



**April 5, 2020**

**Palm Sunday**

Welcome to First St. John! If you are visiting, please sign the guest book near the main door.

We offer a traditional service and a celebration service, a joint effort between members of both services with special music and a message. Our Sunday schedule is:

7:45 am	Traditional Service
9:00 am	Sunday School
10:15 am	Celebration Service

In addition, we offer a contemporary worship service on the second Wednesday of the month beginning with a light supper at 5:30 pm. (This service has been postponed until May.)

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:00 am in the lounge (middle floor of the educational building – turn right out of the door by the choir loft.

Children ages 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will meet for Sunday School in the basement of the church (the JAM Room!).

Catechism Classes: The 7th grade class will meet at 9:00 am on Sundays in the catechism room next to the ladies restroom on the second floor of the Educational Building. Eighth grade class meets every other Sunday at 11:30 am in the lounge.

Nursery is in the church basement and is currently unstaffed; you are welcome to sit with your child. A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

Restrooms are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take either set of steps to the basement hallway. The ladies room is at one end, and the men's room is at the other.

Flowers: If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, there is a book in the Narthex (lobby) by the telephone. Or, you can call the church office during the week to check on availability.

Memorials: If you wish to give a memorial in honor or memory of a loved one, you may mail it in or pick up a memorial card in the church office or in the Narthex (lobby) and place it in the offering plate

## First St. John Lutheran Church

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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary

### ORDER OF WORSHIP – CELEBRATION SERVICE

Prelude

#### The Procession With Palms *(please stand)*

P: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**C: Hosanna to the Son of David.**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. Mercifully assist us, 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 everlasting; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### Processional Gospel – Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

*(Please raise your palm branches  
for the thanksgiving and the processional.)*

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P: We praise and thank you, O God, for the great 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 acclaimed Son of David and King of kings by those who scattered their garments and branches of palms in his path.

We ask that you bless these branches and those who bear them, and grant that we may ever hail him as our Lord and King and follow him with perfect confidence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

Processional Hymn "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" No. 344

*Children, worship leaders, choir, and any worshipers  
who wish to join in will now make their way  
around the sanctuary to the altar while the hymn is sung.*

After the conclusion of the hymn:

P: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**C: Hosanna in the highest.**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy, enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **Announcements**

#### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

*Today's reading is a description of the mission of a servant. When early Christians read this text they heard the voice of Jesus in this servant of God. Thus, the reading was associated with the Lord's passion. The servant does not strike back at his detractors but trusts in God's steadfast love.*

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.

<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 up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.

<sup>9</sup>It is the Lord GOD who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

#### **SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11**

*Paul quotes from an early Christian hymn that describes Jesus' humble obedience, even to death, and his exaltation as Lord of all.*

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Lenten Verse**

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in  
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

#### **Gospel Acclamation (spoken)**

P: The Gospel according to St. Matthew Chapter 27.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

## GOSPEL READING: Matthew 27:11-54

Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

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, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 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, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" And he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

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, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" 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 governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and twisting together 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spit on 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.

As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed 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 saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself!

If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, "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.'" 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 out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

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, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

### Gospel Response (Spoken)

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE

Message Song "Crown Him With Many Crowns"

Pastor Rayl  
No. 855

*(Please stand)*

### Apostles' Creed

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,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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.

*(Please be seated)*

The Offering                    *"Sing Hosanna!"*                    John Carter

*"Sanctuary"* (please stand)

*Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary,  
Pure and holy, tried and true;  
With thanksgiving I'll be a living  
Sanctuary for You.*

**Offering Prayer**

P: Merciful God, receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection, through Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Pastoral Prayer** *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Hear us, Lord.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**The Lord's Prayer** *(prayed by all)*

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.

**The Blessing**

P: May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

**C: We turn to the Lord for our life and hope.**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you (+) peace.

**C: Amen.**

**Dismissal**

P: Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Closing Song                    *"Christ, the Life of All the Living"*                    No. 339  
Postlude

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***PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE***

**ELDERS**

Ben Hodges, Bob Hecklinger

**READER**

Toni Wilbarger

**ACOLYTES**

Ethan & Brandon Clair

**SOUND BOARD**

Mark Ackerman

### **When We Feel Abandoned**

In Matthew and in Mark, two out of the four Gospels, Jesus says only one thing from the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Of the "seven last words," three sayings are found only in Luke and three only in John. There is no major conflict among the Gospels' different tellings, but there is certainly a difference in emphasis, a difference in tone. In Matthew and Mark, the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death is a story of abandonment. Jesus' closest friends and followers abandon him after proclaiming that they will die before they will deny him. Even Peter, the rock against which Hades will not prevail, distinguishes himself by the most blatant denial of Jesus. Yes, some of the women stay throughout, but they can only look on from a distance. They are witnesses to his suffering, but they are not physically close enough (in Matthew and Mark's telling) to make him feel less alone. Finally, with his movement crushed and his followers scattered, the dying Jesus feels that even God has deserted him.

When terrible or tragic things happen to us, we are devastated in two ways: by the loss or the pain itself, and also by the feeling that we are outside the circle of God's care. It is important for us to know that Jesus also experienced not only pain and loss, but also the feeling of being abandoned by God. When you feel forsaken, you are not outside the story of God's care for His own. You are with Jesus on the cross. You can't be more inside the story than that. The hope is that for you also, God, unseen, is working to overturn the tragedy, joining you even in forsakenness in order to draw you into Easter.