

**Family of Christ Lutheran Church**  
**Palm Sunday**  
**March 29, 2026**

*We gather in the narthex*

**Acclamation**

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

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Processional Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

<sup>5</sup>“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.”

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

<sup>10</sup>When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” <sup>11</sup>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 Palms**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of all, bless these palms and those who carry them. As you join us in the joys of our lives, we join this joyful procession. As you join us in pain and heartache, we join the procession to the cross. These palms are signs of pain and promise, and you reside in both. God of all, bless these palms and those who carry them.

**Amen.**

### **Welcome and Greet One Another**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Share a sign of Christ’s peace with one another.

# Entrance Hymn: All Glory Laud and Honor ELW 344

## All Glory, Laud, and Honor

*Refrain*



All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re-deem-er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 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,

*Refrain*



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

*Please be seated*

### **Prayer of the Day**

God of all, the joyful parade of this day will soon become a gruesome march to Golgotha. Yet you are in all of it: the joy and the heartache, the pain and the promise, the peace and the anguish. In this holy week, help us to walk through all of it with you, that we may experience the comfort of knowing you with us in our highs and in our lows too. **Amen.**

### **The Passion Story according to Matthew 26**

#### **• Preparing for the Passover**

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal for you?”

“As you go into the city,” he told them, “you will see a certain man. Tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My time has come, and I will eat the Passover meal with my disciples at your house.’” So the disciples did as Jesus told them and prepared the Passover meal there.

#### **• The Betrayer**

When it was evening, Jesus sat down at the table with the twelve disciples. While they were eating, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.”

Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, “Am I the one, Lord?”

“Am I the one, Lord?”

He replied, “One of you who has just eaten from this bowl with me will betray me. For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the

one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!”

Judas, the one who would betray him, also asked, “Rabbi, am I the one?”

And Jesus told him, “You have said it.”

*Please rise as you are able*

- **The Bread and Cup**

As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take this and eat it, for this is my body.”

And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, “Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and God’s people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many.

<sup>29</sup> Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.”

### **Invitation to Communion**

Come to the table. Feast on God’s goodness and mercy. **Amen.**

## **Communion Hymn: “Lamb of God Pure and Sinless” ELW**

**357**

### Lamb of God, Pure and Sinless



Lamb of God, pure and sin - less, once on the cross an of - f'ring,



pa - tient, low - ly, guilt - less, for - sak - en in your suf - f'ring:



from sin's grasp you have torn us, from gloom to hope have borne us.



1 Grant us your mer - cy, O Je - sus.  
2 Grant us your mer - cy, O Je - sus.  
3 Your peace be with us, O Je - sus. A - men.

Text: Nikolaus Decius, 1485–1550; tr. composite

Music: O LAMM GOTTES, UNSCHULDIG, Nikolaus Decius

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### • **Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial**

On the way to the Mount of Olives, after they had finished the meal, Jesus told them, “Tonight all of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say,

‘God will strike the Shepherd,  
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’

But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there.”

Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you.”

Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.”

“No!” Peter insisted. “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!” And all the other disciples vowed the same.

### **Apostles’ Creed**

**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.**

• **Jesus Prays in the Garden**

Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, “Sit here while I go over there to pray.” He took Peter and Zebedee’s two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, “My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”

Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? <sup>41</sup> Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, “My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done.” When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn’t keep their eyes open.

So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

**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.**

• **The Arrest**

Then he came to the disciples and said, “Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let’s be going. Look, my betrayer is here!” And even as Jesus said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the leading priests and elders of the people. The traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal: “You will know which one to arrest when I greet him with a kiss.” So Judas came straight to Jesus. “Greetings, Rabbi!” he exclaimed and gave him the kiss.

Jesus said, “My friend, go ahead and do what you have come for.”

Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him. But one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s slave, slashing off his ear.

“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword. Don’t you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly? But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?”

Then Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I some dangerous revolutionary, that you come with swords and clubs to arrest me? Why didn’t you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day. But this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.” At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.

### • **The Rooster Crows**

Then the people who had arrested Jesus led him to the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of religious law and the elders had gathered. Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and came to the high priest’s courtyard. He went in and sat with the guards and waited to see how it would all end.

...A servant girl came over and said to him, “You were one of those with Jesus the Galilean.”

But Peter denied it in front of everyone. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. “I don’t even know the man,” he said.

A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.”

Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying—I don’t know the man!” And immediately the rooster crowed.

Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he went away, weeping bitterly.

### **Prayers of the People**

God, our maker, healer, and friend, You are all in for us and all creation. You have given us a beautiful universe to explore. You have called each one of us by name. You never cease to offer life and forgiveness. There is no detail of life in this world that has escaped you. We pray now, trusting in your goodness and mercy.

*A brief silence.*

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally (*here local bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay preachers may be named*).

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. We pray for those on our prayer list and those whose names and needs we lift before you now, either silently or aloud (*a brief pause*). 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 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.**

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

**Offering is collected during the hymn of the day**

**Hymn Of The Day: ELW 353**

- 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?**  
*Text: African American spiritual*

## **The Passion Story Continues**

- **Jesus Taken to Pilate (Matthew 27:1-2)**

**V1:** When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

### •The Suicide of Judas

**V2:** When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.” After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.

### •Pilate Questions Jesus

**V3:** Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

Jesus replied: “You say so.”

But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how

many accusations they make against you?”<sup>14</sup> But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

•**Barabbas or Jesus (Son of a father or Son of God)?**

**V4:** Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to releasing a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted.<sup>16</sup> At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas.<sup>17</sup> So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?”<sup>18</sup> For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.<sup>19</sup> While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.”<sup>20</sup> Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed.<sup>21</sup> The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.”<sup>22</sup> Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?”

**Congregation: Crucify him! Crucify him!**

Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?”

**Congregation: Crucify him! Crucify him!**

•**Pilate Hands Jesus Over to be Crucified**

**V3:** So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands

before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood;<sup>[k]</sup> see to it yourselves.”<sup>25</sup> Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!”<sup>26</sup> So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

### •The Soldiers Mock Jesus

**V2:** Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters,<sup>[l]</sup> and they gathered the whole cohort around him.<sup>28</sup> They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,<sup>29</sup> and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”<sup>30</sup> They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head.<sup>31</sup> After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

### •The Crucifixion of Jesus

**V1:**<sup>32</sup> As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.<sup>33</sup> And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),<sup>34</sup> they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.<sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;<sup>[m]</sup><sup>36</sup> then they sat down there and kept watch over him.<sup>37</sup> Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

<sup>38</sup>Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup>Those who passed by derided<sup>[n]</sup> him, shaking their heads <sup>40</sup>and saying,

“You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,

“He saved others; he cannot save himself.<sup>[o]</sup> He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup>He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, ‘I am God’s Son.’”

<sup>44</sup>The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

### ●The Death of Jesus

**V2:** From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>46</sup>And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice,

“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

<sup>47</sup>When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “This man is calling for Elijah.” <sup>48</sup>At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup>But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” <sup>50</sup>Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice.

**V3:** He breathed his last. <sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup>The tombs also were opened, and many

bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. <sup>53</sup> After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup> Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”<sup>[s]</sup>

*Brief silence*

**V4:** Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. <sup>56</sup> Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

• **The Burial of Jesus**

**V1:** Please stand for the conclusion of the reading:

<sup>57</sup> When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup> So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth <sup>60</sup> and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away.

*Brief silence*

***The Story is Not Over...***

• **Philippians 2: 5-11**

*Have the Attitude of Christ*

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Though he was God,  
he did not think of equality with God  
as something to cling to.  
Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;  
he took the humble position of a slave  
and was born as a human being.  
When he appeared in human form,  
he humbled himself in obedience to God  
and died a criminal's death on a cross.

**“Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor  
and gave him the name above all other names,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.”**

### **Blessing**

As you have met God in this place, go now to meet God beyond this place. As you have received the love of Jesus, go now to give the love of Jesus. As the Creator has been all in for you, go now and be all in for the sake of the world.

Gracious God, Father, Son, and ✠ Spirit,  
bless you as you go. **Amen.**

### **Sending Hymn: O Sacred Head Now Wounded ELW 351**

1 O sacred head, now wounded,  
with grief and shame weighed down,  
now scornfully surrounded

with thorns, thine only crown;  
O sacred head, what glory,  
what bliss till now was thine!  
Yet, though despised and gory,  
I joy to call thee mine.

2 How pale thou art with anguish,  
with sore abuse and scorn;  
how does thy face now languish,  
which once was bright as morn!  
Thy grief and bitter passion  
were all for sinners' gain;  
mine, mine was the transgression,  
but thine the deadly pain.

3 What language shall I borrow  
to thank thee, dearest friend,  
for this thy dying sorrow,  
thy pity without end?  
Oh, make me thine forever,  
and should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never  
outlive my love to thee.

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Announcements:**

- **Bible Study:** Signs of the Kingdom: Studies in Matthew, March 29, April 12, at 9 a.m.
- **Community Easter Egg Hunt:** Today! March 29<sup>th</sup>, noon.
- **Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services:** April 2 and April 3, at 7 p.m.
- **Easter Sunrise Service:** April 5<sup>th</sup>, 7 a.m.
- **Easter Festival Service:** April 5<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m.
- **FeedtheNeedStl service project:** April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1 to 3 p.m. at Queeny Recreation Center.
- **Rummage and Bake Sale:** April 18<sup>th</sup>. Bring donations in on Sundays or on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to noon.
- **Getting Crafty Group:** April 15<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.
- **Book Club:** April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7 p.m.

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Pastor Jane Brda, SAM

Ellen Mueller — Music

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