



Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026

Pastor Calvin Konop, Presiding
Jessica Christenson, CYF Director
Karina Roth, Musical Director

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Introduction

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

Prelude

Karina Roth

Gathering

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. **Hosanna in the highest.**
(Repeated several times)

Processional Hymn

All Glory Laud and Honor

ELW 344

Blessing of Palms

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Welcome to Worship and Announcements

Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those

who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Time

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting coins for the "Holy Cow" fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger. *Find that noisy change and help feed kids around the world!*

First Reading:

2 Maccabees 10:1-7

¹ Now Maccabeus and his followers, the Lord leading them on, recovered the temple and the city; ² they tore down the altars that had been built in the public square by the foreigners and also destroyed the sacred precincts. ³ They purified the sanctuary and made another altar of sacrifice; then, striking fire out of flint, they offered sacrifices, after a lapse of two years, and they offered incense and lighted lamps and set out the bread of the Presence. ⁴ When they had done this, they fell prostrate and implored the Lord that they might never again fall into such misfortunes but that, if they should ever sin, they might be disciplined by him with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations. ⁵ It happened that on the same day on which the sanctuary had been profaned by the foreigners, the purification of the sanctuary took place, that is, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which was Chislev. ⁶ They celebrated it for eight days with rejoicing, in the manner of the Festival of Booths, remembering how not long before, during the Festival of Booths, they had been wandering in the mountains and caves like wild animals. ⁷ Therefore, carrying ivy-wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also palm fronds, they offered hymns of thanksgiving to him who had given success to the purifying of his own holy place.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm:

Please read responsively

Psalm 118:19-29

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 chief cornerstone.**

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 beseech you, O LORD! O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

²⁶ **Blessed is the one 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 given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, 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 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Second Reading:

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia

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The holy gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel:

Matthew 21:1-11

¹ When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² 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. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ “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.”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ 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!”

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Calvin Konop

Hymn of the Day

Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW 264

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of God's People

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *(A brief silence.)*

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally our Minnesota Bishops: Bishop Regina Hassanally, Bishop Patricia Lull, Bishop Jen Nagel, Bishop Amy Odgren, Bishop Dee Pederson, Bishop Bill Tesch. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Bring about, throughout the whole world, your procession of mercy and peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day. *We pray especially for Phyllis, Joan, Linda, Luke, Sarah, Bruce, Lynn, and Katrina.* We pray now for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. *(A time of silence).* We pray for all those dealing with issues of mental health or addiction. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed, especially Susan Gulstrand, who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

Karina Roth

Offering Prayer

O God, maker of heaven and earth, **your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

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The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution

Holy, Holy, Holy

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Invitation to Communion

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy. All are welcome!

*Bethlehem Lutheran Church believes in the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion, and we practice eucharistic hospitality. **All persons**, whether visiting or a member, are welcomed to Communion. (Offered in these sacraments are wine or apple juice; and regular or gluten-free wafers.)*

Communion Music

Lamb of God

ELW page 146

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

ELW 338

Post Communion Blessing

Prayer After Communion

God of our salvation, **we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Blessing

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, **✝** bless you now and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Pave the Way with Branches

ACS 928

Dismissal

Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Karina Roth

We pray for healing for these members & friends: Phyllis Olson, Joan Bieber, Linda Zenk, Clayton & Nancy Koss, Lois Johnson, Butch & Rhonda Schulte, Luke Gulstrand, Sarah Coe, Lynn Schulte, Paulina Backstrom, Bruce & Stacey Johnson, Shae Lindholm, Char Anderson, Stacey Schulte, Hank Ferland, Margaret Dahl, Katrina Crouse, Karen Shannon, Tom Christiansen

This week we lift up these members: Jarod, Jill, Sofi, Emma & Landon Boen; David, Karsten & Henrik Stieler; Kim Schulte; Chuck Wiger; and Adam Wellan. May God walk with these faithful friends in their Lenten journey.

Our Mission of the Month for March is Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Rental Assistance Program. Your giving will assist families in preventing eviction from their homes, will provide opportunities for families to stay together in their homes and will assist with utilities that will keep families warm, with light and with water.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- **Valencia Baryton Project Concert** at Bethlehem April 11 at 7pm - a rare chance to hear a nearly forgotten instrument. Presented by North Shore Music Association. Tickets at nsma.simpletix.com.
- **Vacation Bible School** will be July 13-17, 2026. 9am to noon for K-5th grade students.
- **Senior Quilts: April 30** lunch with the Quilters at 11:15am. Come and pick out your quilt. **May 10:** Senior blessings and quilt gifts distributed during worship. Reception following service.
- **Memorial Service for Ed Bolstad** will be on May 2 at 11 am.
- **Memorial Service for Barbara Erickson** will be on May 16 at 11 am.

On-line giving is encouraged using this QR Code or through automatic transfer.



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This Week at Bethlehem:

Sun Mar 29 PALM SUNDAY
 8:40 AM Choir Practice
10:00 AM Worship Service
 with **Sunday School**
 11:15 AM Communion
 Learners Class



Tues Mar 31 8:30 AM Staff Meeting
 Wed Apr 1 12:30 PM Text Study

Thurs Apr 2 8:00 AM Bible Study
 9:00 AM Quilting
7:00 PM Maundy Thurs.
Worship, with
First Communion



Fri Apr 3
 - - - - Clarity Hearing
7:00 PM Good Friday
Tenebrae Service



Sun Apr 5 EASTER SUNDAY
8:00 AM Easter Worship
 9:00 AM Easter Brunch
 9:30 AM Easter Egg Hunt
10:00 AM Easter Worship



Traveler Cards and Local Grocery Cards are available from Bethlehem to members of the community that need help. Please contact the office.

Coffee An': *Have you taken a turn serving for our fellowship time on Sundays?* Please sign up to bring some treats to share.

Wednesday Text Study: Join us at 12:30 pm on Wednesdays for a study of the scripture lessons. Zoom link is available.

Men's Bible Study: Every Thursday morning, beginning at 8:00 to 9:15 am. Contact Mike Chmelik for information, 218-387-1790. Zoom link is available.

Quilters are seeking more helpers! Every Thursday morning at 9 to 11:30am. No experience necessary. You are invited to the fun!