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*in view of*

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G O D ' S  
M E R C Y

A SERIES OF SERVICES

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*for Holy Week*

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W O R S H I P   K I T

————— *in view of* —————

# G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S E R I E S O F S E R V I C E S

*for Holy Week*

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G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S E R I E S O F S E R V I C E S  
*for Holy Week*

ABOUT “IN VIEW OF GOD’S MERCY”

Holy Week is a time when we take a look at our lives in view of God’s mercy toward us in the sacrifice of his Son for us on the cross. We, in turn, are called by God, especially during these holy days, to be living sacrifices for him, displaying our devotion to him in word and deed. Jesus helps us to see the richness of God’s mercy in his life, death and resurrection. The services in this worship series for Holy Week by theology professor David Peter focus our eyes of faith on the meaning behind God’s mercy made manifest in Christ.

For each service, the kit contains: an order of service • sermon • children’s message • prayers • music for the accompanist • pdfs of the worship bulletins for you to print on your own

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:

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G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S E R I E S O F S E R V I C E S

*for Holy Week*

PALM SUNDAY:  
MERCY IN PALMS

ORDER OF SERVICE

*So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" John 12:13*

Invocation and Call to Worship

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

**C** Amen.

**P** With palm branches in hand, we greet the One who comes to save us from our sin.

**C** Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

**P** With raised voices, we glorify the Messiah who comes humbly riding on a donkey.

**C** Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

**P** With jubilant song, we worship the King who comes to rule in righteousness and peace.

**C** Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

**P** With penitent hearts, we repent before the Lord who is holy and just.

**C Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

**P** With soaring spirits, we rejoice in the God of our salvation.

**C Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

**P** Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king comes to you sitting on a donkey's colt.

**C Amen.**

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.

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

The company of angels is praising you on high,  
And we with all creation in chorus make reply.

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

The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went;  
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present.

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.

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

As you received their praises, accept the prayers we bring,  
O Source of ev'ry blessing, our good and gracious King.

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

Confession and Forgiveness

**P** On Palm Sunday the crowds welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with the cry of “Hosanna!” But on Friday they called out for his execution, shouting “Crucify him!” So also our sin has led to Christ’s crucifixion. We repent of that sin, and we seek God’s mercy to absolve our iniquity.

**C** **Most merciful God, we have sinned much and are in need of your salvation. We cry to you “Hosanna, save us!” We ask you not to remember our evil but instead to forgive our transgression. For the sake of your humble servant, Jesus Christ, pardon us and restore us in righteousness. Renew our spirits so that we walk in obedience to your Word, to the glory of your holy name.**

**P** We cry to you for mercy.

**C** **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

*(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God’s mercy is greater.)*

**P** Hear the good news! God’s Word declares: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Behold, your king comes to you; righteous and having salvation is he” (Zechariah 9:9). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you. For Christ’s sake God forgives you all your sins and gives you his righteousness, making you holy in his sight and giving you salvation. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

**C** **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Children’s Sermon

Old Testament Reading ..... Zechariah 9:9-12

Epistle Reading ..... 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

Gospel Reading ..... John 12:12-19

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;  
Through pillared court and temple the lovely 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 mid 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 his blissful presence eternally rejoice!

Sermon

Offering

Prayers

**P** Almighty and merciful God, we approach your throne of grace today as your loyal subjects.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** You summon us to humility, even as you came humbly riding on a donkey, so guide us to walk humbly before you and one another.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** You summon us to worship, even as the children sang hosannas to you, so fill us with your Spirit to worship you in spirit and in truth.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** You summon us to fidelity. Even as you set your face for Jerusalem and the cross, so give us faith to take up our cross and follow you.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** You summon us to sacrifice. Even as you offered your life as the ultimate sacrifice for sin, so give us courage to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to you.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** In view of your mercy, move us by your Spirit to submit to your rule and live under your reign.

**C** **Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!**

**P** For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

**C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

**P** May the merciful God, who sent his Son to be Savior of the world, direct you to follow him as King in faith and faithfulness, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever.

**C Amen.**

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 triumphs 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!

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G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S E R I E S O F S E R V I C E S  
*for Holy Week*

P A L M S U N D A Y :  
M E R C Y I N P A L M S

S E R M O N

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

Ⓟ Today is Palm Sunday. This is the day in which we commemorate Christ's procession into Jerusalem at the beginning of Holy Week. It is called Palm Sunday because the people used palm branches to welcome and honor Jesus as he entered into the city. Verse 13 of John chapter 12 tells us that many people in Jerusalem "took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!'" Other accounts inform us that they spread these palm branches on the road before Jesus to honor him (Matthew 21:8; Mark 11:8).

What is the significance of palm branches for entering into Jerusalem? Well, almost two centuries before this event, palm branches had become associated with triumphal celebrations. In 164 B.C. palm branches were used to celebrate the rededication of the temple that had been occupied by enemies but now was reclaimed by the Jews. In 141 B.C. the Jews celebrated victory over their enemies by honoring their liberator, Simon the Maccabee, with the waving of palm branches. Indeed, the palm branch became a symbol of Jewish nationalism in the centuries surrounding the ministry of Christ. So at this event, Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, palm branches are used to signal the people's hope that a new liberator had arrived.

## I. The World's Triumphal Processions

Today we might compare the Palm Sunday event to a celebration parade in a big city. It might look like a victory parade following the successful conclusion of a war, with military bands marching while confetti and ticker tape float from the sky. Or it might look like the victory celebration of an athletic team that has just won the national championship, such as a football team that prevailed in the Super Bowl or a baseball team that triumphed in the World Series. Crowds gather to celebrate their heroes and to rejoice in the victory.

In the ancient world such triumphal processions were very impressive. The conquering general would lead the parade in a golden chariot pulled by strong stallions straining at the reins. He would be dressed in a royal robe and would smile with satisfaction over his military forces. This lead warrior would be followed by his officers in polished armor, who in turn would be followed by ranks of soldiers carrying banners and flags. Last of all would come the captives of the conquered land pulling the wagons filled with the spoils of war. All the while the crowds lining the street called out "Hail!" to their heroes. The message of this pomp and ceremony is very clear: the victors deserve glory for their military conquest!

## II. The Lord's Palm Sunday Procession

But the triumphal procession that took place on that Palm Sunday in Jerusalem looked very different. The center of attention was an ordinary-looking man clothed in everyday dress—the dirty ragged clothes of a commoner. Far from riding a chariot or a prancing steed, Jesus sat on a borrowed young donkey with a borrowed coat as a saddle. Luke's gospel tells us that as he approached the city, Jesus began to weep bitterly. Instead of celebrating a national victory, Jesus foretells the future demise of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44). Those who welcomed him into the city were the blind and the lame and little children who chant songs to him. The crowd lining the street don't cry out "Hail to the Chief!" but rather "Hosanna!" which means "save us!"

Picture this parade: a forlorn weeping figure rides on a lowly donkey followed by a disorganized array of lowly folk. Can you have a more dramatic contrast with the grandiose military processions of Rome?

What is the meaning of this unconventional procession? What is the message behind this pathetic parade? It communicates that although Jesus is a king, he is unlike other kings of the world. He comes not in military power and conquest but rather in humility and compassion. His weeping indicates that this is a pathway to sorrow and sacrifice.

Why is Jesus entering the city? Actually it is to accomplish what the people are crying for. The crowds call out "Hosanna!" meaning "save us!" And Jesus has come to save them. He comes to bring salvation. He comes to sacrifice his life at the city where ritual sacrifices are made. He has come at Passover to offer up his life as the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover sacrifice. He comes to save humanity from its ultimate enemies of sin, death and hell.