



**PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH
PALM & PASSION SUNDAY**

6th Sunday of Lent

March 28, 2021

*Connecting with the Community,
Growing Disciples, and Serving Jesus Christ*

*Our Worship can be viewed on our website
PantherValleyChurch.org*

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

PRELUDE

It is this “turning” or “re-orienting” ourselves toward the Holy that is the essence of our season of Lent.
What we pay attention to is what we are formed by.
So let us continue this season of listening, of hearing that still, small voice
and finding our own true selves.

**Come and rest
Come and listen
Lay the fullness of your lives before the Maker**

CALL TO WORSHIP

This is the day that the Lord has made!
Let us rejoice and be glad in it!
Open wide the gates of your hearts.
Let the Savior enter!
Shout with joy, all you people.
The Savior has come forth bringing peace. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER

Hosanna! Blessed is Jesus who comes in God’s Name! We stand at the gates of our Jerusalem and wave our branches high. We get caught up in the excitement of the parade. Jesus sits astride a donkey, a beast of burden bearing a most precious gift. Let the joy fill your hearts this day as we shout our Hosannas. Praise God for the wondrous ways in which our lives have been touched. Prepare our hearts to worship and celebrate this day!

HYMN *All Glory Laud and Honor*

PRAYER OF PRAISE

Lord Jesus, in You we recognize what life can be:
Recklessly loving, abundantly forgiving, and limitlessly free.
Thank You for offering this life to us again, now.
Thank You for removing the barriers that would keep us from this life,
and for making us new again.
We praise You for the way You lived – opening doors of pain and guilt,
and releasing captives.
We praise You for the way You died – forgiving sinners,
and denying revenge.
We praise You for the way You returned from death – opening graves,
and re-awakening hopes and dreams.
And, we praise You for the way You come to us now –
stirring love in our hearts, and passion in our lives.
Amen.

GOSPEL OF MARK

Mark 11:1-11

New International Version

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’”

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Mark 11:12-25

New Revised Standard Version

On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written,

'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'?

But you have made it a den of robbers."

And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. Then Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you. So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

"Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."

Mark 14:32-42 New Revised Standard Version

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could

you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

MESSAGE *A Season For Figs*

SPECIAL MUSIC *We Sang Our Loud Hosannas*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

When the truth-twisting accusations were spat in Your face, Jesus,
when the crowds chanted their execution-call,
when the nails forced their way through Your flesh,
Things could have been very different,
if not for Your embrace of death.

But, You knew that love would lead to the cross,
it always does,
to laying down life for the beloved.
and you embraced Your death willingly
inviting us to follow.

So, if not for Your embrace of death,
we could never know what it is
to love those who don't deserve it;
we could never find the anger
to resist the injustice that steals dignity;
we could never have our hearts broken
at the grief and need of strangers;
we could never risk ourselves
to challenge violence, corruption and abuse.

But, in answer to Your call, we follow You
into the embrace of death,
laying down our lives in small acts of prayer,
service and justice,
allowing the suffering of others into our hearts.

And we ask that in some small way,
our expressions of love and sacrifice,
may bring greater wholeness into our world.

Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

O Lord our God,
We bring You the needs of our world,
broken by division and suspicion,

by hatred and war.
We bring You the needs of our land,
the hungry and homeless,
the wounded and despairing.
We bring you the needs of ourselves and our loved ones,
seeking Your peace and healing,
Your wisdom and protection.

Additional prayers may be offered here.

Hear us, O God, and come to us,
In compassion and love rescue and restore us,
And make us a people in whom Your gentle reign is seen.
Amen.

And Now as the beloved children of God let us pray together the prayer that Your Beloved Son taught us to pray:

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 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. Amen

PRAYER FOR THE OFFERING

In deep gratitude for all that You have done for us,
we offer ourselves and our gifts to You—
living sacrifices of worship and praise.
Transform our hearts and minds from the inside out;
show us what is good and pleasing in Your sight,
so that we may be quick to recognize Your call,
and quick to respond.
In the name of Jesus, our Messiah and Lord,
Amen.

BENEDICTION

And now as you move on into the world...
Hold that which is happening on the outside AND the inside dear.
Love what comes across your path for what it will teach you.
Cherish the struggle that stirs in your gut for how it will guide you.
And know that all people carry within them
the Essence of the Divine—a Holy Wisdom—given at birth.
Listen every day until we meet again.
Get quiet enough to hear the still small voice and to find your own.
And may the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with you all.

Shalom To You

POSTLUDE

Credits:

Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Call to Worship and Opening prayer, Nancy C Townly. Prayer of Praise, Prayer of Confession, Prayer of Intercession, John van de Laar.

Prelude, The Palms, CCLI #51538, Public Domain

Postlude, The King In Triumph

Hymn, All Glory Laud and Honor, CCLI #29509, Public Domain

Special Music, We Sang Our Glad Hosannas

We are grateful for the following people who made this worship service possible:

Diane Van Dongen our Music Director, Terrie Newbold our Liturgist, and Pastor Ninabeth Metcalf.