

PLACES *of the* PASSION

A Series of Services for Holy Week



Bethphage



The Upper Room



Golgotha



The Empty Tomb

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PLACES *of the* PASSION

A Series of Services for Holy Week

ABOUT “PLACES OF THE PASSION”

In this worship series, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, contemplating what happened at each place our Savior stood along the path of his Passion for our sake. Written by theology professor Reed Lessing, each service explores the meaning, history and spiritual inspiration associated with the location highlighted. Parishioners will learn things they may not have known before as they grow to understand more deeply the hard road our Lord took that the way to heaven might be open to us.

For each service, the kit contains: sample bulletins with complete orders of service • sermon • children’s message • prayers • music for the accompanist

ORDERING INFORMATION

Additional resources are available from Creative Communications for the Parish. Contact us for current pricing and availability. Call us at 1-800-325-9414. Or visit our website:
www.creativecommunications.com.

Bulletins for the Holy Week Services Are Available:

Palm Sunday

Code **PLPT** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • printed

Code **PLPW** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • blank

Code **PLPX** 8.5" x 14" bulletins • blank

Maundy Thursday

Code **PLPC** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • printed

Code **PLPG** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • blank

Code **PLPL** 8.5" x 14" bulletins • blank

Good Friday

Code **PLPD** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • printed

Code **PLPH** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • blank

Code **PLPM** 8.5" x 14" bulletins • blank

Easter Sunday

Code **PLPE** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • printed

Code **PLPJ** 8.5" x 11" bulletins • blank

Code **PLPN** 8.5" x 14" bulletins • blank

A Complete Series for the Weeks of Lent Is Available:

Those who desire may supplement this service with other services for all of Lent. They are available as a kit and include all the Leader's Guide features described above. The kit also includes a CD-ROM (Mac/PC) in RTF format with text of services and of bulletins, plus PDF files of the kit, and PowerPoint documents for use on screens. Kit Code **PLPU**

Ash Wednesday

The City of Jerusalem • Matthew 26:1-5

Jerusalem is the place of the Passover, where Jesus gathers with the crowds.

Week 1

Bethany • Matthew 26:6-13

Jesus is anointed for burial by his friend Mary, at her home in this small town.

Week 2

The Mount of Olives • Matthew 26:30-35

The disciples sing a hymn with Jesus before they head out to this place of prayer.

Week 3

Gethsemane • Matthew 26:47-56

Jesus is betrayed and arrested in this garden under cover of darkness.

Week 4

The Courtyard • Matthew 26:57-69

While Jesus is put on trial before the high priest, Peter denies Jesus in this place.

Week 5

Pilate's Judgment Hall • Matthew 27:11-23

Pilate is positioned here to set Jesus free, but turns him over to be crucified instead.

Bulletins for the Six-Week Kit:

Code **PLPP** • Pre-printed bulletins • 8.5" x 11"

Code **PLPS** • Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 11"

Code **PLPR** • Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 14"

You can also order the Ash Wednesday service alone:

Ash Wednesday

Code **PLP3 • Kit**

Code **PLPB** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **PLPF** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **PLPK** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

Other Resources:

Code **PLP1 • Bookmark • 7" x 2 1/2"**

Code **PLP7 • Promotional Bulletin Insert**

Code **PLP8 • Display Posters • 11" x 17"**

Bible Study Resources:

Code **PLPSG • Places of the Passion Student Guide**

Code **PLPLG • Places of the Passion Leader's Guide**

PLACES *of the* PASSION

**A Series of Services
for Holy Week**

**PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE**

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for the Places of the Passion special service for Palm Sunday. In this service we go to Bethphage, the place where the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey begins for Jesus. It is here where we discover that Jesus is a humble King who serves as he heads toward the cross.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this Places of the Passion service for Palm Sunday, we go to Bethphage, the place where the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey begins for Jesus. It is here where we discover that Jesus is a humble King who serves as he heads toward the cross.

PLACES *of the* PASSION

A Series of Services for Holy Week

MAUNDY THURSDAY: THE UPPER ROOM

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for the Places of the Passion special service for Maundy Thursday. In this service we climb the stairs to the Upper Room to join the disciples in receiving the body and blood of Christ in bread and wine. We are reminded here that Jesus sets a place at the table for each of us, even though he knows all that we have done. Amazingly, we find that he is willing to give completely of himself to forgive us.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this Places of the Passion service for Maundy Thursday, we climb the stairs to the Upper Room to join the disciples in receiving the body and blood of Christ in bread and wine. We are reminded here that Jesus sets a place at the table for each of us, even though he knows all that we have done. Amazingly, we find that he is willing to give completely of himself to forgive us.

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GOOD FRIDAY:
GOLGOTHA

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for the Places of the Passion special service for Good Friday. We stand at the foot of the cross on Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, where the crucified Christ breathes his last for our sake. His suffering is in plain view, as well as his great love. His death redeems us all.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this service for Good Friday, stand at the foot of the cross on Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, where the crucified Christ breathes his last for our sake. His suffering is in plain view, as well as his great love. His death redeems us all.

PLACES *of the* PASSION

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EASTER SUNDAY:
THE GARDEN TOMB

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for the Places of the Passion special service for Easter Sunday. In this service we marvel with the women at the garden tomb—now empty—and hear the good news from the angel: “He has risen, just as he said.” All fear is gone because Jesus is alive and all faith is found in his words of comfort and peace.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this Places of the Passion service for Easter Sunday, we marvel with the women at the garden tomb—now empty—and hear the good news from the angel: “He has risen, just as he said.” All fear is gone because Jesus is alive and all faith is found in his words of comfort and peace.

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

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PLACES *of the* PASSION

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

ORDER OF SERVICE

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me." Matthew 21:1-2

Invocation and Call to Worship

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Let us ever walk with Jesus.

C To see the depths of his love.

P To behold the gift of his forgiveness!

C To gaze upon the heights of his grace.

P To marvel at the magnitude of his mercy.

C We walk with Jesus as he rides a donkey.

P He begins in Bethphage and makes his way to Jerusalem.

C He does it for us and for our salvation!

P Faithful Lord, with me abide.

C I shall follow where you guide!

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;
Through pillared court and temple the joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed amid an exultant crowd,
The victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud;
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,
Nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

“Hosanna in the highest!” that ancient song we sing;
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav’n our King.
Oh, may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
And in God’s joyful presence eternally rejoice!

Confession and Forgiveness

P Merciful and mighty Father, you know us well. We are quick to speak of faith, but slow to live it out. We shout “hosanna” as Jesus approaches, as did the people of Jerusalem, but we do not want him coming too close to us, not close enough to really see—

C Our greed and our grasping.

P Our pride and our pretense.

C Our envy and our strife.

P Our hard hearts and lackluster prayers.

C Our willful disobedience and ongoing sin.

P Our harsh words and condemning judgments.

C Our backbiting and badmouthing.

P Our lame excuses.

C Our fickle faith. Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ's love is greater.)

P Hear the good news! Jesus walked to places of rejection, suffering, torment and death—for you. Jesus was determined to go to Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha—for you. That's why Jesus forgives you completely and loves you eternally. Faithful Lord, with me abide!

C I shall follow where you guide!

Prayer of the Day

Children's Sermon

Old Testament Reading Zechariah 9:9-10

Epistle ReadingPhilippians 2:5-11

Gospel Reading..... Matthew 21:1-11

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry!
O Savior meek, pursue thy road, with palms and scattered garments strowed.

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

Ride on, ride on in majesty! The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see the approaching sacrifice!

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Thy 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 thy meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, thy pow'r and reign.

Sermon

Offering

Prayers

P Onward in Christ's footsteps treading, pilgrims here, our home above. Full of faith and hope and love, let us do the Father's bidding. And so we pray: Lord Jesus, you are the King of Zechariah's vision, and on this Palm Sunday, we worship, honor, and bless you, saying—

C Hosanna in the highest!

P Lord Jesus, no other king would show up to conquer his enemies, humbly riding on the foal of a donkey. No other king would break the power of death and rob the grave by the brokenness of the cross. No other king could defeat evil and tyranny by shedding his blood. That's why we say—

C Hosanna in the highest!

P Lord Jesus, no other king would come not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many—a group of rebels and sinners like us. No other king would come so humbly, so lovingly, so kindly. That's why we shout it out—

C Hosanna in the highest!

P Lord Jesus, you are our King, the King of glory, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. You are our Monarch of mercy, our Governor of grace and our the Prince of Peace. Great is our rejoicing, for you have come to us, righteous and victorious, loving and sovereign. That's why we celebrate—

C Hosanna in the highest!

P Lord Jesus, by the riches of your grace, continue to free us from sin, selfishness and worthless idols. By the power of the Gospel, enable us to live with hope and as agents of redemption until the Day you return to finish making all things new.

C Jesus, let me faithful be, life eternal grant to me. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

P Jesus invites us to walk with him to Bethphage and then into Jerusalem, places of great suffering and places of great love! We will walk with Jesus all the way to the empty tomb—and resurrection victory!

C Let us ever walk with Jesus.

Let us suffer here with Jesus and with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness; where he is, there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter, we shall reap celestial joy;
All discomforts that annoy shall give way to mirth hereafter.
Jesus, here I share your woe; help me there your joy to know.

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP
LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/palm-branches-leaves-sunset-vintage-retro-611990342

- This **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me." Matthew 21:1-2

- The **Invocation and Call to Worship** are spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Ⓟ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy

Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Let us ever walk with Jesus.

C To see the depths of his love.

P To behold the gift of his forgiveness!

C To gaze upon the heights of his grace.

P To marvel at the magnitude of his mercy.

C We walk with Jesus as he rides a donkey.

P He begins in Bethphage and makes his way to Jerusalem.

C He does it for us and for our salvation!

P Faithful Lord, with me abide.

C I shall follow where you guide!

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation while waving palm branches, with children and/or worship leaders processing in waving palm branches, if desired, according to local custom, to the tune Ellacombe 76 76 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;
Through pillared court and temple the joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed amid an exultant crowd,
The victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud;
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,
Nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

“Hosanna in the highest!” that ancient song we sing;
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav’n our King.
Oh, may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
And in God’s joyful presence eternally rejoice!

- The **Confession and Forgiveness** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P Merciful and mighty Father, you know us well. We are quick to speak of faith, but slow to live it out. We shout “hosanna” as Jesus approaches, as did the people of Jerusalem, but we do not want him coming too close to us, not close enough to really see—

C **Our greed and our grasping.**

P Our pride and our pretense.

C **Our envy and our strife.**

P Our hard hearts and lackluster prayers.

C **Our willful disobedience and ongoing sin.**

P Our harsh words and condemning judgments.

C **Our backbiting and badmouthing.**

P Our lame excuses.

C **Our fickle faith. Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ’s love is greater.)

P Hear the good news! Jesus walked to places of rejection, suffering, torment and death—for you. Jesus was determined to go to Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha—for you. That’s why Jesus forgives you completely and loves you eternally. Faithful Lord, with me abide!

C **I shall follow where you guide!**

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in hand, gathered to greet your Son when he came into the City of David, grant that we may hail him as our King and walk with him in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- The **Children’s Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

“The crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:9)

- Ⓟ Do you have a favorite sports team? What do you say when your team wins? How about, “We’re number one!” “We’re the best!” “Our team is in first place!”

Do you know what the people said to Jesus on Palm Sunday? It was kind-of-like, “You’re number one!” “You’re the best!” “You’re in first place!” Instead, though, they said, “Hosanna.” The Bible says the crowds that went before Jesus and that followed Jesus shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’”

“Hosanna” was the way to say to Jesus, “Jesus, you’re number one!” The people waved palm branches, too. Palm branches, back in Jesus’ day, symbolized victory. “Jesus is in first place!”

Who was Jesus about to defeat? That’s right. There were three big, mean enemies on the other side—sin, Satan and death. How was Jesus going to defeat that team? How was Jesus going to be number one?

Just a few days after Palm Sunday, Jesus was arrested, tried, and led to a hill called Calvary to be crucified. Everyone thought that Jesus had lost. His friends buried him and everyone went home saying, “We’re not number one!” “We’re not the best!” “We’re in last place because Jesus lost!”

Then, get this. Three days later Jesus came back to life and gained the victory over those big, mean enemies—sin, Satan and death. What shall we say? How shall we respond? How about this? “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” Which is to say, “Jesus is number one, forever and ever and ever!”

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Zechariah 9:9-10, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

- Ⓟ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Philippians 2:5-11, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so 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.

- The **Gospel Reading**, Matthew 21:1-11, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’” The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Winchester New LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry!
O Savior meek, pursue thy road, with palms and scattered garments strowed.

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

Ride on, ride on in majesty! The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see the approaching sacrifice!

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Thy 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 thy meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, thy pow'r and reign.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

☐ Please repeat after me. Jesus Christ. (Jesus Christ). Is the best thing. (Is the best thing). That ever happened. (That every happened). To me. (To me).

James Bonham was a young lawyer from South Carolina. He had only been in Texas for three months when he volunteered to fight at the Alamo—a small fort near the Guadalupe River in San Antonio. On February 23, 1836, as General Santa Anna and his 2,000 Mexican troops gathered, the 182 men at the Alamo prepared for battle. Just then, James Bonham broke through enemy lines and rode his horse to find help in Goliad, Texas. No one in Goliad was willing to fight. Next, Bonham rode to Victoria, Texas. No one in Victoria was willing to fight. What did James Bonham do? He rode back to the Alamo—back to the fight, back to the battle, certain he would die.

We're in a series of sermons from Matthew's gospel called Places of the Passion. Today we begin our walk in Bethphage—a village on the Mount of Olives. At Bethphage Jesus rides into Jerusalem—back to the fight, back to the battle, most certain he would die.

“When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken up, asking, ‘Who is this?’” (Matthew 21:10) “Who is this?” That's the question for Palm Sunday—that's the question for the ages. Who is Jesus? We get this right; we get everything right. We get this wrong; we get everything else wrong.

Who is Jesus? Some say Jesus is a Therapist—he helps us cope with life's problems, tells us how valuable we are and encourages us not to be so hard on ourselves. Some say Jesus is a coffee lover—he drinks fair trade coffee at Starbucks, loves spiritual conversations and goes to film festivals. Some say Jesus is a Coach—he helps Christian athletes run faster and jump higher than non-Christian athletes. Some say Jesus is a Hippie—he says, “Give peace a chance, imagine a world without religion, and remember all you need is love.” Some say Jesus is a Spiritual Guru who says, “Get out in nature and find the god within you.” Some say Jesus is a Revolutionary—he teaches us to rebel against the status quo, stick it to the man and blame everything on the system. Some say Jesus is a Good Example—he shows us how to change the planet and help little old ladies cross the street.

Then there is the Plastic Jesus. Paul Newman stars in the movie *Cool Hand Luke*. He sings a song in the movie called “Plastic Jesus.” It includes these lyrics, “Well, I don't care if it rains

or freezes. Long as I have my plastic Jesus.” A Plastic Jesus believer sees the Savior as a good-luck charm, a rabbit’s foot, a four-leaf-clover. Someone they turn to when they need a favor.

We all need the real Jesus! Enter Matthew! Who is Jesus? Matthew tells us in spades!

Jesus is our humble King who serves. “Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them.’” (Matthew 21:1–3) Jesus employs the law of royal levy. The law of royal levy gave a king authority to get anything, from anyone at any time. “The Lord needs them!”

Who is Jesus? Jesus is a King—check that. Jesus is the King. But what kind of King? “Behold, your King comes to you, humble and riding on a donkey.” (Matthew 21:5) Compare this with the verse Matthew is quoting. “Behold, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, humble and riding on a donkey.” (Zechariah 9:9)

It is surprising that Matthew omits Zechariah’s phrase, “righteous and having salvation”—both words appear frequently in his gospel, seventeen and fifteen times respectively. By leaving them out, Matthew emphasizes Christ’s attribute of humility. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus makes this clear when he says, “I am humble and lowly in heart.”

The donkey further accents Christ’s humility. By not riding on a horse, Jesus announces that he doesn’t come to bark out orders, but to wash feet. Jesus doesn’t come to dominate and intimidate, but to love, forgive and shed tears. Jesus doesn’t come to marshal an army, but to stretch out his hands upon the cross—for us and for our salvation. Though rich, this King became poor so that through his poverty he might make us rich—beyond our wildest imagination. A King like this is worth shouting about!

Jesus is a King, alright. But Jesus is a humble King. Jesus uses his authority to serve. Who? Us! He says in Matthew 20:28, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey—back to the fight, back to battle, most certain he would die. Why would he do that? To give his life as a ransom for many. A ransom is a sum of money paid to release prisoners. Prisoners to anxiety, emptiness, fear, sin and selfishness—prisoners like us. Martin Luther says Jesus ransomed us, “not with gold or silver, but with his holy precious blood and his innocent suffering and death.” Prisoners to sin, we’ve been ransomed and redeemed—bought back by the blood! Jesus is our humble King who serves.

Jesus is our mighty warrior who fights. “The crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:9) Hosanna means, “Save us now!” Couple that with the palm branches—an ancient sign of victory—and Jesus is what? Jesus is a mighty

Warrior! True, Jesus is a humble King who serves. But Jesus is also a mighty Warrior who fights for our salvation and for our resurrection. Jesus fights sin and Satan, demons and death. He wins on the third day—his resurrection day.

Jesus is our radical prophet who shakes the city. “When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken up.” (Matthew 21:10) Prophets do that. Prophets shake things up! And we need it! Do we ever! We become lackluster, lethargic, listless and lukewarm in our faith. “Come weal, come woe, our status is quo.” Prophets shake things up! Isaiah walked around naked for three years (Isaiah 20:3). Jeremiah buried his underwear. Was it Hanes or Fruit-of-the Loom? (Jeremiah 13:1–11). Hosea married a prostitute named Gomer. Gomer. Not Goober. Gomer. (Hosea 1:2–3).

And Jesus? What did Jesus do to shake things up? Jesus allowed people to spit on him, beat him, impale him and spike him to wood. Describing his death, Matthew 27:51 states, “The earth shook and the rocks split.” But there would be more shaking! Describing Easter, Matthew 28:2 states, “And behold there was a great earthquake.” The crucified one is not dead. He is risen! That shakes up everything! The resurrection means Jesus is who he says he is. Jesus is our radical prophet who shakes the city.

The donkey woke up Monday morning, his mind still savoring the afterglow of the most exciting day of his life. He found some people who had been there and commanded them, “Throw your garments down.” They looked at him in amazement and walked away. “Miserable heathens!” the donkey muttered. “I’ll go to the marketplace.” He asked the people in the marketplace, “Where are the palm branches? Yesterday, you threw palm branches!” Hurt and deeply broken, the donkey went home to his father. “Crazy donkey,” his father said. “Don’t you get it? You’re nothing without Jesus!”

My heavenly Father says to me, “Don’t you get it, crazy donkey? You’re nothing without Jesus!” I’m not talking about Jesus the Therapist or Jesus the Coach. I’m not talking about the Plastic Jesus. I’m talking about the real Jesus; our humble King who serves; our mighty Warrior who fights; and our radical Prophet who shakes the city.

Who is Jesus? Please repeat after me—with a full voice. Jesus Christ. (Jesus Christ). Is the best thing. (Is the best thing). That ever happened. (That every happened). To me. (To me). Amen.

- The **Offering** is collected at this time. If desired, this **Mini Movie** (purchased by you from Worship House Media: worshiphousemedia.com) is presented on a screen at this time for reflection on the theme of the service:

<https://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/30077/palm-sunday>