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PALM/PASSION SUNDAY  
*March 29, 2026*

*Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.*



## \*BLESSING OF THE PALMS

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept.*

*The congregation lifts its palm branches.*

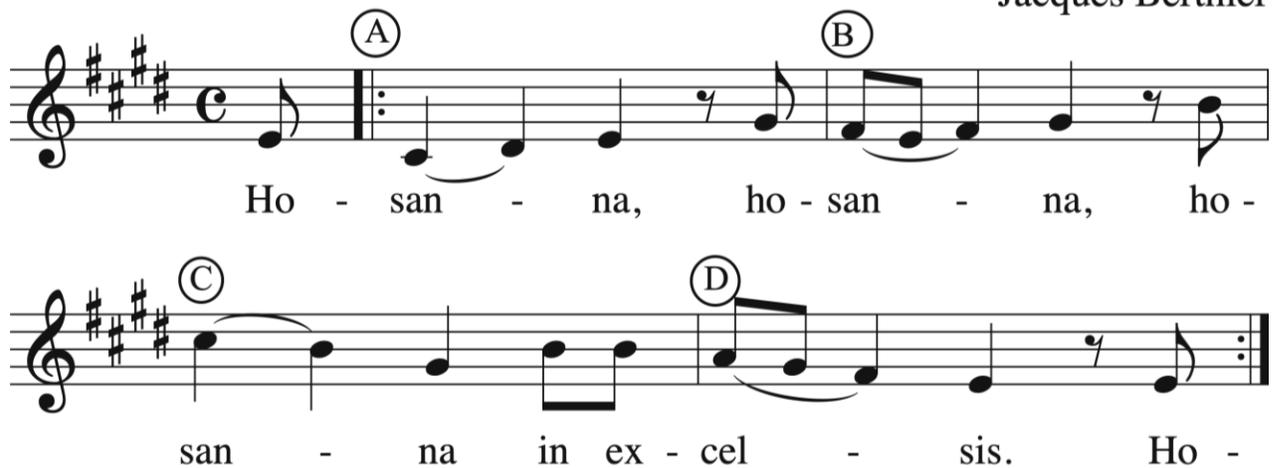
We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

## \*PROCESSION

Let us go forth in peace, **in the name of the Christ. Amen**

*The congregation processes to the sanctuary repeating the refrain.*

Jacques Berthier



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho -  
san - na in ex - cel - sis. Ho -

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*Refrain*

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,  
 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;  
 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;  
 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.  
 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

*Refrain*

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.  
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.  
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.  
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

## \*GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you.**

O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.*

### FIRST READING

ISAIAH 50:4-9A

A reading from Isaiah:

<sup>4</sup> The Lord God has given me a trained tongue, 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. <sup>5</sup> The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I did not turn backward. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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; <sup>8</sup> he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand in court together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. <sup>9a</sup> It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

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



## Refrain



## Tone



- <sup>9</sup>Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I<sup>1</sup> am in trouble;  
my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat<sup>1</sup> and my belly.
- <sup>10</sup>**For my life is wasted with grief, and my<sup>1</sup> years with sighing;  
my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones<sup>1</sup> are consumed.**
- <sup>11</sup>I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to<sup>1</sup> my acquaintances;  
when they see me in the street<sup>1</sup> they avoid me.
- <sup>12</sup>**Like the dead I am forgotten,<sup>1</sup> out of mind;  
I am as useless as a<sup>1</sup> broken pot. R**
- <sup>13</sup>For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is<sup>1</sup> all around;  
they put their heads together against me; they plot to<sup>1</sup> take my life.
- <sup>14</sup>**But as for me, I have trusted in<sup>1</sup> you, O LORD.  
I have said, “You<sup>1</sup> are my God.**
- <sup>15</sup>My times are<sup>1</sup> in your hand;  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who<sup>1</sup> persecute me.
- <sup>16</sup>**Let your face shine up-<sup>1</sup> on your servant;  
save me in your<sup>1</sup> steadfast love.” R**

## SECOND READING

## PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

A reading from Philipians:

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

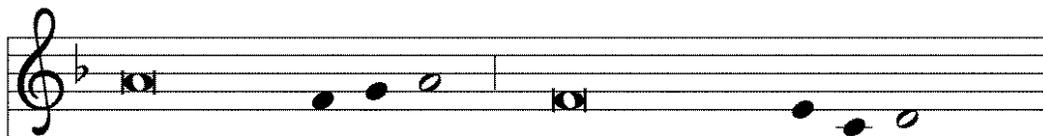
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Choir will sing Proper Verse.*



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ.



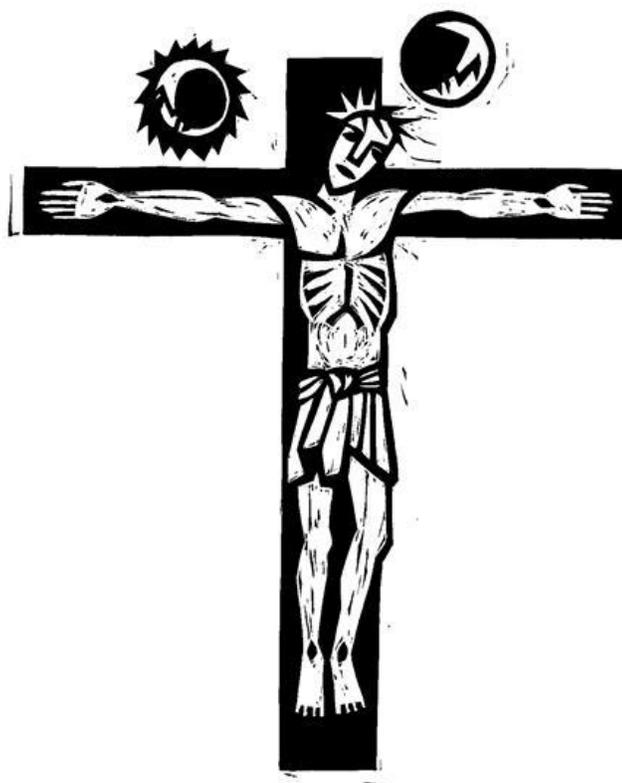
Christ humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death  
—even death<sup>l</sup> on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that  
is above<sup>l</sup> ev'ry name.

\*GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 26:14-27:66

SEE INSERT



\*HOMILY & HYMN OF THE DAY

*My Song is Love Unknown*



All: 1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to  
 Treble Voices: 2 He came from his blest throne sal - va - tion to be -  
 Bass Voices: 3 Some - times we strew his way and his sweet prais - es  
 Choir: 4 We cry out, we will have our dear Lord made a -  
 Choir: 5 In life no house, no home my Lord on earth might  
 All: 6 Here might I stay and sing— no sto - ry so div -



me, love to the love - less shown that they might  
 stow; the world that was his own would not its  
 sing; re - sound - ing all the day ho - san - nas  
 way, a mur - der - er to save, the prince of  
 have; in death no friend - ly tomb but what a  
 ine! Nev - er was love, dear King, nev - er was



love - ly be. Oh, who am I that for my  
 Sav - ior know. But, oh, my friend, my friend in -  
 to our king. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is all our  
 life to slay. Yet cheer - ful he to suf - f'ring  
 strang - er gave. What may I say? Heav'n was his  
 grief like thine. This is my friend, in whose sweet



sake my Lord should take frail flesh and die?  
 deed, who at my need his life did spend!  
 breath, and for his death we thirst and cry.  
 goes that he his foes from thence might free.  
 home but mine the tomb where - in he lay.  
 praise I all my days could glad - ly spend!

Text: Samuel Crossman, 1623–1683, alt.  
 Tune: LOVE UNKNOWN, John Ireland, 1879–1962  
 Arrangement: Benjamin M. Culli © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

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## \*APOSTLES' CREED

Together with all the baptized people of God, we confess our faith.

**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**

## \*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*The assisting minister prays the petition. The congregation responds to the petitions that end "Lord in your mercy with: "hear our prayer." and those that end "O, God we give you thanks" with: "Thanks be to God" The prayers conclude with the pastoral petition followed by a congregational "Amen."*

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O, God we give you thanks. **Thanks be to God.**

Into your hands... Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## \*THE PEACE

The Peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*Wondrous Love*

Paul Christiansen

(Text can be found at ELW 666)

(1914-1997)



## \*OFFERTORY PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## \*PREFACE DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

## \*PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed ... unending hymn:

## \*SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and 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.

## \*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

## \*THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,  
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.  
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we  
for - give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al  
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,  
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

## \*COMMUNION INVITATION

Come to the table.

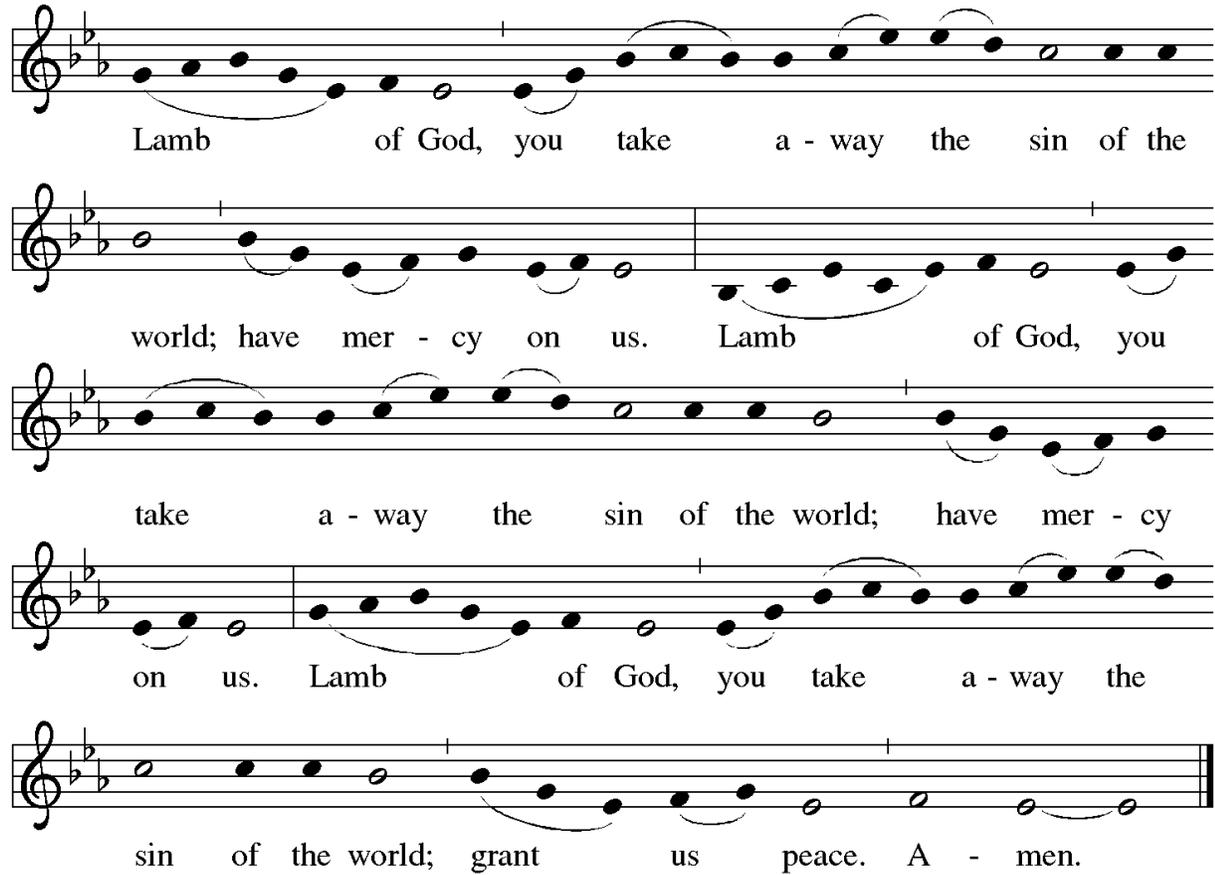
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

*All are welcome to partake of the Holy Sacrament. Inform the pastor if you need a **gluten-free host**. Grape juice is available in the center rings of the wine tray. Children or adults who do not or choose not to partake of the sacrament today may come forward and receive a blessing. Please indicate you would like a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest in the form of an X.*

# COMMUNION HYMNS

## *Lamb of God*



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



# Were you there

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

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

## Refrain

Oh, some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble.

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

## PRAYER IN THE ABSENCE OF COMMUNION

*Those not receiving communion are invited to pray the following while communion is being distributed:*

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the bread of life and the cup of salvation. I believe that you are truly present in the sacrament of Holy Communion. I am baptized into your death and resurrection. I seek you daily and worship and adore you. When I cannot receive you in the eucharistic bread and wine, I pray that you continue to come into my heart and soul, as you always have, through Confession and Forgiveness, through the proclamation of your holy Word, and through the prayers of your people; that I may remain united to you by your all-powerful and ever-present Holy Spirit. Let me receive you and be nourished by your abundant grace. Be for me the manna in my wilderness, the bread of angels for my very human journey, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and solace in the hour of my death. I pray this, trusting that you are my life, my peace, and my everlasting joy. Amen.

### \*SACRAMENTAL BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen**

### \*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

**God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*BENEDICTION

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Jesus, remember me*

ELW 616

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The second system of musical notation is identical to the first system, consisting of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff in a key signature of two flats. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community

Music: REMEMBER ME, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994

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\*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

*There in God's Garden*

David Cherwien



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **There is no Bible Study this evening. Bible Study will return on Sunday, April 12**
- **PLEASE consider donating to the "Snow Heart" Project to help offset the cost of this winter's snow removal.** Choose a doily heart from the window in the lounge. Write your envelope # or last name on the heart. Place your heart and donation in the envelope provided. Drop the envelope in the collection plate or place it in the financial secretary's drawer. *Thank you from the bottom of our HEARTS.*❤️❤�
- **Please join us for a special Congregation Meeting on Sunday, April 12, following worship, to vote on changes to the church constitution.**
- **Easter Egg Hunt April 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Following last year's enthusiastic response to the Easter Egg Hunt, St. Mark will once again hold it for the VRABE ESL children and their families on April 2<sup>nd</sup> after the classes are done for the day. **We are asking for donations of small, wrapped Easter candy that can fit within plastic Easter Eggs. Please leave the candy in the box labelled 'Easter Egg Hunt'.** For more information, please contact Deb Gresens or Jan Frick.
- **Please join us for our Annual Congregation Meeting on Sunday, April 26, following Worship.**

## HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE

|                               |                          |  |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Sunday, March 29</b>       | <b>9:00am</b>            | <b>Passion/Palm Sunday<br/>Service of Word and Sacrament<br/>Followed by Coffee Hour<br/>Sponsored by GF &amp; Friends</b> |
| <b>Tuesday, March 31</b>      | <b>9:00am<br/>7:00pm</b> | <b>Matins Via Zoom<br/>Choir Rehearsal</b>   |
| <b>Thursday, April 2</b>      | <b>1:30pm<br/>6:00pm</b> | <b>Easter Egg Hunt with VRABE<br/>Maundy Thursday<br/>Potluck Supper<br/>&amp; Worship Service</b>                         |
| <b>Friday, April 3</b>        | <b>7:00pm</b>            | <b>Good Friday Service</b>   |
| <b>Saturday, April 4</b>      | <b>7:00pm</b>            | <b>Easter Vigil at Concordia</b>   |
| <b>Easter Sunday, April 5</b> | <b>9:00am</b>            | <b>Resurrection of Our Lord<br/>Service of Word and Sacrament<br/>Followed by Coffee Hour<br/>Sponsored by Deb's Team</b>  |



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