

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion April 9, 2017

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

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An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of
the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

April 2, 2017 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44130

*(Presented as a part of the bible study/worship weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting, a
newly formed assisted living site and used by Lutherans in Africa.*

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www.alamy.com - CTYMYB

<http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/donkey-jesus-christ.html>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 442 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 160

“All glory, laud, and honor”

Published in 473 hymnals – go to [http://www.hymnary.org/text/all glory laud and honor](http://www.hymnary.org/text/all_glory_laude_and_honor) if you would like to see the list.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4sQxXNMPu0> “Highlights of Palm Sunday and the hymn "All Glory Laud and Honor" from Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, from April 5, 2009”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZX7EzqMBifo> Played on an Allen organ, a relative of the one at Bethlehem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pttElvF94Vo> “A fun piece. I probably should have done another take as there are some mistakes, but oh well! Performed on the Great Organs of First Congregational Church, Los Angeles”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foEYXC5WshQ> You can follow the lyrics, but read the comments – some people just miss the point.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

The readings for this Sunday can either be themed for Palm Sunday or the Sunday of the Passion. Although all readings are listed, this week’s lesson will follow the Palm Sunday theme. As the days that follow are Holy Week, the passion story will appear throughout the week.

Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday

“Caught a post this morning from Christian Century about the dual focus of the last Sunday in Lent, called ["Against Passion Sunday"](#). (Can you guess what conclusion the author draws?) In that brief post, the author argues against the "recent liturgical emphasis" on observing both the Triumphal Entry and the Passion on the last Sunday in Lent. She draws on childhood memories of when Palm Sunday was just that - Palm Sunday *only* - and says that the move toward Palm/Passion Sunday was caused by practical concerns (recent lack of attendance on Good Friday).

It is true; attendance at Good Friday liturgies is not as high as any pastor or liturgist would like. However, I believe that this is a straw man, and a misleading one at that. The novel, recent practice is not the reading of the synoptic Passion on the Sunday of Holy Week. The reading of a synoptic Passion account on the Sunday of Holy Week dates back to the medieval church (when the practice was to read Matthew's Passion on Sunday). Instead, the historically novel practice was (is?) congregations who omit the reading of the Passion on this Sunday.

Besides the historical argument, there is also a certain theology presented in the observance of the Sunday of the Passion. In the liturgy of Passion Sunday, we - the church - are simultaneously the ones who pour accolades on the entering Jesus and the ones who demand his execution. The peculiar juxtaposition of celebration and crucifixion gets to the heart of what we believe about Jesus and the world. Yes Jesus is the Messiah, but not the Messiah of worldly conquest. Yes this creation is good, but it is broken by sin. Yes we have been made holy by Christ, and yet our wills are still *incurvatus in se*. Yes God's Kingdom has drawn near, but no it has not fully come into being.

The liturgy of the Sunday of the Passion will not allow any theology that dwells on triumphalism. It will not let us deceive ourselves about the sort of Messiah that Jesus is. To leave Palm Sunday without the Passion narrative is to leave with the impression that Jesus is the conquering Messiah, the Messiah of worldly power. The Passion narrative reminds us that

we follow the crucified Messiah, the one who gained victory precisely in defeat.”
<http://revdavidh.blogspot.com/2011/04/palm-sunday-or-passion-sunday.html>

Isaiah 50:4-9a; RCL (Revised Common Lectionary), RCL, Liturgy of the Passion, the same reading (Next Week (Easter Sunrise, Exodus 14:10-15:1; Easter Day, Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6; RCL, Easter Day, Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9; Easter Evening Isaiah 25:6-9)

“...The Christian year gives Christ followers the time to observe and repeat, hear the Scriptures and walk in these words year after year. As the season of Lent draws to a close with what is traditionally known as Palm Sunday, it is also a time to reflect on why Lent is so important to the Christian year. For the Liturgy of the Palms/Passion, the words of the Hebrew prophet found in Isaiah attempt to vindicate the heart of the teacher found in the Servant...” <http://www.aplainaccount.org/single-post/2016/03/14/Isaiah-5049a> James Matthew Price | Associate Professor of Christian Education and Intercultural Studies, MVNU

⁴ The Lord GOD has given me
 the tongue of those who are taught,
 that I may know how to sustain with a word
 him who is weary.

Morning by morning he awakens;
 he awakens my ear
 to hear as those who are taught.

⁵ The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
 and I was not rebellious;
 I turned not backward.

⁶ I gave my back to those who strike,
 and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
 I hid not my face
 from disgrace and spitting.

⁷ But the Lord GOD helps me;
 therefore I have not been disgraced;
 therefore I have set my face like a flint,
 and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

⁸ He who vindicates me is near.
 Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who is my adversary?

Let him come near to me.

⁹ Behold, the Lord GOD helps me;
 who will declare me guilty?

*Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment;
 the moth will eat them up.*

“One of the challenges of preaching the lectionary in conjunction with the liturgical calendar is that of remaining true to the tradition of the church season while allowing the biblical texts to speak anew to our communities of faith.

Palm Sunday is certainly no different, and with the exception of Easter, may in fact be one of the most difficult weeks in the calendar to preach a new word. How might one seek a new and relevant word for the congregation that anticipates the major celebration of Resurrection Sunday in just one week's time? How does one commemorate the entry of Christ into the city while also maintaining the depth and somberness of what he will have to face in the week ahead?

One possibility for this liturgical year is to turn to the Hebrew Bible text for this Sunday, Isaiah 50:4-9a. This passage is the third of four so-called "servant songs" in the second portion of Isaiah (42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13--53:12). Christian tradition has often placed these songs as laments on the lips of Christ to express his suffering during Passion week. When read in light of the historical context of Second Isaiah (Isaiah 40-55), however, these texts take on a different tone...

First, this song might speak a word for the preachers, teachers, and other ministers. At the risk of self-aggrandizement, one might read the first verse of the song as an exemplar of prophetic responsibility...

Second, the song offers testimony to the suffering community of faith...

Third, the song exhorts these suffering communities using a legal metaphor...

Finally, the text offers exhortation to the weary, inspiring individuals and communities to make their stand for principles of faith and justice, knowing that the Divine Vindicator is on their side. As we come to this text in the latter season of Lent let us listen as disciples so that we, too, can speak timely words to a weary world."

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=943 **David G. Garber Jr.**

Associate Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, Ga

Psalm 118:19-29 or 31:9-16; RCL, Liturgy of the Palms, Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, or Liturgy of the Passion, Psalm 31:9-16 (*Easter Sunrise, Psalm 118:15-29 or The Song of Moses and Israel; Easter Day, Psalm 16; RCL, Easter Day, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, Easter Evening, Psalm 114*)

"Psalm 118 is the last psalm in a group of six psalms in Book Five known as the "the Egyptian Hallel" (Psalms 113-118), psalms that are used in present-day Jewish life at the Passover meal on the eighth day of that annual spring celebration.

Psalms 113 and 114 are recited before the meal. Psalms 115-118 are recited at the conclusion of the meal while drinking the fourth cup of celebratory wine. Many scholars maintain that in ancient Jewish life Psalm 118 was used in liturgical processions, perhaps an entrance liturgy into the temple in Jerusalem. According to the Mishnah, a document that interprets the Torah, the procession around the altar that took place on seven successive days during the Feast of Tabernacles was accompanied by the recitation of Psalm 118:27..." (continued after reading)

- ¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.
- ²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.
- ²¹ I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
- ²² The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone. ^[a]
- ²³ This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
- ²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- ²⁵ Save us, we pray, O LORD!
O LORD, we pray, give us success!
- ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We bless you from the house of the LORD.
- ²⁷ The LORD is God,
and he has made his light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!
- ²⁸ You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will extol you.
- ²⁹ Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

a. [Psalm 118:22](#) Hebrew *the head of the corner*

...”In present-day Christian lectionary use, Psalm 118:1-2 and 14-24 is the psalm reading for Easter Sunday in all three years; Psalm 118:1-2 and 19-29 is the reading for Palm Sunday in all three years; and Psalm 118:14-29 is the psalm reading for the second Sunday of Easter in Year C. All four of the New Testament gospel writers use the words of Psalm 118:26 -- “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord” -- in their Palm Sunday narratives (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9-10; Luke 19:38; and John 12:13). In Mark 12, Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22 -- “The stone the builders rejects has become a cornerstone” -- as the explanation for the so-called Parable of the Vineyard. Peter quotes the same verse in Acts 4:11 in reference to Jesus; Paul alludes to it in Ephesians 2:20-21; and the words of Psalm 118:6 -- “The Lord is for me; I will not fear” -- echo in Romans 8:3 and Hebrews 13:6. Thus, Psalm 118 has a rich and varied history of transmission and use in both Jewish and Christian life.

The timeless appeal of Psalm 118 may have something to do with its form and content. Erhard Gerstenberger states that the psalm “abounds in liturgical forms and rhythmic, repetitious, formulaic phrases and shouts.” It is an Individual Hymn Thanksgiving, a psalm in which a single voice praises God for God’s goodness to or on behalf of that individual, usually for deliverance from some trying

situation. But in Psalm 118, the words of the individual hymn singer are woven into, H.J. Kraus says “anchored in,” the liturgy of the gathered worshipping community. Thus, the psalmic voice moves back and forth between the singular and the plural, as the individual worshiper approaches God in the context of corporate worship with thanks for deliverance from trouble.

The structure of Psalm 118 may be outlined as follow:

Verses 1-4: Call to Worship

Verses 5-18: Voice of the Individual

Verses 19-28: Mingled Voices of the Individual and the Worshipping Community

Verse 29: Conclusion...”

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2380 **Nancy deClaissé-Walford**
Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages, McAfee School of Theology, Mercer
 University, Atlanta, GA

Philippians 2:5-11; RCL, None for Liturgy of the Palms, Liturgy of the Passion, the same reading (Easter Sunrise, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Easter Day, Colossians 3:1-4; RCL, Easter Day, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43; Easter Evening, 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8)

“Every year, the Sunday that begins Holy Week gives us this reading from Paul: “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus ... ”

The brilliance and wisdom of Philippians 2:5-11 becomes especially poignant when the worship honors both the pageantry of the palm waving (Hurrah for Jesus!) and the darkness of the passion (Oh, sacred head ...) celebrated together on one day, for the admonition to live in the mind of Christ Jesus entails both adulation and sorrow. Entering into Holy Week -- whose end will be both a tortured death and an awe-filled rising up out of the grave -- with the words of this letter, opens the way for the people who have come to reckon with this mystery to know themselves as Christ-bearers: “Let the same mind be in you ... ” How can we possibly imagine such a thing?...”

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2370 **Melinda Quivik**
 Liturgical and Homiletical Scholar, Houghton, Mich

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,^[a] ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,^[b] ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,^[c] being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- a. [Philippians 2:5](#) Or *which was also in Christ Jesus*
- b. [Philippians 2:6](#) Or *a thing to be held on to for advantage*
- c. [Philippians 2:7](#) Or *slave* (for the contextual rendering of the Greek word *doulos*, see Preface)

“Philippians 2:5-11 is one of the New Testament's truly majestic texts.

I encourage the preacher to consider this text for Palm Sunday instead of, or at least alongside, the Gospel lection of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem... Let me suggest three possible entrance points into Paul's testimony.

First, consider *the stark distinctions within the text itself*. Whether or not we accept Philippians 2:5-11 as a pre--Pauline hymn, there's no denying this lection's concentrated juxtapositions.

It unfolds in two perfectly balanced stanzas: verses 6-8 and verses 9-11. Within each are evocative contrasts between:

divinity and humanity,
true being and fraudulent calculation,
death and life,
humiliation and exaltation,
bending and raising,
heaven and earth,
things above and below,
self--imposed slavery and God--bestowed lordship...

Second, one may fruitfully *reposition this lection within Paul's epistolary context*, which unfolds to embrace our own...He writes from prison (1:7, 13-14), in circumstances that make death appear strangely attractive (1:22-24). ..

Whether in this letter brimming with joy or at the start of Christianity's Holiest Week, sin, suffering, and dissension take no holiday. It is at the heart of the muck and the stresses of a church in the real world that God has planted the gospel of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:5-11)...

Third, the preacher may *juxtapose Philippians 2:5-11 with the Old Testament texts* the Common Lectionary assigns for this Sunday (Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalms 31:9-16, 118:1-2, 19-29).

If so, the same pattern reemerges...

The poetry of Philippians 2:5-11 rhymes with that of the Psalms and Isaiah's Servant Songs. The only way that our torments - as persons, as a church, as a world - may be redeemed is by the decision of God's Messiah to empty himself of glory and journey with us into the heart of darkness..."

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=284 **C. Clifton Black** Otto A. Piper Professor of Biblical Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ

**“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 12th Chapter and
St Matthew the 26th Chapter”**
“Glory to You, O Lord”

Palm Sunday Procession, John 12:12-19 and Matthew 26:1-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-66 or John 12:20-43; RCL, Liturgy of the Palms, Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16, Liturgy of the Passion, Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47) (Easter Sunrise, John 20:1-18, Easter Day, Matthew 28:1-10; RCL, Easter Day, John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8; Easter Evening, Luke 24:13-49)

“...THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19

Notice that all four gospels record this event in the same place in the story about Jesus. After Jesus had completed his ministry in Galilee and just as he was entering Jerusalem, this event of the triumphal entry occurs. ...the four gospel authors agree on the location of this story at this moment in the life of Jesus..."

http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_b_the_palm_story_GA.htm

"What you might do on this day is to help people enter this story, inviting them to identify with a particular character or bystander and asking them to reflect on their emotions during the readings..."
(continued after reading)

John 12:12-19 The Triumphal Entry

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So 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!"

¹⁴And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

¹⁵"Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!" (Zechariah 9:9)

¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

¹⁷The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

Matthew 26

The Plot to Kill Jesus, vv. 1-5

Jesus Anointed at Bethany, vv. 6-13

Judas to Betray Jesus, vv. 14-16

The Passover with the Disciples, vv. 17-25

Institution of the Lord's Supper, vv. 26-29

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial, vv. 30-35

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane, vv. 36-46

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus, vv. 47-56

Jesus Before Caiaphas and the Council, vv. 57-68

Peter Denies Jesus, vv. 69-75

- a. [Matthew 26:6](#) *Leprosy* was a term for several skin diseases; see [Leviticus 13](#)
- b. [Matthew 26:20](#) Some manuscripts add *disciples*
- c. [Matthew 26:28](#) Some manuscripts insert *new*
- d. [Matthew 26:38](#) Or *keep awake*; also verses [40](#), [41](#)
- e. [Matthew 26:45](#) Or *Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?*

- f. [Matthew 26:50](#) Or *Friend, why are you here?*
- g. [Matthew 26:51](#) Or *bondservant*
- h. [Matthew 26:59](#) Greek *Sanhedrin*
- i. [Matthew 26:62](#) Or *Have you no answer to what these men testify against you?*

Matthew 27

Jesus Delivered to Pilate, vv. 1-2

Judas Hangs Himself, vv. 3-10

Jesus Before Pilate, vv. 11-14

The Crowd Chooses Barabbas, vv. 15-23

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified, vv. 24-26

Jesus Is Mocked, vv. 27-31

The Crucifixion, vv. 32-44

The Death of Jesus, vv. 45-56

Jesus Is Buried, vv. 57-61

The Guard at the Tomb, vv. 62-66

- a. [Matthew 27:3](#) Greek *he*
- b. [Matthew 27:24](#) Some manuscripts *this righteous blood, or this righteous man's blood*
- c. [Matthew 27:26](#) A Roman judicial penalty, consisting of a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing embedded pieces of bone and metal
- d. [Matthew 27:27](#) Greek *the praetorium*
- e. [Matthew 27:27](#) Greek *cohort*; a tenth of a Roman legion, usually about 600 men
- f. [Matthew 27:45](#) That is, noon
- g. [Matthew 27:45](#) Or *earth*
- h. [Matthew 27:45](#) That is, 3 p.m.
- i. [Matthew 27:54](#) Or *a son*
- j. [Matthew 27:65](#) Or *Take a guard*

“And what of the sermon, you ask? I won’t go so far as to say there should be no sermon on this day – though that is certainly a reasonable option – but rather invite you to think of the sermon as background, guide, and interpreter of the Gospel story which is itself the sermon this week. What you might do on this day is to help people enter this story, inviting them to identify with a particular character or bystander and asking them to reflect on their emotions during the readings.

The key in all of this, I think, is that they hear that this story is for them, for us... All that we see and hear, all that we read and sing, all of this is *for us*...

That’s the story we tell, the story of this week’s dramatic reading, the story of God’s passionate and relentless quest to redeem each and all of us in love. And if our preaching can introduce this story and invite others to see it as their own that they make look ahead to an open future of freedom and possibility, it is enough. Even more than enough.”

<http://www.davidlose.net/2015/03/palmpassion-sunday-b-entering-the-story/>

“Hey sanna, ho sanna, sanna, sanna, hey sanna, ho sanna sanna sanna , ho sanna, hey sanna, Hey, hey JC, JC won’t you smile at me. Jesus Christ, if you’re divine, turn my water into wine. Prove to

me that you're no fool. Walk across my swimming pool. Hey sanna, ho sanna, sanna, sanna, hey sanna, ho sanna."

...these words, Webber and Rice's rock opera, "Jesus Christ Superstar"* have captured the glimmer of that first Palm Sunday parade; that nationalistic religious fervored carnival of "Hey sanna, ho sanna, sanna, sanna, hey sanna, ho sanna; Jesus Christ if you're divine, turn my water into wine."What a day. You couldn't believe it. It was like a carnival. It was like a circus. It was like a parade ...

There are people who are like that, you know. They will only believe if they see a sign...

This second group didn't want a religious carnival; they weren't looking for the Houdini of the Holy Land; they weren't looking for one more magic trick. These people were much more serious. They were looking for a political revolution..."

And so there were two groups on that first Palm Sunday...Both groups chanted, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Hosanna to the Son of David..."

http://www.sermonsfromseattle.com/series_b_the_palm_story_GA.htm

*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14rSHAnFW3E> Jesus Christ Superstar (1973) Hosanna.wmv



Word is this whole move to "Passion Sunday" is being resisted by a powerful and cabalistic palm branch growers syndicate.

Agnus Day appears with the permission of <http://www.agnusday.org/>



Maunder Thursday: Exodus 24:3-11 or 12:1-14, Psalm 116:12-19, Hebrews 9:11-22 or 1 Corinthians 11:23-32, Matthe 26:17-30 or John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Good Friday: Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22 or 31, Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1-19:42 or John 19:17-30

The Revised Common Lectionary has 11 readings for the **Easter Vigil** – all of which can be found at <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=37>.