

Palm/Passion Sunday

4/5/2020

J.V.Trautwein

Celebrate Introduction:

“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.”

We are one in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Confession:

Gracious God, have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins.

Opening Hymn: “All Glory Laud and Honor” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3a8fTTrAdE>

Psalm 118

²⁵ Lord, save us!

Lord, grant us success!

²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

From the house of the Lord we bless you. ^{1b}

²⁷ The Lord is God,

and he has made his light shine on us.

With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession

up ^{1c} to the horns of the altar.

²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise you;

you are my God, and I will exalt you.

²⁹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his love endures forever.

The Prayer of the Day

“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 their garments and branches along his way. 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.

Hymn of Praise: “Rejoice the Lord is King” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N0iVysrykU>

Scripture Lessons:

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

The Gospel:

Matthew 21:1-11

Hymn of the Day: “Ride On, Ride on, In Majesty” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zo5pfl6z6lA>

The Message:

Life is an amazing journey through our allotted time here on earth for it never ceases to bring new experiences. These experiences can be either negative or positive. No matter how hard we try to plan this journey to reach our intended positive goals, there can be more urgent plans and occurrences which delay, alter, or even totally change our direction. In reality we are never certain what the next moment will bring. This brings to mind the words of Robert Burns, (adapted version) “The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry. No matter how carefully a project is planned, something may still go wrong with it.” I know the truth to these words. Just a couple of years ago I had made plans for a much anticipated vacation but an unanticipated illness and hospitalization cancelled all those carefully made plans. After that deep disappointment and experience I found that life went on, although drastically changed in many ways.

Today, we all are experiencing, in one way or another, a dramatic change in our lives with the current world pandemic. During this part of our life’s journey we do not know what the next moment or day will bring. But one thing is certain; life’s journey continues and will continue even during these uncertain times. The sacrifices we make today will bring hope for tomorrow.

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday which begins Passion Week in the church calendar. It is Palm Sunday which records the story of what seems to be a well-planned event in Jesus’ journey through life. He had just raised his friend Lazarus from the dead in front of many people. The word must have spread quickly throughout the pilgrims who traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. Jesus was well aware of what the peoples’ reaction would be. He knew that He would be the focal point of all the talk among them. He knew that, even more so, they

now would look upon Him as their long awaited Messiah, a political king sent by God who would establish a new Jewish kingdom.

With this in mind he created a plan to turn that notion of a political Messiah up-side down. He couldn't lead the people astray. He was not that Messiah but a different Messiah whose kingdom was a spiritual one. Therefore prior to entering the city he sent two of His disciples with specific instructions of what to do so that His plan would be fulfilled. They were told to go into a village in order to find what John called a "young donkey" and bring it to Him. Evidently Jesus had prearranged this with the donkey's owner. This they did and the plan was beginning to become a reality. So far, so good - as planned he mounted the donkey, an animal of humility not royalty, in order to begin His journey. When the people heard He would be making his entrance into the Holy City they gathered along the road laying palm branches and their robes on the road a sign and gesture of royalty.

The entry into the city went according to Jesus' plan. The people responded with shouts of "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in highest Heaven!" But the people must have begun to question the whole event when they saw Him riding the symbol of humility – a donkey. After all conquering kings rode the majestic animal of power, the horse. During the days that followed they continued to wait for Jesus to make His move against the Romans and establish His role as King of the Jews. Finally, they gave up and saw Jesus as another false hope. His plan was not what they foresaw as a conquerors plan. During the following days it became evident that what seemed to be a promising event in the Jews' journey through life and history was in fact just another disappointment.

But was it a failed plan in the life of Jesus? Unlike the disappointment of those who cheered him along the way and unlike the frustration and anxiety that we may be experiencing with the interruption of our best laid plans, Jesus plans were on target. By the end of that week one may assume that any earthly plans Jesus may have had were destroyed with His conviction and the cross. It seems like the saying about the best laid plans going awry were all too true. But God's plan was entirely different for His plan would change the physical death of the cross into the good news of a new life, a new journey into the future. God's plan was to give us a new glimpse into the hope we all have. This hope and promise is with us no matter whether our journey in life is delayed, or even drastically changed. This is the hope of new life beyond the circumstances which interrupt our life's journey. Therefore in light of this hope we celebrate Palm Sunday even if we are not physically able to do so together.

"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord,,,"!

Offering*

"We give thee but thine own, what-e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee."

The Prayer:

Comforting and loving God, with several weeks of confinement still remaining, we long for the freedom that we know is in our future. Grant us the patience and well-being during this time. Let us always be mindful that the sacrifice of a pause in our life will give life to others. We

especially pray for all those who are placing themselves in harm's way in order to bring life sustaining endeavors and sustenance to those who are in need. On this Palm Sunday and Passion Week remembrance, we bring praise to you for the gift of life, for each other, and the world in which we live. We give you thanks for the Good News of your eternal love as revealed to us through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son.

Reach out and touch us with your blessing, We especially seek healing and comfort for , Pam Ash, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Elshafei family, Betty Fultz, Darrell Garrison, the John Family, John Kahl, Ray Lambert, Donna Mayhew, Bev and Jim Mertz, Nic Nelson, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Terre Rones, Paul Sagal, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Tommy Shimer, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Linda Stephens, Randy Stephens, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Pastor Jack, and all those who are suffering fear anxiety, pain, and sorrow as a result of this pandemic. We fervently ask that your comforting and healing presence be with our brother, Al Honey, during his time of need.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

.The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine upon you;

The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters

Live on knowing God's love,

The joy of living this life of love,

And the peace which only come through the power of His presence within you.

So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: "Crown Him with many Crowns"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh_ept-Js

Postlude: "Jesus shall Reign" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5U4IMtvp6bg>

*Offering to be sent to:

Bob Brackbill

10274 Raleigh Tavern Road

Ellicott City, MD 21042