



April 2, 2023
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

Always keep in mind that ashes put on your forehead come from last Palm Sunday's burnt palms. Those things that we regard old and die are a major source of the new beginnings.

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

**– Richard Rohr
April 2, 2023**

Greenfield 11:00am

Palm/Passion Sunday / “Open the Gates”

* *Processional Hymn* “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna” CH #297

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Right Side: Open the gates, for on this side of Jerusalem, a grand parade of Rome brings the pomp and circumstance of power and prestige to the streets for the Passover Feast.

Left Side: Open the gates, for on the other side of Jerusalem, a humble procession enters the city among the lives of the Jewish poor and marginalized.

Right Side: (*Facing left and stomping together*) Entering through the gates, we ride in on horses with the powerful armor of Rome, bind the festal procession with power. Let the feast begin!

Left Side: (*Facing right and waving palms*) Entering through the gates, Jesus comes riding on a donkey and the crowd binds the festal procession by laying down palm branches and shouting, “Hosanna!”

All: (*Waving branches*) Open to us the gates of God and together we will proclaim, “Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!”

* *Prayer of Invocation*

God of humble entries, we lay down our branches on the path ahead and give thanks for this day you have created. For this is the day you have made, and we rejoice in it together. As we walk with Jesus and his followers into Jerusalem today, open the gates of our hearts that we might enter your realm with joy and thanksgiving. In the name of the One who came humbly, we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* “Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!” NCH #215

Prayer for Confession

O God, we know that our lives have missed the mark and fallen short of your call to love you and neighbor with our whole lives. At times we can enter into the circumstances of our lives with power over others, arrogance, or a lack of awareness of the needs of our neighbor. Forgive us for being more interested in our own achievements or our obsession with seeking the approval of others. Come and save us now. Transform us into a people of humility and righteousness, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of God's Love

The good news of God this day is this: This is the day that God has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. For on this day, God has entered into our lives with love and compassion for all who surrender and lay down their lives in Christ.

Friends, you are loved. You are embraced. You are forgiven. Amen.

We give thanks to the Lord, for God is good, and God's love endures forever. Amen and Amen!

Psalms Reading

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 NIV

- ¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.
- ² Let Israel say:
“His love endures forever.”
- ¹⁹ Open for me the gates of the righteous;
I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.
- ²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD
through which the righteous may enter.
- ²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me;
you have become my salvation.
- ²² The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
- ²³ the LORD has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.

- ²⁴ The LORD has done it this very day;
let us rejoice today and be glad.
- 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.
- ²⁷ The LORD is God,
and he has made his light shine on us.
With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession
up 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 Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 21:1-11 NIV

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

TH #497

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵ “Say to Daughter Zion,
‘See, your king comes to you,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

¹¹ The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“We Will Glorify”

CH #105

Today's Message

* *The Apostle's Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic/Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

* *The Lord's Prayer*

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

* *Sung Response*

“Hear Our Prayer, O Lord”

TH # 501

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

O God of Welcome and Waving Palms, as the crowd offered to you their praise and the palms on the road, so we share these gifts out of the abundance you have provided. May they be for the healing salvation and work of justice you are bringing about in the world through your unending love. Amen and Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“Join All The Glorious Names”

CH #132

* *Benediction*

Right Side: (*Turning from the front to the back*) Having entered through the gates in power and prestige, this Jesus has called us to go out in love, compassion, and humility.

Left Side: (*Turning from the front to the back*) Having entered through the gates on donkeys and waving palms, this Jesus has come to save and now calls us to go out in hope, justice, and love.

All: Together, we are embraced by an enduring and boundless love that forges us together in shouts of “Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!”

Friends, Go forth humbly to serve the God whose love endures forever. Go forth in the name of the Christ who entered Jerusalem on a lowly donkey. Go forth in the strength of the Holy Spirit, that calls us to rejoice in this very day God has made. God’s love endures forever.

God’s love endures forever. Amen!

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Open the Gates: Service Prayers for Palm/Passion Sunday was written by the Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott, the Conference Minister for the Indiana Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ who resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.