

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP April 5, 2020 PALM SUNDAY

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness (*stand*)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

O, God, I know the wrong I have done, and my sin is always before me. I have broken your laws and done what is evil in your sight. Have mercy on me, according to your unfailing love. Wash away all my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a pure heart and renew a faithful spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us and has sent His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.

Grant this, Lord, unto us all. Amen.

Hymn LW 102 All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain

**All glory, laud, and honor
To you, Redeemer, King
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.**

**You are the king of Israel
And David's royal Son,
Now in the Lord's name coming,
Our King and Blessed One.
Refrain**

**The company of angels
Are praising you on high;
Creation and all mortals
In chorus make reply.
Refrain**

The multitude of pilgrims
With palms before you went,
Our praise and prayer and anthems
Before you we present.

Refrain

*All glory, laud, and honor
To you, Redeemer, King
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.*

To you, before your Passion,
They sang their hymns of praise.
To you, now high exalted,
Our melody we raise.

Refrain

*All glory, laud, and honor
To you, Redeemer, King
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.*

Their praises you accepted;
Accept the prayers we bring,
Great author of all goodness,
O good and gracious King.

Refrain

KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort and defend us gracious Lord.

Amen.

THE HYMN OF PRAISE

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly king,
almighty God and Father: We worship you; we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:

You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1 Samuel 17:1-11: 26

Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah. Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified... David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Psalm 16

Keep me safe, my God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing." I say of the holy people who are in the land, "They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight." Those who run after other gods will suffer more and more. I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods or take up their names on my lips. LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay. You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

2 Corinthians 4:1-12

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

GOSPEL (stand)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 19th chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

Luke 19:28-40

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and 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 untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They replied, "The Lord needs it." They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

HYMN LW 270 Jesus, Priceless Treasure

**Jesus, priceless treasure,
Source of purest pleasure,
Truest friend to me,
Long my heart was burning,
And my soul was yearning,
Lord, with you to be!
Yours I am, O spotless Lamb;
Nothing I'll allow to hide you,
Nothing ask beside you.**

In your arms I rest me;
Foes who would molest me
Cannot reach me here.
Though the earth be shaking,
Ev'ry heart be quaking,
Jesus calms my fear.
Sin and hell in conflict fell
With their bitter storms assail me;
Jesus will not fail me.

Satan, I defy you;
Death, I now decry you;
Fear, I bid you cease.
World, you cannot harm me
Nor your threats alarm me
While I sing of peace.
God's great pow'r guards ev'ry hour;
Earth and all its depths adore him,
Silent bow before him.

Hence, all earthly treasure!
Jesus is my pleasure,
Jesus is my choice.
Hence, all empty glory!
What to me your story
Told with tempting voice?
Pain or loss or shame or cross
Shall not from my Savior move me
Since he deigns to love me.

Hence, all fears and sadness,
For the Lord of gladness,
Jesus, enters in.
Those who love the Father,
Though the storms may gather,
Still have peace within.
For, whate'er I must bear,
Still in you lies purest pleasure,
Jesus, priceless treasure!

SERMON

David and Jesus

On Palm Sunday we celebrate the day our Lord arrived at Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by the people as a king. It was traditional for people to welcome a conquering king by strewing palm branches and garments in his path and singing praises to him as he rode by. This was their way of pledging their loyalty and their service.

Now kings earned the right to be welcomed this way by winning wars. What was different about king Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is that the final battle of the war he was waging had not yet been fought. In fact, the armies were just beginning to take their positions on the battlefield as he entered the city. This would be a battle of cosmic proportions. It would decide the victory in a war between the armies of God and the legions of Satan.

And as Jesus rode into the city over the palm branches and strewn garments amidst the songs and praises of the adoring crowd, he alone could see the battle lines being drawn. He alone could discern the face of the enemy and feel the awesome power of evil. And he alone knew the terrible price he would have to pay to win the war.

There had been another battle which had been fought about a thousand years before Palm Sunday—a battle which bore a strong resemblance to the one about to be fought in Jerusalem. It was a battle that determined the outcome of a war between the children of Israel and the Philistines that was taking place in the valley of Elah.

The outcome of that battle was determined in the same way the battle between Jesus and Satan would be determined; in a contest between two champions.

The first champion we meet is Goliath. He was huge—almost nine feet tall and heavily armed with a helmet, body armor, an immense spear and a shield. For forty days he had appeared on the battlefield every morning and challenged the Israelites to send out a champion of their own to fight him—with the outcome of the battle to be determined by which one prevailed.

Not surprisingly, the Israelites were terrified of Goliath right down to the last man—including Saul, their king. No one was willing to go *mano-y-mano* against Goliath.

And so, Goliath did it by dividing and conquering. By enticing each Israelite soldier to despair of winning a hand-to-hand fight with a giant—he sapped the strength of the entire army. He divided the army of Israel into individual soldiers who no longer drew strength from the bond they had with each other and with God. Physical fear rent apart the band of brothers and personal shame undermined resolve.

No single soldier—including Saul—could imagine themselves pitted against this dreadful giant and so Goliath was making them an offer which they could neither refuse nor accept. A single pagan was able to paralyze an entire army.

Enter champion number two: David of Bethlehem: a man after the Lord's own heart.

Actually, a boy after the Lord's own heart because David was not yet fully grown—probably a mid-to-late teenager. He was the youngest of eight sons but he had received the spirit of God when the prophet Samuel anointed him the future king of Israel. David had been sent by his father to bring some food and supplies to his older brothers at the battlefield.

As he arrived, he heard the taunts of Goliath. And he alone was able to discern what was really going on there because he alone saw the scene through eyes of faith. He could see the giant and hear his boasts, but he knew and trusted the far greater power of God.

And the sheer simplicity and clarity of his question is stunning: "*who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?*" Everyone else is quaking in their boots and David says: "what's the big deal?" Not surprisingly, his question was relayed to Saul.

Now Saul was in sorry shape. He had been anointed the first king of Israel. As long as Saul had trusted God by following the instructions given him by the prophet Samuel, he did well. But at some point, Saul began to trust his own judgment rather than God and so God had withdrawn his spirit—the same spirit that now animated David. God had turned Saul over to a demon which was driving him insane. Saul could no longer see things through God's eyes and so what he did see terrified him.

Saul was immediately interested in whatever David might be able to do for him. He probably sensed God's strength and spirit at work in David because at one time he had had the same spirit and strength.

So, when David offered to fight Goliath Saul offered him his own armor to wear because the only way, he could imagine fighting Goliath was on Goliath's terms. But David rejected the armor and went out against Goliath armed with five stones, a slingshot and his faith.

Goliath, using his familiar tactic of intimidation, cursed David by his pagan gods and swore that he would destroy him. But David was not intimidated and replied: "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel."

Advancing in the strength of the Lord, David ran quickly to the battle line, for faith never hesitates but acts with daring certainty—even in the face of overwhelming odds.

And the rest is history. David killed the giant from Gath with a single stone, causing the Philistine army to lose heart and flee. And the armies of Israel, emboldened by the courage and faith of their champion, surged forward with a great shout and routed their enemies. All it had taken to cow them was a large warrior with fearsome boasts. All it took to save them was a small boy with great faith.

So, what does this all have to do with Palm Sunday? Well, I think it teaches us two things. First of all, spiritual battles are won by champions, not by soldiers. When we picture Goliath strutting back and forth, blaspheming the God of Israel and cursing his people, can we not see in him the face of our ancient foe satan? Satan, who blasphemes and mocks God and his people, the church? Satan, who invites us to forget about our faith in God and do battle with him one on one—trusting in our own strength? And when we do rely on our own strength to do battle with Satan, do we ever win?

Jesus tells a parable about a sinful man who was afflicted by a demon. He decides to cast the demon out so he puts his house in order and vows to keep demon far from his door. But the demon goes out and collects seven more demons and they all move back in. And, Jesus says, the final condition of that man was worse than it was at the first.

When we try to take on satan by our own strength—our self-discipline or self-reliance—we fail at every turn because we are no match for him. As we sing in *A MIGHTY FORTRESS*, "and still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate: no one on earth his equal." "no one on earth his equal."

If David had relied on armor, spear and javelin, he would have been easy prey for Goliath. But armed with faith he was invincible.

Does this not bring to mind the "Son of David," who forsook all physical armaments when he went out to meet his enemy satan?

Satan had mobilized the combined power of king Herod, the entire Jewish ruling council and imperial Rome against one lowly shepherd. The battlefield was a place called calvary and all that the shepherd brought to the battle was his life. But with the weapon of his life he crushed the head of the enemy.

Alone we are no match for the power of our enemy, the prince of this world, whose boastful lies sow seeds of doubt and fear in us. Whose temptations convince us to hide our sins and fight him on our own. And when we succumb to his forked-tongue arguments, we end up paralyzed and in despair just like the armies of Israel did in the valley of Elah.

But when we cast our lot with the son of David, who took away all the power of the enemy on the cross, then with a mighty shout we too can rush forward and claim the victory.

The second thing it teaches us is that the covenant community of God—the church—derives its strength from its unity, and its unity from its champion, Jesus Christ.

When individual Christians allow themselves to be separated from one another, they are easy prey for the enemy. When they try to “go it alone” they can become overwhelmed by the doubts and fears the world hurls at them. They get suckered in by the devil’s wiles and forget about their faith. They become frightened and paralyzed—like the Israelite soldiers were when they were faced with Goliath.

But when they band together to draw spiritual strength from one another and place their collective trust in their champion, Jesus Christ, they can mount up as on wings of eagles, and the gates of hell itself will not stand before them.

So, during this time when we are physically separated from each other let us unite in worship and prayer to draw spiritual strength from one another and from God—each one drawing strength from all the rest.

As Jesus arrived at the scene of the battle on Palm Sunday, he alone could see the Goliath of the cross waiting for him with its promise of unspeakable suffering and death. But he never hesitated: like his human ancestor David, he moved quickly and with certainty toward the battle line. And there he defeated Satan once and for all.

So as the crowds welcomed Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem almost two thousand years ago, let us—the hosts of the new Israel, the church of Jesus Christ—welcome him in our hearts today.

The peace of God that passes all understanding keep your hearts in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

APOSTLE’S CREED (*stand*)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

We pray all these things in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Father in heaven, As we labor under fear of this virus, please give us confident hearts, knowing that you are in control of all things and that you will rein in this disease and deliver our country from economic chaos.

We especially pray for the following people:

- For the Lord to draw near to Donna Mattmuller whose grandson is in hospice care. Bless the Mattmuller family and give them peace.
- For Milt Colburn who is receiving physical therapy at Anna Maria. Lift his spirits and strengthen his body so that he can return home soon.
- For Glenda Colburn during this time of separation from her husband Milt.
- For Wyatt Mullins, that he will receive an accurate and favorable diagnosis of his liver problems and be enabled to live a normal and healthy life.
- For all healthcare workers who are exposed to the Covid-19 virus every day, that you would keep them safe and healthy and bless the important work that they do. Father in heaven, strengthen our hearts and clear our minds as we suffer through this trial. Bless us with courage and strength of heart. Amen.

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 and ever. Amen.

Hymn LW 105 Ride On, Ride On in Majesty

**Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hear all the tribes hosanna cry;
O Savior meek, pursue your road
With palms and scattered garments strowed.**

**Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.
O Christ, your triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquered sin.**

**Ride on, ride on in majesty!
The winged squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.**

**Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Your last and fiercest strife is nigh.
The Father on His sapphire throne
Awaits his own anointed Son.**

**Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.
Bow your meek head to mortal pain,
Then take, O Christ, your pow'r and reign!**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.