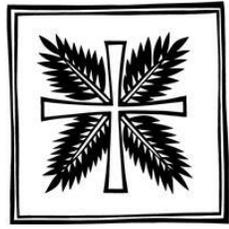


Sunday, March 29, 2026
Palm and Passion Sunday
SUNDAYS AND SEASONS 2026



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

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.

GATHERING – We Await the Triumphal Entry with the Crowds

Please take a palm branch and wait in the Gathering Space. Together, we await with the crowds as we look for the entry of Jesus, God's chosen Messiah.

PALM SUNDAY ACCLAMATION

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

Choir and Sunday School Children - "Blessed is the One"

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL

Matthew 21:1-11

Pastor Steve Kuhl

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 21, beginning at the 1st verse. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus enters Jerusalem

¹ When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² 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. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "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."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ 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!"**



¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

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

BLESSING OF THE PALMS

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.



Let us pray.

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.

Raise your palm branches in the air.

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.**

Let us go forth in peace.

In the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN – ELW # 344 “All Glory, Laud, and Honor

All Glory, Laud, and Honor



- 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,



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.

TEXT: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
MUSIC: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

CONCLUSION OF THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN

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

Apostolic Greeting

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

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. 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.**

Please be seated.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 31: 9-16 [Lector for the Day]

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. (Ps. 31:5)

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

First Lesson: Isaiah 50:4-9a [Lector for the Day]

This text, the third of the four Servant Songs in Isaiah, speaks of the servant’s obedience amid persecution. Though the servant has been variously understood as the prophet himself or a remnant of faithful Israel, Christians have often recognized the figure of Christ in these poems.

- ⁴ 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 awakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
⁵ The Lord God has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
⁶ 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.

⁷ 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;
⁸ he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

^{9a} It is the Lord God who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?



Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Lesson: Philippians 2:5-11 [Lector for the day]

Paul quotes from an early Christian hymn that describes Jesus' humble obedience in his incarnation as a human being, even to death, and his exaltation and glory as Lord of all.

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.



Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

The Passion of Our Lord: Matthew 26: [1-13] 14 – 27:66

In fulfillment of scripture and obedience to God's will, Jesus goes to the cross so that a new covenant in his blood may bring forgiveness of sins. Even the soldiers who crucify him recognize him to be the Son of God.

We now enter into the contemplation of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and meditate on the salvation of the world through his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection from the Gospel of St. Matthew. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

A dramatic Reading of the Gospel is presented.

The Passion of our Lord according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Hymn: ELW # 343 "My Song is Love Unknown" verses 1 & 2 (to Tune ELW # 640)



- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | My song is love unknown,
my Savior's love to me,
love to the loveless shown
that they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I that for my sake
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?
my Lord should take frail flesh and die? | 2 | He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow;
the world that was his own
would not its Savior know.
But, oh, my friend, my friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend!
who at my need his life did spend! |
|---|--|---|--|

Text: Samuel Crossman.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for *Hans Nielsen Hauge* and all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Pastor: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.
Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words. The assembly is seated.

OFFERING - Collection of our offerings.

SONG DURING OFFERING – *please sing along.*

Hymn: ELW # 343 "My Song is Love Unknown" verses 3 & 4 (to Tune ELW # 640)

3	Sometimes we strew his way and his sweet praises sing; resounding all the day hosannas to our king. Then "Crucify!" is all our breath, and for his death we thirst and cry. and for his death we thirst and cry.	4	We cry out; we will have our dear Lord made away, a murderer to save, the prince of life to slay. Yet cheerful he to suffering goes that he his foes from thence might free. that he his foes from thence might free.
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Text: Samuel Crossman

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

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.



THE MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 for PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
whose suffering and death gave salvation to all.
You gather your people around the tree of the cross,
transforming death into life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus: Holy, Holy, Holy – ELW Setting #10 – S207

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE WORD'S OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Remember us, dear Jesus and teach us to pray:

**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.**



INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy. Come.

Please be seated and wait to come forward for Holy Communion after the singing of The Lamb of God song.

Lamb of God – ELW Setting # 10 – S208



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Hymn During Communion: *(Background music only. ELW # 500 "Now We Remain")*

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands. The presiding minister may say a table blessing; the assembly responds Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.

Today's Lay Leaders

Lector: Kathy Imp

Ushers: George & Gloria Becker

Communion Assistant: Jeanette Nowakowski

Altar Guild: Deanna Posig

Music & Worship Coordinator: Barb Regent

SENDING BLESSING

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.

Adoration Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America

3840 West Edgerton Avenue

Greenfield, WI 53221

Phone: 414.281.0414

www.adorationlc.com

adorationlutheran@gmail.com

Pastor Steve Kuhl, Interim Pastor
Crystal A. Roider, Office Manager

SENDING HYMN: ELW # 805 "Lead On, O King Eternal"

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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