

WORSHIP NOTES

Sunday March 25, 2018 9:30am

MORNING WORSHIP

PALM SUNDAY

PREPARATION MUSIC It's Palm Sunday. We remember on their way from Jericho, Jesus and the disciples neared the village of Bethphage on the slope of the Mount of Olives just outside Jerusalem. Two disciples went into the village, as Jesus told them to bring back a donkey and its colt. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, an unmistakable sign of his kingship. Matthew focuses on the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9 where a donkey and a colt are mentioned. He shows how Jesus' actions fulfilled the words of the prophet, thus proving that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Jesus' entering Jerusalem on a donkey's colt affirmed his messianic royalty as well as his humility. This is also one of the few places in the Gospels where Jesus' glory is recognized on earth. Jesus boldly declared himself King, and the crowd gladly joined him. But these same people would bow to political pressure and desert him in just a few days. We remember these events as we have our processional today. The choir will sing this song:

Sing and shout to the Son of David, bring unto the King a jubilant song. Raise your voices, sing hosanna, Sing unto the King a jubilant song. (repeat). Sing hosanna, blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Sing hosanna, blessed is the One who comes.

CALL TO WORSHIP These words are from Psalm 24. This psalm was probably used in corporate worship. It may have been re-enacted many times at the Temple. The people outside would call out to the Temple gates to open up and let the King of Glory in. From inside, the priests or another group would ask, "Who is this King of Glory?" Outside, the people responded in unison, "The Lord, invincible in battle," proclaiming his great power and might. This would have been an important lesson for children who may have been participating. The exchange was then repeated and the Temple gates swung open, symbolizing the people's desire to have God's presence among them. Who is the King of Glory? The King of glory, identified also as the Commander of heaven's armies, is the Messiah himself, eternal, holy, and mighty. This psalm is not only a battle cry for the church, it also looks forward to Christ's future entry into the new Jerusalem to reign forever.

Leader: Lift up your heads, O you Gates:

People: Be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Leader: Who is this King of glory?

People: The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Leader: Lift up your heads, O you Gates:

People: Lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Leader: Who is this King of glory?

People: The Lord Almighty, he is the King of glory!

HYMN As the call to worship, today's opening hymn is based on Psalm 24. Jesus not only enters the gates of the temple, but personally enters the gates of our hearts. With this psalm used in worship, we see the pageantry and excitement they had in their worship! Not lifeless, boring, predictable rituals. They exulted in praise to the King of glory. They celebrated his creativity, his holiness, and his might!

1

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!**

2

**Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

3

**Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;
let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.**

4

**Thy Holy Spirit lead us on until our glorious goal is won;
eternal praise, eternal fame be offered, Savior, to thy name!**

CONFESSION: The people who were praising God for giving them a king had the wrong idea about Jesus. They were sure he would be a national leader who would restore their nation to its former glory and thus they were deaf to the words of their prophets and blind to Jesus' real mission. When it became apparent that Jesus was not going to fulfill their hopes, many people turned against him. As this prayer of confession suggests, we too praise Jesus, yet easily turn away from him. We are grateful he offers us this time to confess our sin.

Leader: Jesus, we shout hosannas to praise you. With eager hands, we place our cloaks and palms on the path before you.

People: Yet, Lord, we confess that the mouths that seek to praise you often deny or defy you. And we confess that the hands that seek to serve you often become fists. Lord, hear us as we confess our sins.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON Starting with the Palm Sunday story in Luke 19, these words of Assurance echo thoughts from John 3:16 as well. The entire gospel comes to focus in this verse. True love is not static or self-centered. It reaches out and draws others in. God sets the pattern of true love here, the basis for all love relationships---if you love someone dearly, you are willing to give freely to the point of self-sacrifice. God paid dearly with the life of his Son, the highest price he could pay. Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and then offered us the new life he bought for us.

Leader: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

People: For Christ came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him should be saved.

Leader: Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children.

People: And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Hosanna! Amen!

SCRIPTURE/SERMON Read Luke 19:28-40 This is the event Christians celebrate on Palm Sunday. The people lined the highway, praising God, waving palm branches, and throwing their cloaks in front of the colt as it passed before them. "Long live the King" was the meaning of their joyful shouts, because they knew Jesus was intentionally fulfilling the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9 "Our King is coming! He is the Righteous One, the Victor! Yet he is lowly, riding on a donkey's colt!" To announce that he was indeed the Messiah, Jesus chose a time when all Israel would be gathered at Jerusalem, a place where huge crowds could see him, and a way of proclaiming his mission that was unmistakable. The people went wild. Now they were sure their liberation was at hand. The Pharisees thought the crowd's words were sacrilegious and blasphemous. They didn't want someone upsetting their power and authority, and they didn't want a revolt that would bring the Roman army down on them. So they asked Jesus to keep his people quiet. But Jesus said that if the people were quiet, even the stones would shout with joy. Why? Not because Jesus was setting up a powerful political kingdom, but because he was establishing God's eternal Kingdom, a cause for the greatest celebration of all.

Offertory Anthem With the people praising God for King Jesus, they were offering their praises, their thanks and their adoration. During today's offering, the choir sings one of the most familiar hymns of adoration---Beautiful Savior.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer; He makes our sorrowing spirit sing. Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor, Praise, adoration, Now and forevermore be Thine!

CLOSING HYMN We close today's worship with familiar words from Philippians 2 acknowledging who Jesus is, and offering him our praise. What made Jesus' humanity unique was his freedom from sin. In his full humanity, Jesus showed us everything about God's character that can be conveyed in human terms. God has not left us alone in our struggles to do his will. He wants to come alongside us and within us to help. He helps us want to obey him and then gives us the power to do it. God wants us to obey him and gives us the power to do it. The secret to changing our lives is to submit to his control and let him work in us.

1

**At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
Every tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,**

Who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

2

**Humbled for a season, to receive a name
From the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
Faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last,
Brought it back victorious when from death he passed.**

4

**In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
All that is not holy, all that is not true.
Crown him as your captain in temptation's hour;
Let his will enfold you in its light and power.**

SEE YOU SUNDAY IN WORSHIP