



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



4th Sunday of Lent

March 26, 2017

10:30 Service of the Word

Today we read the traditional Palm Sunday text from Matthew. Things are starting to come to a head for Jesus and his followers. While we know the end of the story, they did not. Would their faith be able to comprehend the new and dramatic ways God was about to act?

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available during the service. Please see one of the ushers if you need more information.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: God of heaven and earth, you come in close and make us yours.
Equip us by your Spirit to confess our sin, embrace your forgiveness, and seek the way you set before us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: With honesty of heart, let us confess our sin.

(A moment of silence for reflection)

P: Merciful God,

C: forgive us.

Our will is handcuffed to sin, and we cannot break free.

We have spoken when we should have kept silent.

A: We were silent when we should have said something.

C: We acted when we knew better.

A: We were still when we know we should have moved.

**C: For the wrong we have done, for the good we have failed to do,
have mercy on us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

P: People of God, look to the Son, given to heal you and set you free because God loved the world so much. Take hold of life – eternal life!

C: Amen

Gathering Hymn Here in This Place

(For music turn to Hymn 532 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Here in this place new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**
- 2. We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,**

**gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.**

- 3. Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**
- 4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

Text and music: Marty Haugen; copyright 1982 GIA Publications, Inc.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of your hears, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

‡ WORD ‡

Children's Sermon

First Reading Matthew 21:1-22

P: When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying 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. ³If 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, saying, 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.”

¹² Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³ He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer’; but you are making it a den of robbers.”¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became angry ¹⁶ and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself?’”¹⁷ He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

¹⁸ In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, “May no fruit ever come from you again!” And the fig tree withered at once. ²⁰ When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, “How did the fig tree wither at once?”²¹ Jesus answered them, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ it will be done. ²² Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.”

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Text Study

Second Reading Matthew 21:23-22:46

A1: When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are

you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

A2: "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

A3: "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.'" ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." ⁴²Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?" ⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." ⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about

them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

A4: Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

A2: Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

A3: The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, saying, ²⁴“Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and

raise up children for his brother.’²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother.²⁶ The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh.²⁷ Last of all, the woman herself died.²⁸ In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.”²⁹ Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.³¹ And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God,³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living.”³³ And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

A4: When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together,³⁵ and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.³⁶ “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”³⁷ He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment.³⁹ And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

A1: Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question:⁴² “What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.”⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”’?⁴⁵ If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?”⁴⁶ No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Hymn of the Day A New Commandment
(For music see Hymn 664 in the Blue Hymnal)

**A new commandment I give unto you,
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this shall people know you are my disciples,
if you have love one for another;
by this shall people know you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another.**

Text: John 13:34-35. Music: Anonymous

Apostles' Creed

A: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed

**C: 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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with: Lord in your mercy,

*The congregation will respond: **Hear our prayer.***

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Peace

A: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

A: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

‡ THANKSGIVING ‡

Offering

Hymn of Thanksgiving *As the offering is brought forward the congregation sings:*

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your Word.**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.**

**When my heart is hard,
break the stone away.**

**When my heart is cold,
warm it with the day.**

**When my heart is lost,
lead me on your way.**

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Thanksgiving Prayer

A: Let us pray. Merciful God,

C: we offer to you what is already your own: ourselves, our time and our possessions. Guide us so that we may use your gifts in the service of your will; for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

A: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

† SENDING †

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. 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.

Sending Hymn Beneath the Cross of Jesus
(For music see Hymn 338 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Beneath the cross of Jesus**

**I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock
within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and burdens of the day.**

2. **Upon the cross of Jesus,**

**my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one
who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears,
two wonders I confess:
the wonder of his glorious love
and my unworthiness.**

3. **I take, O cross, your shadow**

**for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by,
to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame,
my glory all, the cross.**

Text: Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830-1869. Music: Frederic C. Maker, 1844-1927

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **God's Work. Our Hands.**

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Acolyte	Sabastian Plouffe
Nursery Care	Katy Stimmel
Counters	Babette Huber and Burdie Gillern
Coffee Hour	Liz Brown and Helen Crown

Worship assistants for next Sunday, April 2

Greeters and Ushers	Sue Kaufmann and Linda Flood
Acolyte	Sarah Brownlee
Altar Care	Joy Lethbridge and Beth Perdan
Communion Assistants	Nancy and Ivan Shuler
Nursery Care	Laura Stroup
Counters	Tom Kurilovitch and Helen Crown
Coffee Hour	Shulers – Communion Education Class

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