

PALM SUNDAY

28 March 2021

GRACE CHURCH

Honesdale, Pennsylvania

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to “Virtual Grace” from Grace Episcopal Church in Honesdale, PA.
I’m Fr. Ed Erb, rector of our parish.

We are happy to announce that our Church is able to be open for in-person worship,
though we continue to offer these broadcasts for those uncomfortable
being in larger gatherings.

This is Palm Sunday, the beginning of our Holy Week observances.
For Good Friday, we will observe the Stations of the Cross at noon,
and the Proper Liturgy at 7:00pm.

Our Easter services will be held Saturday at 5:00 pm in our handicap-accessible
Parish Hall,
and Easter Day itself at 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 am.

We ask that you phone or e-mail me in order to reserve a place
in order that we can maintain the numbers attending in-person.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support these past months,
as we continue to remember all those who have succumbed to Covid.

Let us now offer our thanks and praise to God for the acts of our Salvation.
Pray with me.

The LITURGY of the PALMS

We praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Savior. 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.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The LITURGY of the WORD

COLLECT of the DAY

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son 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 the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

LESSON

Ezekiel 37:21-28

²¹Tell my people that I, the Sovereign Lord, am going to take all my people out of the nations where they have gone, gather them together, and bring them back to their own land. ²² I will unite them into one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. They will have one king to rule over them, and they will no longer be divided into two nations or split into two kingdoms. ²³ They will not defile themselves with disgusting idols any more or corrupt themselves with sin. I will free them from all the ways in which they sin and betray me. I will purify them; they will be my people, and I will be their God.

²⁴ A king like my servant David will be their king. They will all be united under one ruler and will obey my laws faithfully. ²⁵ They will live on the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They will live there forever, and so will their children and all their descendants. A king like my servant David will rule them forever.

²⁶ I will make a covenant with them that guarantees their security forever. I will establish them and increase their population, and will see to it that my Temple stands forever in their land. ²⁷ I will live there with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. ²⁸ When I place my Temple there to be among them forever, then the nations will know that I, the Lord, have chosen Israel to be my own people."

The Word of God.

GRADUAL

PSALM 24

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, *
the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For it is he who founded it upon the seas *
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 "Who can ascend the hill of the Lord? *
and who can stand in his holy place?"
- 4 "Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, *
**who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,
nor sworn by what is a fraud.**
- 5 They shall receive a blessing from the Lord *
and a just reward from the God of their salvation."
- 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, *
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 "Who is this King of glory?" *
"The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle."
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 "Who is he, this King of glory?"
"The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

⁵ The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had: ⁶He always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal with God. ⁷ Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like a human being and appeared in human likeness. ⁸ He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death - his death on the cross. ⁹ For this reason God raised him to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name. ¹⁰ And so, in honor of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees, ¹¹ and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of God.



***The TRIUMPHAL ENTRY of JESUS
Into the City of Jerusalem***

Mark 11: 1-11

The Holy Gospel ✚ of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to St. Mark.

As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, near the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, they came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead with these instructions: "Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. And if someone asks you why you are doing that, say that the Master needs it and will send it back at once."

So the disciples went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders asked them: "What are you doing, untying that colt?"

The disciples answered just as Jesus had told them, and the crowd let them go. They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the field and spread them on the road. The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the coming kingdom of King David, our father! Praise be to God!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem, went into the Temple, and looked around at everything. But since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples.

The Gospel of Christ.

HOMILY

Everybody hates it when the children sitting in the back whine,
"Are we there yet?"
It happens in the car, and it seems to happen here in Church, too.
Our human nature gives us impatience on one hand
and low expectations on the other.
Today we are supposed to jump right from the blessing of palms
to the reading of Good Friday's Passion Narrative.

I grew up in small town Protestant America
where the children sang Hosannas and the waved the palm fronds
and we were dressed almost as pretty as for Easter -
Palm Sunday was a great celebration.
We were like the children of ancient Jerusalem
who had no clue as to what was coming;
we just went along with a parade.
The children would gather and wave palms,
the boys pretending they are warriors with swords, of course.
But they probably even did so in Jesus' time.
The Festival of Passover is coming, there is excitement in the air.

Yet, in our tradition we have built in the presumption that people
won't be aware of the impact of this week
and attendance at services on Good Friday will be minimal.
So, to bring to you the importance of this week,
and Christ's saving passion on Friday,
we thrust into fast-forward.
The revelation of Maundy Thursday
with the institution of the Holy Eucharist in Christ's Last Supper
will escape you.
The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane will fly overhead
like a flock of spring geese.
The arrest of Christ with the solemn and painful kiss from Judas
will be unknown.

The passion of Christ in the tragic hours of Friday morning, midday,
and afternoon will be hinted at, but will they be appreciated?

We are more fortunate this year than last.
While some will be hearing these words on their computer,
as we have for 12 months,
some of us have ventured to join together in-person -
truly today is a celebration.
We have had enough of death this past year,
let's not rush into Christ's Passion,
even as important for our faith that Friday will be.
This year, maybe more so even than last year,
even if you plan to come here,
I invite you to read the story in our Bible, day by day,
starting with Matthew chapter 21,
and enter into the story of this Holy Week.
Become one of the participants,
discover what Jesus has really done for you.

You know my habit,
become one of these real, human, characters,
starting with today's children waving those palm branches.
Close your eyes and ponder in your silence what they are experiencing.

What do they see?
What do they hear?
Are the paving stones of the road hot on your feet?
Are you afraid of the Roman soldiers?
Will you follow Jesus to the Holy Temple?

Have you heard about this Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.
It's been in all the news!
He's been preaching, healing,
saying wonderful things about a new world order,
and he's even raised people from death.
Why just last week, I heard he was in Bethany
and there was this guy Lazarus...

Look. There he is. That's him. That's Jesus.
The children wave, the people shout.
He's getting onto a donkey.

He's a hero.
He's our hero.
He'll save us from oppression.
He's going to save us from the Romans.
He's our real King!
Hail Jesus!
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of God!

Something is going to happen.
Something *is* going to happen!
And soon.
But not yet.
Today is only the Prelude.
But it is the beginning of the story of our salvation.
Live into your - our - salvation,
 each and every day,
 this week and forevermore.
Enter with me, and with Christ, the children
 and the Disciples into the Holy City
and linger a while.

AMEN.

Let us proclaim our faith using the words of the 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 from 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,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic 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.

The PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray saying,
“Have mercy, O God.”

For the peace from above, for the loving kindness of God, and for the salvation
of our souls, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for
the unity of all peoples, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For Justin the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael our Presiding Bishop, Kevin
our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For our Joe and Kamala, our President and Vice President, for Tom our
Governor, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For this borough, for Sarah our Mayor, for every city and community, and for
those who live in them, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us
pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to
conserve it, let us pray:

Have mercy, O God.

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, especially Fr. Graham and Richelle, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, especially Justin and Mitch, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, especially those who have died from the pandemic, those killed by violent acts, and for all the departed, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

For the absolution and remission of our sins and offenses, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray:
Have mercy, O God.

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace.
Have mercy, O God.

In the communion of of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.
To you, our God.

Silence, after which the Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION of SIN

All: Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us of our sins ✝ and with the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

The LORD'S PRAYER (traditional, using 'trespasses')

SEASONAL BLESSING for PALM SUNDAY

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

POSTLUDE

"March on a Theme by Handel"

A. Guilmant