful your humility. How great is your love that emptied yourself to love us, to cleanse us, and to give us life. At your table, we remember all the things you did for us **as we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Glorious God the Son, you took all our shame. Most holy God, Jesus Christ was blamed for all our sins. Spotless and without blemish, the Lamb of God, died on the cross taking up all our darkness and burdens. Thank you Jesus for saving us. Holy Spirit, guide our minds so we know the life-giving love from our deepest hearts as we take the gifts of bread and wine today. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, almighty God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (BREAD)

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us take it)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (CUP)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

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 love, full of what could be.

For we not only found glimpses of you at this table, but also 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 this! So, we thank you for nourishing our curiosity alongside our spirits and our conviction. As you seek our minds and hearts, help us open up ourselves to you and follow your steps all through our lives.

Prince of Peace, thank you for riding a donkey. Thank you for making peace between us and God by your precious blood. Lord, how can we thank you enough for your life-giving love for us. We praise you and worship you. As the apostle Paul said, we decide to live with your heart. Let your mind be our operating force. Change our hearts and transform our lives.

We pray for all the people who are in bondage. Jesus, you already set us free in your gospel. Help us release what we are holding and hold your hand alone.

We pray for our church members. Capture their hearts and make them yours. They are already yours, of course. Let them display you through their lives. There are people who are suffering with their physical needs. Meet their needs. Heal their bodies. Recover them from their illness. There are people who are struggling with emotional and relational difficulties. Give peace in their hearts. Give wisdom as they try to resolve. Encourage them and walk through with them. And there people with other issues. Gracious God, grant their prayers and draw them close to you, so in their life journey with you, they experience you day by day.

On this Passion week, help us remember you and ponder upon your love for us. thank you for loving us and thank you for saving us. In Jesus’ precious name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. Today we are reminded that Christ offered his life on the Cross for our sakes. Now it's our turn to offer God our gifts in gratitude, trusting God to use them to create new life in Jesus' name. As we offer our gifts, let us praise God and glorify him.

The Doxology (BOP 830)

Offering prayer:

Gracious God, when we remember Jesus gave his life for us, our offering seems so small. Yet Jesus shows us five loaves and two fish can feed a multitude; a man dying on a cross becomes Living Bread for a hungry world. Bless these small gifts with your goodness so that the miracle of Jesus' love continues to amaze the world. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 235 Alas! And did my Saviour bleed + At the cross

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Jesus loves us. So, Jesus died for us. Jesus made peace between us and God. That's why we are here. Let us think about what Jesus had to go through to love us and to give us life.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.