

Palm Sunday

A Home Observance

A service for the observance of Palm Sunday during the pandemic 2020, adapted/created from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer's proper liturgy for Palm Sunday and from the liturgy for the "Celebration for a Home" in the Episcopal Church's Book of Occasional Services 2018.

Directions for the Ritual:

The service moves from the door through four "stations" in the home, with the stations chosen as seem fitting in the particular configuration of the house. (Make this decision prior to the beginning of the rite.) The rite may conclude with a simple meal. In choosing stations, one might best give the sense that the house has been covered "end to end." Alternatively, if it makes sense of the house, the stations might cover the "four directions"—north, south, east, west. In a one room or very small space, the rite can move from corner to corner or other spaces as convenient. A single person could eliminate biddings and responses as appropriate. As with all house blessings, those who are able to do so can move from station to station, while those who may be mobility-limited can remain in a central room while the procession moves and the prayers are offered, loudly enough for all to hear.

Gather in a room spacious enough for all. The presider greets any others participating. Palms may be distributed to all. Now, proceed to a place at or near the front door.

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Response: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, as your Son Jesus came to Jerusalem to bring to completion the work of our salvation, so come to the homes of your people and bless us by your presence. Call your church again to the way of the cross. Give us strength to follow it. Quicken our memories and stir our hearts as we contemplate those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

The following gospel is now read aloud, without introduction or conclusion.

Matthew 21:1-11

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead 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, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

The presider now says three times:

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: **Hosanna in the highest!**

Presider: Let us go forth in peace;

Response: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Click on link to All glory, laud, and honor (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zghu8k8r1eqqt9w/All%20Glory%2C%20Laud%2C%20and%20Honor.mp4?dl=0>).

The First Station

Proceed to the first station.

Presider: Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them, I will offer thanks to the Lord

Response: **This is the gate of the Lord; he who is righteous may enter.**

Presider: I will give thanks to you, for you answered me and have become my salvation.

Response: **The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.**

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: **Hosanna in the highest!**

The Second Station

Proceed to the second station.

Presider: This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Response: **On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

Presider: Hosannah, Lord, hosannah, Lord, send us now success.

Response: **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord.**

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: **Hosanna in the highest!**

The Third Station

Proceed to the third station.

Presider: God is the Lord; God has shined upon us;
form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

Response: **You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.**

All: **Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; God's mercy endures for ever.**

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: **Hosanna in the highest!**

The Fourth Station

Proceed to the fourth station.

Presider: Hear my teaching, O my people; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

Response: **I will open my mouth in a parable; I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.**

Presider: That which we have heard and known, and what our ancestors have told us;
we will not hide from their children.

Response: **We will recount for generations to come
The praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, and the wonderful works God has done.**

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Response: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory until he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

Return to a central room. All are seated, and a person appointed reads:

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.

Silence is kept.

Now another person appointed reads the gospel.

Matthew 27: 1-56

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' But they said, 'What is that to us? See to it yourself.' Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.' After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.' Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!' So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their

heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son.'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.' Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!' Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

After a moment of silence:

Presider: That love would go so far as this... that God's Son would die for us, for our salvation! Let us keep silence in thanksgiving and contemplate this great love.

Silence is kept for a time.

Presider: Now I invite your prayers for all the needs of the world God so loved, silently or aloud.

After the prayers are offered:

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

AMEN.

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Participants may adjourn to a simple meal. If palms were held during the service, they might be strewn about the dining table, and a Bible placed on the table in clear sight of all.