**April 2nd, 2023 Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday – Email/At Home Missal**

**ZOOM INFORMATION:**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on April 2nd, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship April 2nd, 2023 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10:00 am.**

**Join Zoom Meeting click here:**[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144723429?pwd=bDM1S2Q5ZVY3eGxhdlhuWG9UOHIvUT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144723429?pwd=bDM1S2Q5ZVY3eGxhdlhuWG9UOHIvUT09)

**Meeting ID: 861 4472 3429 Passcode: 701596**

**You don’t have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the “One tap mobile” option:**

**+17789072071,,86144723429#,,,,\*701596# Canada**

**+17806660144,,86144723429#,,,,\*701596# Canada**

**Dial by your location:**

**+1 778 907 2071 Canada**

**+1 780 666 0144 Canada**

**+1 204 272 7920 Canada  
+1 438 809 7799 Canada**

**+1 587 328 1099 Canada**

**+1 647 374 4685 Canada  
+1 647 558 0588 Canada**

**Meeting ID: 861 4472 3429 Passcode: 701596**

**Find your local number:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kHrnL3MpQ**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kHrnL3MpQ).....................................  
**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the sermon from this past Sunday’s (March 26th) service:** [**https://youtu.be/mTJbkwRhBWw**](https://youtu.be/mTJbkwRhBWw)

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**PASTORAL VISITS:** Pastor Laura Sauder is available for safe visits with social distancing requirements in place, and also for telephone visits. Please reach out to her by calling the church office at 519-653-4721 to arrange a visit.

**…………………………….**

**Bible Study will be in the Art Room on Mondays at 3:00PM.**

**Please join us – all are welcome!**

**…………………………..**

You can order your own Maple Syrup from St. Peter’s, Preston. Our partner is a 5th generation Woolwich Township farm that has been producing maple syrup for over 100 years. They adhere to the production guidelines issued by the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, which state the number of taps per tree (max. of 2) for best forest management practices. Handling of the sap and syrup is minimized to reduce the chance of contamination. Their syrup is pure with nothing added, only the water has been removed. As of 2018 their maple syrup is certified organic.

**1 litre Mason Jars of maple syrup are $23.00**.

**Send an email to or** [**alexblack@sympatico.ca**](mailto:alexblack@sympatico.ca) **to order your own locally produced fresh Maple Syrup.**

**……………………………….**

**Greenhorizons BigYellowBag - Give & Grow Program**

This fundraiser is open to all and enables each one of us to raise funds for St. Peters. If you don’t have a lawn or garden, you can still help by spreading the word to your neighbours, friends and relatives.

Each time that an order is placed at Greenhorizons Sod at 519.653.7494 for a **BigYellowBag** of soil using the **code SPLCC23** you will save $5.00, and the church will receive $10.00.

Spread the word, and the soil!​

**………………………………..**

**Community of Faith Gathering**

**All ages are welcome to this mid-week**

**plug-in and power-up your faith event.**

The Preston neighbourhood churches will offer this mid-week program once a month.

Each month the event will be at a different Church.

**What happens at a “Power-Up” evening?**

**\*Fellowship, \*Fun, \*Faith, \*Food (and Free)**

We will begin the evening with a Bible story told through storytelling, a play, or puppetry, and sing some songs.

We will eat together with food provided by the hosting Church.

We will conclude the evening with crafts and activities.

**When: April 12, 5:30pm-7:30pm**

**Where: Trillium United Church, 450 King St. E. Cambridge**

Contact Heather Margerison (children and youth pastor) @ (519)-653-6601 ext.3 for more information

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**April Lamplighters are now available!**……………………………

**Yard Sale** - Tentative dates are July 7 and 8, 2023. We’re looking for good, gently used, clean items of all kinds, and clothing. Please – no very large mirrors, no complete dining room suites, no large old television sets. If you’re unsure of whether what you have is suitable or not, leave a message at the church office. So – start your spring clear out and think of St. Peter’s. We’d love to re-purpose your goods and make a new owner happy. Items may be dropped off at church; just let us know when we can meet with you.

………………………………….

1. **………………………………….**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Laura Sauder**

**Organist & Director of Music: Bradley Moggach**

**Assisting Minister: Kim Strassburger**

**Lector: Barbara Jones**

**GATHERING**

**Land Acknowledgement:**

*A: With thankful hearts we acknowledge that the land upon which we live and worship here at St Peter’s is the treaty land of the Six Nations, comprising in part the territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral Peoples. This land is covered by treaties such as the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Two Row Wampum Treaty and the Haldimand Treaty of 1784. As we continue to learn more about the truth of our shared history, we desire to grow in Peace, Friendship and Respect, leading ultimately to true reconciliation.*

Welcome and Announcements

**Call to Worship: *(Repeat 3 times)***

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

***C: Hosanna in the highest.***

**The Reading: Matthew 21:1-11**

When they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus gave two disciples a task. He said to them, “Go into the village over there. As soon as you enter, you will find a donkey tied up and a colt with it. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that their master needs them.” He sent them off right away. Now this happened to fulfill what the prophet said, *Say to Daughter Zion,* “*Look, your king is coming to you, humble and riding on a donkey, and on a colt the donkey’s offspring.*” The disciples went and did just as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their clothes on them. Then he sat on them.

Now a large crowd spread their clothes on the road. Others cut palm branches off the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds in front of him and behind him shouted, “*Hosanna* to the Son of David! *Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna* in the highest!” And when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. “Who is this?” they asked. The crowds answered, “It’s the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.” *(CEB)*

Word of God, Word of Life. ***C: Thanks be to God.***

**Greeting:**

P: The Lord be with you.

***C: And also with you.***

**Blessing of the Garments:**

P: Let us pray,

Holy God, we thank you for sending Jesus to teach us about your love. Today we celebrate Jesus’ entry into the holy city of Jerusalem, where he was welcomed as a king by people who spread cloaks and branches along his way. We ask your blessing on these items: socks, underwear, clothing for The Bridges; and we ask your blessing upon those who will use them. May these offerings be a sign of your love as we seek to follow Jesus in his way of peace and love. Amen.

**Gathering Hymn: ACS # 928 ‘Pave the Way with Branches’**

Jesus is coming.

Pave the way with branches.

Jesus is coming. Hosanna. ***Repeat***

Hosanna, Jesus is coming.

Hosanna to the Prince of peace. ***Repeat***

Release for the captives.

Pave the way with branches.

Release for the captives. Hosanna. ***Repeat***

Hosanna, Jesus is coming.

Hosanna to the Prince of peace. ***Repeat***

Hope for the downtrod.

Pave the way with branches.

Hope for the downtrod. Hosanna. ***Repeat***

Hosanna, Jesus is coming.

Hosanna to the Prince of peace. ***Repeat***

Land for the landless.

Pave the way with branches.

Land for the landless Hosanna. ***Repeat***

Hosanna, Jesus is coming.

Hosanna to the Prince of peace. ***Repeat***

Debts are forgiven.

Pave the way with branches.

Debts are forgiven. Hosanna. ***Repeat***

Hosanna, Jesus is coming.

Hosanna to the Prince of peace. ***Repeat***

*(Title: Pave the Way with Branches; Text & Music: Bret Hesla, b. 1957; Text & Music © 1999 Bret Hesla, admin. Augsburg Fortress; All rights reserved. Used by permission*. *Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayer of the Day*:***

Gracious God,

with the crowds who gathered around Jesus, hailing him as king,  
give us grace to recognise the ruler we proclaim,   
and courage to be a part of your reign -   
even when it goes against our ways and the ways of the world,   
even when it leads us where we do not want to go. 

Free us from the tempting alternatives   
of power and wealth and status,   
and embolden us to live lives of thanksgiving and praise.    
Amen.

**Choir Anthem**

**Children’s Message *(Pastor Laura)***

**Gospel Acclamation: Lenten Acclamation from Setting 4 *(ELW page # 151)***

Return to the Lord, your God,

for he is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.\*

**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 27: 11-56**

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

Jesus was brought before the governor. The governor said, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus replied, “That’s what you say.” But he didn’t answer when the chief priests and elders accused him.

Then Pilate said, “Don’t you hear the testimony they bring against you?” But he didn’t answer, not even a single word. So the governor was greatly amazed.

It was customary during the festival for the governor to release to the crowd one prisoner, whomever they might choose. At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. When the crowd had come together, Pilate asked them, “Whom would you like me to release to you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?” He knew that the leaders of the people had handed him over because of jealousy.

While he was serving as judge, his wife sent this message to him, “Leave that righteous man alone. I’ve suffered much today in a dream because of him.”

But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and kill Jesus. The governor said, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

“Barabbas,” they replied.

Pilate said, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”

They all said, “Crucify him!”

But he said, “Why? What wrong has he done?”

They shouted even louder, “Crucify him!”

Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was starting. So he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I’m innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It’s your problem.”

All the people replied, “Let his blood be on us and on our children.” Then he released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus whipped, then handed him over to be crucified.

The governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the governor’s house, and they gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a red military coat on him. They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they bowed down in front of him and mocked him, saying, “Hey! King of the Jews!” After they spit on him, they took the stick and struck his head again and again. When they finished mocking him, they stripped him of the military coat and put his own clothes back on him. They led him away to crucify him.

As they were going out, they found Simon, a man from Cyrene. They forced him to carry his cross. When they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Skull Place, they gave Jesus wine mixed with vinegar to drink. But after tasting it, he didn’t want to drink it. After they crucified him, they divided up his clothes among them by drawing lots. They sat there, guarding him. They placed above his head the charge against him. It read, “This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.” They crucified with him two outlaws, one on his right side and one on his left.

Those who were walking by insulted Jesus, shaking their heads and saying, “So you were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, were you? Save yourself! If you are God’s Son, come down from the cross.”

In the same way, the chief priests, along with the legal experts and the elders, were making fun of him, saying, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself. He’s the king of Israel, so let him come down from the cross now. Then we’ll believe in him. He trusts in God, so let God deliver him now if he wants to. He said, ‘I’m God’s Son.’” The outlaws who were crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark. At about three Jesus cried out with a loud shout, *“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,”* which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?”

After hearing him, some standing there said, “He’s calling Elijah.” One of them ran over, took a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a pole. He offered it to Jesus to drink.

But the rest of them said, “Let’s see if Elijah will come and save him.”

Again Jesus cried out with a loud shout. Then he died.

Look, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split, and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised. After Jesus’ resurrection they came out of their graves and went into the holy city where they appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what had just happened, they were filled with awe and said, “This was certainly God’s Son.”

Many women were watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to serve him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons. *(CEB)*

The Gospel of the Lord. ***C: Praise to you, O Christ.****\**

**Sermon**

**Sermon for Palm/Passion Sunday**

**Matthew 21:1-11; 27:11-56 – Blessed Are the Rejected**

As he arrives in Jerusalem, alongside all the pilgrims on their way to celebrate the festival of Passover, Jesus is welcomed as a prophet and a king. The people cry ‘hosanna’ – a word that means ‘save us.’ They believe that he will be the one to bring the change and the hope they are longing for. But how things turn around in just a few short days.

Jesus is betrayed by his disciple and friend Judas. He’s denied by another disciple and dear friend, Peter. And the very crowds who greet Jesus with hosannas. Their cries of praise turn to jeers and taunts as they call for his death. Completing this path of betrayal and rejection, Jesus will be rejected by the very people he came to save.

The thing is, we already know how this story will end. We know that the worst thing – Jesus’ crucifixion – doesn’t get the last word. And how tempting it is, just to skip to the good part. Why even bother delving into the painful details of Jesus’ final days when the good stuff is just around the corner?

Well, as we know all too well, that’s not how life works, is it?

Sadly, the sting of rejection is a painful part of life that is all too familiar. When who we are or what happens to us, becomes a reason for others to push us away or mistreat us. When our life circumstances make it difficult for us to maintain friendships and connections that were once so important to us.

And this rejection can happen for so many different reasons.

Like when a divorce or the ending of a relationship means the loss of other friendships and communities that were a part of life as a couple.

Or when health challenges or compromised immune systems leave us less able to join in.

When mental illnesses keep us in bed, or when we, or someone we love, are in the throes of addiction.

When our sexual identity or gender expression leave us locked out. This one is especially important right now as we see so many places passing laws that deny rights to transgender folks and kids. As Jesus’ own story tells us, rejection doesn’t just result in hurt feelings – it can mean life or death for those who are pushed out.

And of course, we have to acknowledge the very hard part, that often this rejection has been (and continues to be) at the hands of the church. Which is especially painful and damaging; this rejection that comes from a group or a body that is meant to speak for God; to embody Christ’s presence in the world.

This is deeply painful and shameful stuff.

It’s really tempting to just skip to the good part. But Easter cannot come without holy week. And so this week, we commit to journey with Jesus. To be like Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons. These women who stand at the foot of cross. Who never leave Jesus’ side as he takes his last breath.

This holy week we will journey with Jesus through his rejection, his pain, his grief, and his death. With Jesus, the rejected one, who understands deeply and intimately what it feels like to be abandoned by his friends, family, and community. And who, even though rejected, doesn’t retaliate or run away.

When we experience rejection, often our natural response is to do one of those things. Either to push others away – to give back as good as we got. Anger becomes our shield.

Or to put up a protective wall and hide away from the world (as much as is possible). Two very normal and natural responses when we experience rejection. Sometimes the only safe responses when the world has become an unsafe place to be.

But thanks be to God, Jesus makes another way. Even in his rejection, Jesus is at work reconciling the world to himself. Jesus is pushed away, but his arms are ever open, waiting to embrace us. His arms are ever open, offering not blame or payback, but forgiveness, mercy, and love.

The story of Holy Week is the story of Jesus’ rejection. And I am thankful that as hard as it is, this is part of the story. Because it’s a promise to us that in our experiences of rejection, we are held and heard and loved by God.

It also creates the space for us to be mindful of the ways we may be rejecting others. Maybe because someone doesn’t fit our expectations, or because we don’t understand their choices.

When this is the case, may the Spirit help us to recognize this behaviour within ourselves, and challenge us to change. May the Spirit push us to extend the same love and compassion that Jesus offers us, even when it makes us uncomfortable.

Today, as we proclaim, “Blessed are the Rejected,” we commit not to “rush to the glory of Easter, but instead to accompany the one who walks with us.

Search our hearts, oh Lord, and smooth out any rough edges. Soften us for the ones on the margins for that is where the heart of your kingdom lies.”1

AMEN

1 Kate Bowler. “The Lent We Actually Have: Sermon Guide,” page 18.

**Hymn of the Day: ELW # 353 ‘Were You There’**

1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

4 Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

1. *(Title: Were You There; Text: African American spiritual; Public Domain; Music: African American spiritual; arr. © 1999 Augsburg Fortress; All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayers of Intercession:**

A: Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Save your church, O God. Help us to boldly confess in every time and place that Jesus Christ is Lord. With the humility of a servant, help congregations, synods, and other ministry settings to proclaim your extravagant love for all. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Save your creation, O God. Every living being you have made has purpose. Give us renewed appreciation of farm animals who labor in the fields, service animals who accompany their human companions, and beloved pets who live alongside us. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Save the peoples of the earth, O God. Restore dignity to those who are scorned and persecuted for their religious beliefs or political activism, and deliver them from the hand of their enemies. Bring peace to places where conflict runs deep. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Save those who cry to you in any need, O God. Watch over all who are incarcerated or awaiting trial, and stand with those who are unjustly accused. Be present with those feeling isolated, lonely, or fearful (Especially we pray for Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Bryan, Nansea, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Creena, Shirley, Maya, Karen, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, Mackenzie, Rhett, Linda, Jan, Ken, Lena, Brian, John, Anne, Pastor Neil, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts….. ). Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

As we journey this week from the cloaks and branches to the cross, walking with Jesus into darkness and betrayal, help us, O God, to give freely and generously and extravagantly of ourselves. Shape and mold us in your way of self-giving love. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.\***

**Share the peace of Christ:**

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

***C: And also with you.*\***

Our worship continues with the offering of our gifts.

**Offering**

**Offertory Music: ACS # 968 ‘Feed Us with Hunger for Justice’**

Feed us with hunger for justice.

Feed us with thirst for peace.

***Optional descant***

Feed us justice.

Feed us your peace.

*(Title: Feed us with Hunger for Justice; Text & Music:* *Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960; Text and music © 2020 Augsburg Fortress; All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Offering Prayer:**

A: God of good gifts,

receive these and all our offerings

as we present them in faithful service

for the sake of your gospel.

Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal

as you pour out your very presence

through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

Amen.\*

**You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.**

**Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:**

[**https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY**](https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY)

**ELW Setting 4: ‘Dialogue…’ (page 152)**

The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you. (Sung)**

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise**

**‘Preface…’** *(Sunday of the Passion)*

Holy God,

You sent Jesus into the world

to heal, to teach, to love.

to show us another way.

More than a prophet, more than a king,

your own child, our saviour.

As crowds gathered,

laying cloaks along your way.

They were eager for a taste.

To be witnesses,

to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

We long for this too.

To taste, to witness, to be a part.

United in our awe, our wonder, our hope,

We join their shouts of Hosanna with this song of praise:

**ELW Setting 4:** ‘Holy, Holy, Holy…’ *(page 153)*

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,***

***Lord God of pow’r and might:***

***Heav’n and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

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

***Hosanna in the highest.***

**Thanksgiving at the Table:**

On the night before he died.

Jesus gathered with friends to share a meal,

just as he had countless times before.

First, he took the bread, he broke it,

and he gave it to his disciples saying “Take and eat,

This is my body, given for you, do this for the remembrance of me.”

And again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks

and gave it for all to drink, saying,

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood

shed for you, and for all people, for the forgiveness of sin,

do this for the remembrance of me.”

Holy Spirit, come among us and upon these gifts

May we, who share this meal,

be strengthened and upheld

to serve in love as you did.

In this hope we offer our prayer and praise to you. Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion:**

This is Christ’s table. All are welcome here to receive God’s good gifts of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

I invite those at home, and those in the building communing by fellowship cup, to take your bread or cracker as we say together, “The body of Christ, given for us.”

And, as we take our cup we say, “The blood of Christ, shed for us.”

**Communion Music: ELW # 616 ‘Jesus, Remember Me’**

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

*(Title: Jesus, Remember Me; Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community; Text © 1981 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music:**Jacques Berthier 1923-1994; Text © 1981 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Choir Anthem: ‘The Lamb Will Be a Shepherd’**

*(Title: The Lamb Will Be a Shepherd Text: Richard D. Leach; Text © 1995 Selah Publishing Co., Inc.; All rights reserved. Used by permission.  
Music:**Donald Sebesta; Music**© 2004 Augsburg Fortress Publishers; All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**P:** May the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen you, and keep you, in his grace.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer after Communion:**

A: Embodied God,

at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors

and touch the world with your love.

**Amen.\***

**Blessing:**

Oh God, you are interrupting us with

eternity once again.

Open our hearts and minds and eyes

and ears to hear what you have to teach us.

On this Palm Sunday,

time is marked as one small donkey

plods toward Jerusalem,

One with a face set like flint,

feet almost grazing the ground, walks forward

toward the eastering of all sorrow

—not in the power of horses and swift victory,

but in small, steady steps.

toward the mystery

that through suffering, healing comes,

that through shame, dignity is restored,

that through the cross,

powers are disarmed,

and death done away with forever.

Blessed are all those walking forward

into the great, small work they do:

in hospitals, homes, grocery stores,

classrooms, churches, and cubicles.

And blessed are we joining the crowds,

with cloaks and branches to pave the way,

shouting ourselves hoarse:

“Hosanna! Save us! Save our world.”

God, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit, have mercy.

Amen.\*\*

**Sending Hymn: ELW # 346 ‘Ride On, Ride On in Majesty!’**

1 Ride on, ride on in majesty!

Hear all the tribes hosanna cry;

O Savior meek, your road pursue,

with palms and scattered garments strewed.

2 Ride on, ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die.

O Christ, your triumphs now begin

o'er captive death and conquered sin.

3 Ride on, ride on in majesty!

The hosts of angels in the sky

look down with sad and wond'ring eyes

to see the approaching sacrifice.

4 Ride on, ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die,

bow your meek head to mortal pain,

then take, O Christ, your pow'r and reign!

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**Dismissal:**

A: Go in peace. Serve in Love.

**C: Thanks be to God.\***

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