

WORSHIPPING GOD

March 28, 2021

Palm Sunday

Chiming of the Hour.....Kim Miller
*Three chimes are sounded, awakening us to the presence of God,
alerting us to the voice of Christ, centering us in the embrace of the Spirit.*

Preparing for Worship.....Kim Miller
*Lord Jesus, I am so easily blinded by the world's values,
that I fail to understand what is eternal and true.
Teach me to see the world as you saw it,
through the eyes of God,
that I may not waste my time and energy pursuing the things
that will neither last nor matter.
(John Killinger)*

Prelude.....All Glory, Laud, and Honor.....Melchoir Teschner, 1615
Joan John, Organ

Welcome.....

Call to Worship.....Starr Oliver
The story of faith is a story of courage.
It took courage for John the Baptist to prepare the way.
It took courage for Mary to say, "Here I am. Use me."
It took courage for the disciples to drop their nets and follow Jesus.
It took courage for the paralyzed man's friends to lower him through the roof.
It took courage for Peter to walk on water.
It took courage for Zacchaeus to give half of his possessions to the poor.
It took courage for Jesus to enter Jerusalem on a donkey.
Faith has never been easy. It is a journey of courage.
Again and again, God, show us the way.
Let us worship a brave and courageous God.

Prayer.....Starr Oliver
If we could buy our way closer to you, we'd sell everything we have. If we could work our way to you, we'd never take a day off. If we could walk our way to you, we'd keep our tennis shoes on tight.
But I know—we know—we cannot buy, or work, or walk our way closer to you. We must listen our way closer to you.
So holy God, as you have so often done again and again, Open our ears. Clear out the self-talk that keeps us from you. Dust out the negativity and distractions. Remove any doubt hindering our way. Amen.

Hymn..... All Glory Laud and Honor

Robin Duncan and the CBC Quartet

Refrain:

*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!*

*The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present:*

*To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise:*

*As you received their praises, accept the prayers we bring,
For you delight in goodness, O good and gracious King!*

Call to Confession.....Kim Miller

A phrase has been floating around more and more in recent months: “We can do hard things.” These words have become an anthem for so many. You can buy these words on poster prints, on greeting cards, and even on coffee mugs.

These five simple words aren’t particularly radical, so when I stop to think about why they have caught hold for so many, I can only assume that it is because life and faith require courage.

Vulnerability requires courage. Relationships require courage. Advocacy and justice require courage. Facing our privilege requires courage. Faith requires courage. Even confession requires courage.

So friends, let us do hard things. Let us confess together, trusting that God is always there, Cheering us on, in every courageous act. Let us pray. . .

Prayer of Confession.....Deana Otwell-Clinton

God of palm branches and hallelujahs:

We confess—we love a good Palm Sunday celebration.

We love the sound of a joyful parade. We love shouting, “hallelujah!”

We love that Palm Sunday means Easter is just around the corner. We love good news.

However, if we slow down and pay attention, we know that Palm Sunday was not a walk in the park for you.

There was risk. There was fear. There was the threat of violence. You were leading a peaceful protest against an unjust empire, And the whole world knew it.

Forgive us for glossing over the courage this day took. Remind us that the story of faith is a story of courage, and even we can do hard things.

With hope we pray. Amen.

(one candle is extinguished)

Words of Forgiveness.....Kim Miller

Sisters and brothers in Christ, even when we gloss over the truth, even when our courage fails us, even when we doubt that we can do hard things, God believes in us. God loves us. God forgives us. Hear and believe this truth:

We are known. We are loved. We are forgiven. Again and again and again. Amen.

Gospel Lesson from John 12.....Susan Shelton

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, home of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Lazarus and his sisters hosted a dinner for him. Martha served and Lazarus was among those who joined him at the table. Then Mary took an extraordinary amount, almost three-quarters of a pound, of very expensive perfume made of pure nard. She anointed Jesus' feet with it, then wiped his feet dry with her hair. The house was filled with the aroma of the perfume. Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), complained, "This perfume was worth a year's wages! Why wasn't it sold and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He carried the money bag and would take what was in it.)

Then Jesus said, "Leave her alone. This perfume was to be used in preparation for my burial, and this is how she has used it. You will always have the poor among you, but you won't always have me."

Many Jews learned that he was there. They came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. The chief priests decided that they would kill Lazarus too. It was because of Lazarus that many of the Jews had deserted them and come to believe in Jesus.

The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him. They shouted, "Hosanna!

Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the king of Israel!"

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, Don't be afraid, Daughter Zion. Look! Your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.

His disciples didn't understand these things at first. After he was glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn.....Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Robin Duncan and the CBC Quartet

*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 the little children should on his bidding wait.*

*"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!*

MeditationAgain & Again, We Draw on Courage.....Dan Koger

Affirming Our Faith.....Dan Koger

**I refuse to believe that I am powerless.
I refuse to believe that injustice and hatred are simply the way it has to be.
I refuse to believe that I am better or more deserving than my neighbor.
I refuse to believe that my self-worth is rooted in my accomplishments or appearance.
I refuse to believe that the Church is dying because I see God all around me.
I refuse to believe that the traditions of old are the only path for moving forward.
I refuse to believe that I cannot make a difference.
So, with hope in my heart, I will strive
to live a life of courage, conviction, and compassion,
Just as Jesus taught us. Amen.**

Hymn.....In the Cross of Christ I Glory

Robin Duncan and the CBC Quartet

*In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.*

*When the woes of life o'er-take me, hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me. Lo! It glows with peace and joy.*

*When the sun of bliss is beaming light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming adds more luster to the day.*

*Band and blessing, pain and pleasure, by the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there and knows no measure, joys that thro' all time abide.*

A Charge & Benediction.....Dan Koger

As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.

May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm— Again and again and again.
Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. Amen.

Postlude.....The Psalms.....Jean Baptist Faure
Joan John, Organ

Opportunity for Giving