

## Sermon followed by Service

April 2, 2023      Philippians 2:1-11

“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” Some cheered, Hosanna!” I imagine some snickered, sneered, and snorted: “Hosanna?! Is that the best they can do?” And I imagine that by the end of the week, some were sighing, “Hosanna? Was that the best he could do?”

Jesus is riding into Jerusalem, a crowd growing around him, shouting, cheering “Hosanna!”, preparing the way for their King, waving palm branches, covering the road before Jesus with their shirts and jackets and palm branches, shouting, cheering: “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” In the crowd of disciples, it was a glorious day for Jesus.

From along the way, from high up on the walls, a guy riding on a donkey with a rag-tag crowd waving branches, shouting this and that - it probably didn't look all that impressive. To the world, it deserved little more than a snicker and a snort - “Is that the best they can do?”

At the end of the week, with Jesus riding a cross instead of a donkey, with most all his disciples scattered and hiding, with the Good Friday crowds first shouting, “Crucify him,” and

then mocking him, “If you’re the King of the Jews, save yourself,” how many from the Palm Sunday crowd who had been cheering, “Hosanna!,” were now sighing, “Is that the best he could do?”

Sometimes what Jesus does doesn’t look all that impressive. Sometimes what his church does doesn’t look all the impressive. Sometimes, with what the world sees of Christ and his church, it’s no wonder the world snickers and snorts. Sometimes, with what we see of Christ and his church, it’s no wonder we sigh.

Seeing Jesus riding a donkey instead of a war horse, a donkey instead of a royal steed, can help us keep perspective. Jesus didn’t come to earth to ride high on a horse, to live a royal life of comfort and ease. What did Paul say? Jesus gave up the glory and comfort of his place in heaven; he set aside his power and rule; he came to live the life and die the death of a servant. Not just the life and death of any servant. Jesus came to live the life of God’s servant. He lived to do what God had for him to do; he lived to serve God by serving God’s world.

We hear it in Jesus’ words and we see it in Jesus’ actions. A month ago we heard Jesus tell his parable of the Good Samaritan - not only did Jesus tell the story, he lived the life -

helping, healing, loving, caring. This next week we'll hear Jesus: "A new command I give you: love one another." Not only did Jesus command it with his words; this next week we'll see Jesus live it, first, by getting down on his hands and knees and washing his disciples feet, then by sacrificing his whole body on the cross. Over these past few weeks, we've heard Jesus say the words: "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." This next week, we'll see Jesus live it.

He won't just dip his toes into it, or lend a hand. He will put his whole self - body and soul - into living as God's servant. And it will cost him his life; God will demand his death. Looking at Jesus in pain on the cross, the world will snicker and snort, "Is that the best he could do; ha!" And seeing Jesus nailed to the cross, his followers will sigh, "Is that the best he could do?" But what they didn't see was what God saw and sees even today. What God saw was Jesus stepping in for us: "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows .... But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."

For the ways we expect to be served instead of serving ... for the ways we sit on the sidelines and let others do what God

has given us to do ... for the ways we lift a finger and imagine we are moving a mountain ... for the ways we give a dime and think we're giving a fortune ... for the ways we talk the talk, but don't walk the walk ... for all the reasons we give the world to snicker and snort at Christ and the church - "is that the best they can do!" ... for all the reasons we give each other to sigh - "is this the best we can do?" Jesus stepped in as God's servant and took our place. He took our place and died the death we deserve.

And so often, too often, we sigh - "is that the best he could do?" - while the world snickers and snorts. But we know what we do not see. God raised Jesus back to life. God raised up his servant to rule as King. The day is coming when the world's snickering and snorting will turn to weeping and gnashing of teeth. The day is coming when our sighing will turn to cheering.

So what do we do? We aren't just along for the ride, are we? We're not here just to cheer. What did Paul say? "If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit,

but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”

If Jesus means anything to us, we’re not just along for the ride; we aren’t here just to cheer. We’re here to raise up our voices and to give up our lives. We’re here to celebrate Jesus, not from the sidelines but from the front-lines. We’re here to be like Jesus. How? By setting our self aside to serve our God and serve his world. In other words, we’re here to live the God-Lived Life, a life of serving others.

What does that look like? It looks like what so many of you are doing here and out in the world. Serving, helping, caring - not to get ahead for self, not to make the world a better place for the world, but serving, helping, caring because you are exercising God’s heart inside you. I see it in so many of you, and God sees it way more than I do.

What does the God-Lived Life look like? It looks like what we could be doing here and out in the world - raising the bar, stretching our reach, serving like Mary and Martha, stepping in like the Good Samaritan.

What does the God-Lived Life look like? It looks like Jesus. Serving like Jesus, caring like Jesus, giving like Jesus. It might not always look impressive or feel impressive. At times, it might leave the world snorting and snickering - "is that all?" At times, it might leave us sighing - "is this all?"

But that's not how God sees it. With Jesus covering you, with his Spirit alive inside you, as you give yourself to serve him, as you give yourself showing his love to the world, God sees you covered with Jesus; he sees you shining like Jesus. He sees you here and today hand-in-hand serving with Jesus here, and he sees you in heaven someday side-by-side with Jesus, ruling with Jesus forever.

And there will be no more snickering or snorting from the world - "Is that the best they can do?" No more sighing in the church - "Is this the best we can do?" Instead we will be cheering with the angels: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna!" Amen.

April 1 & 2, 2023

## THE SERVICE

**IN OUR WORLD TODAY ...** While the world celebrates SELF, so many snicker, sneer, and snort at what Christ and his Church do.

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...** we celebrate someone far greater than Self, and we and our world are the better for it!

### OPENING HYMN

*“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”*

**Hymn 412**

#### *Refrain*

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

You are the King of Israel and David’s royal Son,  
now in the Lord’s name coming, our King and Blessèd One. *Refrain*

The company of angels is praising you on high,  
and we with all creation in chorus make reply. *Refrain*

The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went;  
our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present. *Refrain*

To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise;  
to you, now high exalted, our melody we raise. *Refrain*

As you received their praises, accept the prayers we bring,  
O Source of ev’ry blessing, our good and gracious King. *Refrain*

### INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

M: Dear friends in Christ, for five weeks of Lent we have been preparing for the celebration of our Lord's paschal mystery. Today we come together to begin the solemn celebration of Holy Week. Christ entered in triumph into his own city, to complete his work as our Messiah; to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us remember with devotion his entry that culminated at the empty tomb and follow him with lively faith. United with him by Baptism, we share in his resurrection and new life.

#### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.  
**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever. **Amen.**

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

C: **Hosanna in the highest!**



16:33

*John 15:15-21;*

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."

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.' "

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. 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!"

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."

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

C: **Hosanna in the highest!**

PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 24F*

*Refrain*

Sing ho - san - na! Loud ho - san - na! Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the LORD, the name of the LORD!

The earth is the LORD's, and every- / thing in it,  
the world, and all who / live in it;  
for he founded it / on the seas  
and established it on the / waters.

Who may ascend the mountain / of the LORD?

Who may stand in his / holy place?

The one who has clean hands and a / pure heart,

they will receive blessing from God their / Savior. *Refrain*

Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you / ancient doors,  
that the King of glory / may come in.

Who is this King of / glory?

The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in / battle.

Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you / ancient doors,  
that the King of glory / may come in.

Who is he, this King of / glory?

The LORD Almighty—he is the King of / glory.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son**

**and to the Holy / Spirit,**

**as it was in the be- / ginning,**

**is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

God our Father, we remember how Jesus entered Jerusalem and was welcomed as a king by those who shouted “Hosanna” and spread their clothing and palm branches in his path. Accept our praise and listen to our prayers as we rejoice in our triumphant King, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

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

C: **Hosanna in the highest!**

#### EPISTLE READING

*Philippians 2:1-*

**11**

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

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

Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own  
advantage;  
rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!  
Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

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

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*“Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”*

**Hymn 413**

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;  
thro’ pillared court and temple the lovely anthem rang.  
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,  
the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed mid an exultant crowd,  
the victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud.  
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state  
nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

“Hosanna in the highest!” that ancient song we sing,  
for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav’n, our King.  
Oh, may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice  
and in his royal presence eternally rejoice.

## SERMON

### NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.*

Eternal Lord, give us peace as we ponder the good news that you forgive our sins in Christ. Lead us to see clearly the path you have laid out for us.

**Work in us so that we believe and live the Word we have heard today.**

Provide courage and compassion to all who preach and teach your Word. Fill them with a love like yours as they proclaim your grace to us and all people.

**Move us to love all ministers of the Word wherever they serve.**

Guard and guide the families of our congregation. Lead husbands and wives to love each other with commitment, respect, and patience. Help parents to grasp the eternal value of keeping their children close to Jesus all their lives. Grant joy to those who are single, and make them a blessing to others.

**Protect us from the temptations that surround us; give us pure hearts and minds.**

Provide wisdom and insight to those who make laws and set policies. Give us respect for those who protect us from crime. Lead us to value the rights of our fellow citizens and to defend those who cannot defend themselves.

**Bless our land with peace and prosperity so that the gospel may be proclaimed to all.**

Give us passion to share the story of your love with our family and friends. Overcome unbelief, and open the hearts of people everywhere to believe the good news that Jesus has forgiven their sins and opened the gates of heaven.

**Fill us with joy over every sinner who repents and comes to trust in you.**

Extend your healing power to those who are sick and suffering in body or mind. [Pour out your special blessing on . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Give patience and compassion to all who care for the sick and dying.

**Lift the eyes of the distressed to your love in Christ.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

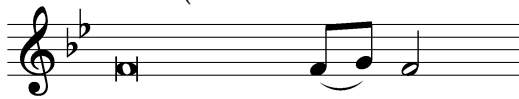
*Silent prayer*

Gracious God, you govern and direct all things and you love all people. Hear our prayers, spoken and silent, and answer them in your wisdom and grace.

**In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)  
(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)



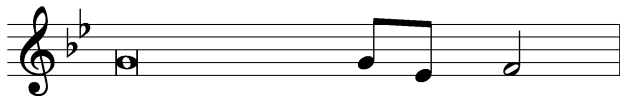
The Lord be with you.



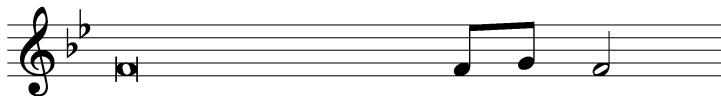
**And al - so with you.**



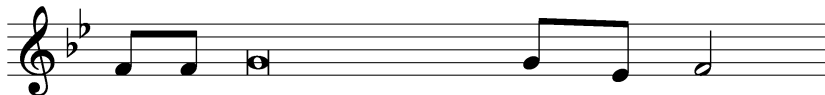
Lift up your hearts.



**We lift them up to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,  
 God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your  
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -  
 san - na in the high - est!

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty. He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the



hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### LORD'S PRAYER

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my  $\text{T}$  body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my  $\text{T}$  blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

### JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The second staff contains a similar melody with lyrics underneath: "Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the".

sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.  
 Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.  
 Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sin of the world; grant us your peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

*"A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth"*

Hymn 422

A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth, our guilt and evil bearing  
 and, laden with the sins of earth, none else the burden sharing,  
 goes patient on, grows weak and faint, to slaughter led without complaint,  
 that spotless life to offer; bears shame and stripes and wounds and death,  
 anguish and mockery and saith, "Willing all this I suffer."

This Lamb is Christ, the soul's great friend, the Lamb of God, our Savior;  
 him God the Father chose to send to gain for us his favor.  
 "Go forth, my Son," the Father said, "and free my children from their dread  
 of guilt and condemnation. The wrath and stripes are hard to bear,  
 but by your passion they will share the fruit of your salvation."

"Yes, Father, yes, most willingly I'll bear what you command me.  
 My will conforms to your decree; I'll do what you have asked me."  
 O wondrous Love, what have you done! The Father offers up his Son,

desiring our salvation. O Love, how strong you are to save!  
You make his bed within the grave who built the earth's foundation.

From morn till eve, in all I do, I'll praise you, Christ, my treasure.  
To sacrifice myself for you shall be my aim and pleasure.  
My stream of life shall ever be a current flowing ceaselessly,  
your constant praise outpouring. I'll treasure in my memory,  
O Lord, all you have done for me, your gracious love adoring.

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you  
have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith,  
nourished our hope, and strengthened our love.

By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you  
will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

#### BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

#### CLOSING HYMN

*"Ride On, Ride On in Majesty"*

**Hymn 411**

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry.  
O Savior meek, pursue your road,  
with palms and scattered garments strowed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die.  
O Christ, your triumphs now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! The angel armies of the sky  
look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see th' approaching sacrifice.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Your last and fiercest strife is nigh.  
The Father on his sapphire throne awaits his own anointed Son.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die.  
Bow your meek head to mortal pain,  
then take, O Christ, your pow'r and reign.

## OFFERING

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## H O L Y · W E E K

<b>Holy Thursday</b>	<b>April 6</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b>
<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>April 7</b>	<b>7:00pm</b>
<b>Easter Service</b>	<b>April 9</b>	<b>9:00am</b>
<b>Easter Fellowship</b>	<b>April 9</b>	<b>10:00am</b>
<b>Easter Service</b>	<b>April 9</b>	<b>11:00am</b>

(No worship service on Saturday, April 8)

### **Holy Thursday**

Jesus, the Son of God himself, invites you to the Upper Room to show you “the full extent of his love.” Join him at his table as he gives you his body and blood, “given and shed for you,

for the forgiveness of your sins.” Witness the Rite of the Stripping of the Altar and strengthen your resolve to never abandon the Lord. (Plan to leave the service quietly, reflecting on the love of our Lord.)

### **Good Friday**

Alone in the dark, forsaken by God, Jesus pays for your sin and the sin of the world. Join us for a Good Friday Tenebrae Service, a service of shadows and darkness, reminding us of the darkness of our sin and guilt, the darkness of the world’s hate and anger against God, and, yes, the darkness of God’s curse on our sin, all charged against Jesus.

In a Tenebrae service, candles are extinguished and lights are dimmed to impress on us the utter darkness and loneliness, the horrible curse that Jesus faced on the cross. As you hear of Jesus’ burial and the service closes, expect to hear the *strepitus* and see a sign of hope. (Again, plan to leave the service quietly, reflecting on the love of our Lord.)

### **Easter Sunday**

We can’t wait for the sun to come up! We have a living Jesus to meet! Join us for Easter service at 9, food and fellowship at 10, and Service at 11. You don’t have to be quiet leaving this service – rejoice and tell your world the best news of the year - Jesus lives!