

Palm Sunday

and the



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

180 Route 539 Whiting, New Jersey 08759

Our Mission

To proclaim the faith that our years have engendered, to use the diversity of our Episcopal experience while working toward a common goal; to teach the young about Jesus and to reach out and affect the lives of those in the community.

"Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them." Matthew 7:20

Rector

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Year A

Palm Sunday
(The Sunday of the Passion)

The following or some other suitable anthem is sung or said, the people standing

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

Peace in heaven and glory in the high - est.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord... *Amen.*

Here a Deacon or other person appointed reads the following (Mathew 21:1-11)

And when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If any one says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying,
“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Behold, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on an ass,
and on a colt, the foal of an ass.”
The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.”

The Celebrant then says the following blessing

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in

triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever... *Amen.*

*While passing out the Palms the Choir will sing "The Palms" or some other suitable anthem
The following may then be sung or said*

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a dotted quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, and a half note on D5. A thick black bar is present at the beginning of the staff.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on G4.
Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The Procession

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a dotted quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, and a half note on D5.
Let us go forth in peace.

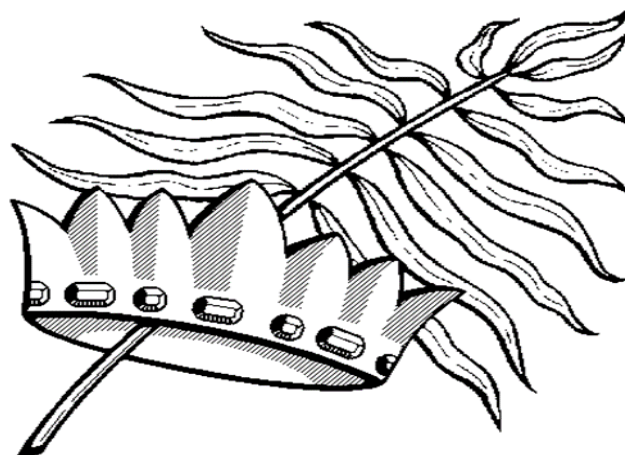
Deacon

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a dotted quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on G4.
In the name of Christ. A - men.

People

In the name of Christ. A - men.

During the procession, all hold branches in their hands, and appropriate hymns, psalms, or anthems are sung, such as the hymn "All glory, laud, and honor" and Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29.



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 com - pa - ny of an - gels is prais - ing thee on high;
 3 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;
 4 To thee be - fore thy pas - sion they sang their hymns of praise;
 5 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Repeat Refrain

1 who in the Lord's Name com - est, the King and Bless - ed One.
 2 and we with all cre - a - tion in cho - rus make re - ply.
 3 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
 4 to thee, now high ex - al - ted, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 5 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King.

The stanzas may be sung by choir alone or alternately by contrasted groups; all sing the refrain.

At a suitable place, the procession may halt while the following Collect is said

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever....*Amen.*

First Reading

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens--
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.
The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Psalm 31: 9-16

In te, Domine, speravi

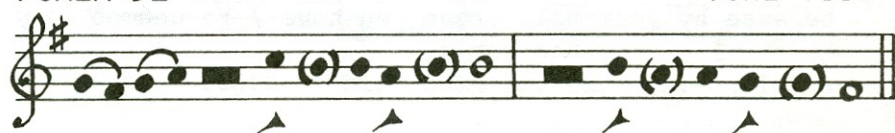
REFRAIN



Fa-ther, in-to your hands I com-mend my spir-it.

PSALM 31

TONE VII^b



9 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; *

my eye is consumed with sorrow,
and also my throat and my belly.

10 For my life is wasted with grief,

and my years with sighing; *
my strength fails me because of affliction,

and my bones are consumed. (refrain)

11 I have become a reproach to all my enemies and

even to my neighbors,
a dismay to those of my acquaintance; *
when they see me in the street they avoid me.

12 I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; *

I am as useless as a broken pot. (refrain)

13 For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;

fear is all around; *
they put their heads together against me;
they plot to take my life.

14 But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord. *

I have said, "You are my God. (refrain)

15 My times are in your hand; *

rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *

and in your loving-kindness save me." (refrain)

Second Reading

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, 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.

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (26:36 - 27:66)

Narrator: Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsem'ane, and he said to his disciples,

Jesus: "Sit here, while I go yonder and pray."

Narrator: And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zeb'edee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them,

Jesus: "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me."

Narrator: And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed,

Jesus: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Narrator: And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter,

Jesus: "So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Narrator: Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed,

Jesus: "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, thy will be done."

Narrator: And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them,

Jesus: "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

Narrator: While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,

Judas: "The one I shall kiss is the man; seize him."

Narrator: And he came up to Jesus at once and said,

Judas: "Hail, Master!"

Narrator: And he kissed him. Jesus said to him,

Jesus: "Friend, why are you here?"

Narrator: Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

Jesus: "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

Narrator: At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

Jesus: "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But all this has taken place, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Narrator: Then all the disciples forsook him and fled. Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Ca'iaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter followed him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said,

Witnesses: "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.'"

Narrator: And the high priest stood up and said,

High Priest: "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"

Narrator: But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him,

High Priest: "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: "You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

you?"

Narrator: Then the high priest tore his robes, and said,

High Priest: "He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?"

Narrator: They answered,

Congregation: "He deserves death."

Narrator: Then they spat in his face, and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, **Congregation:** "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck

Narrator: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a maid came up to him, and said,

Maid 1: "You also were with Jesus the Galilean."

Narrator: But he denied it before them all, saying,

Peter: "I do not know what you mean."

Narrator: And when he went out to the porch, another maid saw him, and she said to the bystanders,

Maid 2: "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth."

Narrator: And again he denied it with an oath,

Peter: "I do not know the man."

Narrator: After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter,

Congregation: "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you."

Narrator: Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear,

Peter: "I do not know the man."

Narrator: And immediately the cock crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus,

Jesus: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Narrator: When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death; and they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pilate the governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw that he was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying,

Judas: “I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.”

Narrator: They said,

Chief Priests: “What is that to us? See to it yourself.”

Narrator: And throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said,

Chief Priests: “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.”

Narrator: So they took counsel, and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.” Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him,

Pilate: “Are you the King of the Jews?”

Narrator: Jesus said,

Jesus: “You have said so.”

Narrator: But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him,

Pilate: “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?”

Narrator: But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge; so that the governor wondered greatly. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them,

Pilate: “Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?”

Narrator: For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him,

Pilate's Wife: "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream."

Narrator: Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor again said to them,

Pilate: "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"

Narrator: And they said,

Congregation: "Barabbas."

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

Narrator: They all said,

Congregation: "Let him be crucified."

Narrator: And he said,

Pilate: "Why, what evil has he done?"

Narrator: But they shouted all the more,

Congregation: "Let him be crucified."

Narrator: So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying,

Pilate: "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

Narrator: And all the people answered,

Congregation: "His blood be on us and on our children!"

Narrator: Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him, saying,

Congregation: “Hail, King of the Jews!”

Narrator: And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him.

+ *ALL STAND* +

As they went out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus the King of the Jews.” Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying,

Congregation: “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

Narrator: So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying,

Chief Priests: “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Narrator: And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice,

Jesus: “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”

Narrator: that is,

Jesus: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Narrator: And some of the bystanders hearing it said,

Congregation: “This man is calling Elijah.”

Narrator: And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said,

Congregation: “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.”

Narrator: And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

+ *ALL KNEEL or STAND SILENTLY* +

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said,

Centurion: “Truly this was the Son of God!”

Narrator: There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre. Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

Chief Priests: “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ Therefore order the sepulchre to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away, and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.”

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: “You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.”

Narrator: So they went and made the sepulchre secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.



Today's liturgy is in two parts. The Liturgy of the Palms celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of the week of his Passion. After we hear Matthew's account of that event, the celebrant gives thanks over the branches of Palm, which we carry. In many congregations, a procession with branches follows as we enact the event that led directly to Good Friday.

The second part of today's liturgy changes from triumph to tragedy as it focuses on the suffering and death of Jesus. The account of the Lord's Passion is read from Matthew's Gospel so that we may have a fuller sense of sharing with him in his redemptive acts of dying and rising for our salvation.

The first reading is from Isaiah. This is one of the servant songs in which God's servant is rejected by the people but he will be vindicated by God. The reading from Philippians is an early Christian hymn announcing that Jesus' Lordship is revealed not in power and divinity, but in self-giving love to the point of dying for us, his beloved.

Today we enter into the celebration of the mighty acts of God that brought about our redemption. During this week we will rediscover what God has done for us, rediscover the meaning of our baptism, rediscover the meaning of our sharing in Eucharist.

From The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year.

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