



March 24, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

Six weeks ago we marked our foreheads with ashes remembering that we are dust. Although we are destined to return to dust, we are not trapped in our brokenness brought about by sin. We have a Savior and King who redeems us.

This Sunday we will once again remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as he makes his way to the cross for our sake. Enclosed is the worship service that you might draw near to the One who sacrificed all for our sake. Please join us, if you are able, for worship on Sunday at 10:00 on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> **Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-715-8592 or 253-215-8782.**

Please note all of the announcements at the end of the service including the special offerings of worship during Holy Week. You will receive a separate mailing of these services.

On Easter we will receive and recognize the special offering given to One Great Hour of Sharing. This offering has been received by many different denominations for over fifty years to address global needs. In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. Your faithful generous gift can help. If you wish to donate, please send a check to the church marked "One Great Hour of Sharing" in the memo line or bring it to our in-person outdoor worship on Easter Sunday.

Please remember that even during this season of continued social distancing, God is still near and will walk with us through this holy season.

God bless you.

Yours in Christ's service,

Pastor Su



*Palm Sunday Worship*  
*March 28, 2021*  
*Draw near to God*  
*for God is waiting for you.*

*(If you are using Lenten Candles, light only one now)*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

*We raise our voices and wave with joyful hope the palms of deliverance of God's people.*

**Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!**

*Our hearts are filled with expectation as we welcome the coming king.*

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

*We receive into the crowded streets of our lives the one who is Savior, not only of us, but of all the earth.*

**Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus Christ, on the first Palm Sunday you entered the rebellious city where you were to die. Enter our hearts, we pray, and subdue them to yourself. And as your disciples blessed your coming and spread garments and branches in your way, make us ready to lay at your feet all that we have and are, that we too may bless your coming. In the name of the Lord. Amen.

**HYMN** All Glory Laud and Honor

*Refrain:* All glory, laud, and honor, to thee, Redeemer, King,  
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

1. Thou art the King of Israel thou David's royal Son,  
who in the Lord's name comest the King and Blessed One. *Refrain*

2. The people of the Hebrews with palms before thee went.  
Our praise and prayer and anthems before thee we present. *Refrain*

3. To Thee, before thy passion they sang their hymns of praise.  
To thee, now high exalted our melody we raise. *Refrain*

4. Thou didst accept their praises, accept the love we bring,  
who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King. *Refrain*

**CONFESSION** *(Extinguish the last Lenten candle)*

*We place at the cross today the palm branches that welcomed Jesus as He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. The people loudly shouting, "Hosanna!" expected to be saved by a conquering hero. Palm Sunday reminds us of our self-centered expectations.*

**Lord Jesus, we confess our misguided, impatient expectations. We expect you to deliver us from suffering. We expect you to bless our materialism. We expect you to destroy our enemies. Help us say "No" to our self-centered, unholy expectations. Help us say "Yes" to the cross.**

*Palm Sunday is about worship. We worship the One most holy. We worship the One for whom we are willing to die.*

**Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that, although we worshiped you on Sunday, we denied you on Friday. Like Peter we promised to die for you; you have died for us. Help us say “No” to worship without sacrifice. Help us say “Yes” to the cross.**

*Palm Sunday is about worship. But the people turned the triumphal entry into a political parade.*

**Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that the heroes we most admire ride in chariots pulled by white horses. We confess that we don’t want to follow leaders who empty themselves of power, and ride on donkeys. Help us say “No” to “might making right.” Help us say “Yes” to the cross.**

*Palm Sunday is about worship. But we follow Jesus, hoping for positions of power on his right and on his left.*

**Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that we want your power without accepting the cup of suffering that you drank, without the obedience to the point of death. We want your Kingdom to come, but we fear it will cost us too much. Help us say “No” to our weak disobedience. Help us say “Yes” to the cross.**

*Let us pray together...*

**Almighty God, we confess that we love parades of power; your parade was humble. We confess that we worship conquering heroes; you were conquered. We confess that we grasp whatever advantage we can get; you emptied yourself for us. In Jesus Christ you have brought us mercy! Teach us to be merciful to one another. Burn our palm branches into ash; help us take up our cross daily and follow you. Amen.**

*FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON* Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*HYMN* Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

1. 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.
2. From Olivet they followed mid an exultant crowd, the victory 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.
3. “Hosanna in the highest!” That ancient song we sing, for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven, our King. O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice, and in his blissful presence eternally rejoice.

*SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON* Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, “Why are you doing this?” just say this, “The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.” ’ They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, ‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’ They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

‘Hosanna!

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

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

*SERMON* Hosanna

It was a beautiful Tuesday afternoon. I had worked all morning on worship preparation for Holy Week. It was time to take a breather and both reward and free myself from the load of pastoral responsibility. A walk in the woods seemed like the perfect retreat and add to that my grand dog, 70 lb. Labrador, Pepper, and seven year old grandson, Braden and well, it seemed like as close to heaven as I could get in mid-March.

It was such a beautiful day I decided my jacket wasn't necessary. Comfort was the order of the day and so I wore loose-fitting sweatpants – no pockets. After weighing my options, I chose to toss my purse into the trunk of my car, retrieving only my single car key. "That's enough," I thought. In my haste to leave my home and commence my re-creation, I neglected my usual backpack. I had walked this trail hundreds of times over the years. We would be fine, I told myself and left my cellphone in the pocket of my purse.

Since the pandemic was still a very real concern, I chose to take a remote hike in Washington Crossing Park. There would be few people on that stretch so I didn't have to worry about social distancing like I would have on either the canal path or any of the roads that wind through the park. Braden and Pepper were up for anything so long as it didn't mean a long car ride.

Most of the snow was melted, but there were still some icy patches along my favorite trail that led down to a creek bed. It is such a beautiful wooded secluded setting.

Pepper, being only two years old, demonstrated unrestrained enthusiasm as we made our way. Braden kept questioning our choice of direction even asking why we weren't taking the more level trail as opposed to the steeper slope. But that would prolong our journey to the bottom and I saw no need. Our feet squished in the mud even as we tried to hug the drier edges of the path. Pepper's pull on her leash wasn't as bad as it had been in the past and so we moved on until we came to the stretch with about a 45 degree downward angle. It was very wet mud and still had some ice.

Something inside my head said, "Take this very easy." And then my feet slipped out from under me. Pepper pulled me forward as I hung onto her leash but my body was on the ground. For some reason I looked at my right foot and cried, "Oh, no." I knew instantly that this was bad – very bad. No foot could be in that position unharmed. Instinct had me raise up my leg out of the mud. My foot just dangled life-less. Using my hands I turned it around and just sat down in the mud. Now what?

I had no phone. My seven year old grandson couldn't go for help by himself nor could he control the dog. He saw that I was hurt and couldn't walk and so he started to cry. In that moment I knew complete helplessness. As independent as I like to be, as one who always holds onto control, in that moment I was helpless. There was no way I could walk or crawl my way out of this. I couldn't send a seven year old to get help and Pepper was no Lassie and I am no MacGyver.

When Braden asked what we were going to do, I said we would do the one and only thing we can do in that moment of helplessness - call for help and we did – me in the mud holding my leg and Braden standing trying to keep the dog from running off. Although there was no one in sight and no sound to be heard, I took a deep breath and prayed "God, please" and then shouted using all my old cheerleading and bagpipe playing lung power, "Help!"

After what seemed like an eternity but was probably more like five minutes, we heard that for which I had prayed, "I'm coming." Then I saw him, a young man coming from the opposite direction across the creek. When he approached he explained that he would have gotten there sooner but he had to be careful not to slip and fall himself. I explained that I had no cell phone and he then pulled out his own. He knew just what to do. First, he

looked at Braden and told him that I was going to be all right. Then he made the call to the park rangers and gave them perfect markers to indicate where we were. Next 911 and then my daughters who didn't pick up because they were on work calls. He left a message saying, "I'm with your mom. She's alright but has had an accident, but I will stay with her. She's alright, but I've called for emergency services. Her leg may be broken." Comfort and hope first, then the facts.

The pain in my ankle was excruciating and Craig, my savior, told me he wouldn't leave me or Braden or Pepper, for as long as it takes. Finally emergency services arrived and still Craig stayed until Braden and Pepper were safe with Clark, my son-in-law. To my relief, my girls got the message.

I cried for help and my help came and stayed until I was placed into the help and safety of others. I have never felt more in the hands of God my Savior than I did that afternoon.

This is Palm Sunday, the day the Christian church commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to the masses crying "Hosanna." That's a peculiar word, one that is difficult to define and yet it gives meaning to this day. Scholars' best guess is that "Hosanna" is a contraction of two Hebrew terms: yaw-shah, meaning to save or deliver, and naw, meaning to beseech or pray. So you might translate the shouts of the crowd as: "We beseech you to deliver us." I would translate it as, "God, please, help." It's a cry for mercy and deliverance.

"God, please, help," the people cheered. They tossed branches from the nearby trees to the ground, and they called out, "Hosanna." They looked upon this prophet, rumored to be the Messiah, and they cried out to him, "Help! Save us." Isn't that the most primal prayer ever prayed?

I'm guessing that is a prayer that has been uttered more than any other, maybe even more than "Thanks." In our moments of helplessness, when there seems our own resources are depleted and lacking, we cry, "God, please, help."

On that Sunday in Jerusalem, the crowd is said to utter this prayer. These were pilgrims who traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. The first Passover would have been on their minds, when the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt and prayed, "God, please, help" in hopes of liberation from their life of torment. It was the very reason why Jews for near and far made their way to the Temple so they could give honor to their liberator God. But now, 1,200 years later, and they were anything but free. The might oppressive Romans were in power. Life was dangerous and harsh. If it wasn't bad enough to live in fear of the whims of soldiers lurking on every corner, poverty and all that entails was a reality for most.

So let's for a moment imagine just what was behind their cries of "Hosanna, God, please, help." If salvation was on their minds that Sunday, what about us on this Sunday? Are their cries our cries as well?

Presbyterian Pastor, Scott Johnston, asked his 7<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School class what they thought Jesus saved them from. The answer quickly came back – hell. Not satisfied with this seemingly superficial response, he then asked, "If God were on the ball, what would God save you from?" One youth then responded, "Death." Another offered that God could really help him out by saving him from an upcoming math test. Then one said, "Pressure." And another youth said, "My parents' expectations." Then another, shy individual, almost in a whisper said, "Fear. I want God to save me from my fears." All of these answers struck Johnston as more sincere than "hell." Although you could argue that their comments gave a pretty clear picture of what "hell" looks like to a 7th grader.

Let's dip down into our souls and be as real and honest as those young people were. On this Palm Sunday, when we boldly cry out, "Hosanna," do we dare imagine what we really want God to save us from? Save me from anger. Save me from cancer. Save me from depression. Save me from debt. Save me from the strife in my family. Save me from boredom. Save me from COVID. Save me from the endless cycle of violence. Save me from humiliation. Save me from staring at the ceiling at three a.m. wondering why I exist. Save me from

bitterness. Save me from arrogance. Save me from loneliness. Save me from pain. Save me, God, save me from my fears.

“Hosanna.” “Save us.” Please, God, take the broken places that will tear us apart and make them whole. We beseech you, God, run down the muddy path and bear our broken selves to safety. “Save us. Please, help.” “Hosanna.”

Does God respond to our cries? Does God do anything to save us? On that Sunday so long ago, it would appear that the crowd believed that God, in Jesus the promised Messiah, would give the help necessary to free them from the Romans. However, when it became apparent that Jesus was not “that kind of Messiah,” the people's jubilation quickly vanished. “Hosanna,” they cried, but then Jesus did not set about saving them in a manner that they could recognize. He did not take up a sword and send the Romans fleeing. Instead, he went and had supper with his friends; he went and prayed in a garden. Some Messiah!? It only took a few days for the crowds to switch from crying “Hosanna” to the shouts of “Crucify him” because Jesus help didn't look much like the kind of salvation help they desperately wanted and needed.

So what does Jesus' help look like? As we pray, “Hosanna, God, please, help” let's ask ourselves what it looks like to be saved by God? To answer that question I'd like to look at another detail of this story. When Mark described the crowd, he stated that some were ahead of Jesus while others followed behind. In other words, Jesus was in the midst of them.

I think that's the message of Mark's telling of this significant event. Mark reminds us that Jesus is not only behind or ahead of us. He is not simply a figure from 2,000 years ago or a savior who will meet us in the moment of death and bring us to new life. Our verse reminds us that Jesus is here now in our midst. He comes to us today meeting us whenever and wherever we meet a neighbor—in our homes, workplaces, schools, community or on a muddy slick path in a state park. How does God help? I'm not always sure but I do know that it involves a God who would stoop to step right into the messiest and hardest parts of life with us.

When that hiker, Craig, approached me in my pain and fear, it is impossible to describe the power of that moment. I felt... sort of... well... “saved.”

You know this too, don't you? To be approached by someone, stranger or friend, in a time of great need is to experience a fierce solidarity that smacks of the holy. I believe that this is, in part, how God saves us. As Pastor Johnston said, “God doesn't fax salvation in from some suite in heaven's ritzy district. God comes. God incarnates. God steps out of grandeur to stand with us in awkward places at awful times to experience life and death. God answers our cries of “Hosanna” in ways so utterly unexpected that we have got to look (a second time) to see if they can possibly be true.”

So on this Palm Sunday as we wave palm branches and shout “Hosanna,” praying, “God, please, help.” Look. See. Your Savior is come, riding on a donkey, or running up a slope in hiking boots, or ...

#### *PASTORAL PRAYER*

Jesus, you set your face towards Jerusalem and walked alongside those who suffer. Be our vision, that we too may walk the way of compassion and extend a hand to those we meet.

Lord, hear our prayer, and in your love, answer.

Lord, you stopped to heal the sick and tend to those broken in body, mind or spirit. Be our vision, that we too may be a source of healing to all in need of your grace.

Lord, hear our prayer, and in your love, answer.

Jesus, you said, “The first shall be last and the last first.” Be our vision, that we too may work towards your realm – when the marginalized and oppressed will be raised up and know that they are indeed beloved children of the

Holy.

Lord, hear our prayer, and in your love, answer.

Jesus, you took the time to pray and to be silent. Be our vision, that through our prayers, meditation and reflection we may draw closer to you and find our way on this journey of faith.

Lord, hear our prayer, and in your love, answer.

Lord, you entered Jerusalem with peace in your heart. Be our vision, that we too can live as people of peace in the face of the world's many conflicts. May we hold your vision of justice and peace ever before us.

Lord, hear our prayer, and in your love, answer.

Bless us, O Blessed One, as we enter into the days ahead of us. We will need your power and presence to sustain us as we move through these difficult days together. Spirit of Love and Life, stay close.

These and all the prayers of our hearts we offer in faith, as we pray the way you taught us to pray: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*HYMN* Ride On, Ride On in Majesty

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

2. 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.

3. Ride on, ride on in majesty! The winged squadrons of the sky  
look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see th'approaching sacrifice.

*BENEDICTION*

May Jesus, our King of kings, make his rule known in your life.

May you echo the crowds as Jesus entered Jerusalem, who praised and celebrated this King even though they did not yet know the nature and scope of his saving plan.

May the glory of our King give you strength and excite you with reasons to worship even as we pray for his saving power over our world.

May Jesus' humility as he draws near to heal us of our sin give you hope that while we face this present storm and darkness, Jesus, the ultimate healer of our souls, will one day make all things new and right.

### **Sunday March 28th – ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY** - Join us today for Sunday school class for all ages at 11:30am on Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/127591875>. For one half hour our children will be hearing stories, singing songs, engaging in activities and games about God and God's teachings.

**Join us today at 3:00pm: EASTER FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITY**

We will gather on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-715-8592 or 253-215-8782 to dye Easter Eggs and/or hats as well as learn how to make Ukrainian Easter Eggs. Hard boil up a few eggs and get creative with us. It will be a fun time of sharing.

**WEEKLY LENTEN COMMUNION SERVICES:** Wednesday March 31st, we will be gathering for a brief meditation, prayer, and share communion at 8:30am on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/127591875>

**GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP:** If you attended the Ash Wednesday service, you broke a pot into pieces remembering your own brokenness due to sin. During the Good Friday service we will bring out our pots and remember how Jesus' death on the cross restores us to wholeness. In preparation for this message, please begin to glue your pot back together. Leave at least one chard unglued. Elmer's glue works fine. If you didn't attend the service but plan to attend on Good Friday, pots are available at the church for pick up. Break it and glue it together as described above. You will also need your small candle that was included in the kit.



**HOLY WEEK OFFERING AT THE ANCHOR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - Stations in the Street: A Stations of the Cross Art Show** Stations of the Cross developed out of the pilgrimage of retracing Jesus' final steps in Jerusalem up to the hill where he was crucified. These stations were created many years ago for those who couldn't make the trip to Jerusalem.

As you work your way through each station, you're invited to meditate and reflect on two things. First, remember Jesus accomplishing what he came to do--save humanity through his own willful sacrifice. Second, focus on the encouraging truth that this was Jesus' journey of *God being with us*. Jesus says, "In this world you'll experience many trials. But take heart...I have overcome the world." May you experience Jesus' words afresh and new on this journey with Stations in the Street.

Beginning Palm Sunday (3/28), Stations in the Street will be open for your own journey outside The Anchor Church. Stations will be positioned around the driveway allowing accessibility for all people. If you prefer to walk the stations, please do! If you prefer a more solitude journey, Stations in the Street will also be displayed along our prayer trail in the woods located behind The Anchor. Stations will be displayed Sunday, March 28 through Saturday, April 3.

- Calendar:** March 31- 8:30AM Lenten Communion Service - Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/127591875>  
6:00 PM Confirmation Class - Zoom
- April 1- **Maundy Thursday Service**-7:00PM on Zoom. Communion will be observed.  
Please provide your own elements.
- April 2- **Good Friday Service**- 7PM We will join with The Anchor Presbyterian Church as we did on Ash Wednesday. You will need your broken clay pot and candle.
- April 4- **Easter Sunday**- 10:00 AM worship will be either on Zoom or under the pavilion at George M. Bush Park: 3868 Burnt House Hill Rd, Doylestown, PA 18902, rain or shine. Some seating will be available at picnic tables. Feel free to bring a cushion or your own seating, if you prefer. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for the children following the service.

**In our thoughts and prayers:** Su Fall, Doris Elliott, The Conner/Lang Family, Diane Dauer, Aleena Lang, Natalie Pizza, Bill Wark, Nancy Yerkes, Raymond Tinari, Dick Wright, Evin Kimbel and family for the passing of his father Tom Kimbel.

### *Easter Plants*

**For a donation of \$10 per plant you can help  
Brighten up our Altar for Easter.**



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory/Honor of:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I wish to take a Plant after the Easter Service. \_\_\_ Lily, \_\_\_ Gerber Daisy, \_\_\_ Hyacinth, \_\_\_ Tulip  
\_\_\_ Please, deliver to a shut-in or someone in the hospital (complete information below)

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone Number:**

**Donations will be accepted no later than **March 29<sup>th</sup>**. Pls. Drop off or Mail to:  
Forest Grove Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 1856 Forest Grove, Pa 18922**