St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church
In the City of Charleston, South Carolina

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

April 5, 2020

We welcome you to St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church,
a house of prayer for all people.

The Reverend Dr. Adam J. Shoemaker, Rector
The Reverend Courtney Davis-Shoemaker, Assistant Priest
The Reverend Dr. Roy Hills, Preacher
The Reverend Greg Smith, Deacon
Wayne Helmly, Organist & Choirmaster
Margaret Kelly Cook, Special Guest Soprano
THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS

The Officiant says

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.

People Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

The Officiant then continues

Let us pray.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MATTHEW 21:1-11

1When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying 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. 3If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." 4This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, 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." 6The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The 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!" 10When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" 11The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Officiant then says the following blessing

The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

People Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

The Officiant and People together say

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

People Hosanna in the highest.

Let us go forth in peace.

People In the name of Christ. Amen.
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 Blessèd One.
   Refrain

3 The people of the Hebrews
   with palms before thee went;
   our praise and prayers and anthems
   before thee we present.
   Refrain

5 Thou didst accept their praises;
   accept the prayers we bring,
   who in all good delightest,
   thou good and gracious King.
   Refrain

The Officiant says the following Collect

Almighty God, whose dear most Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before 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.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

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

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.

THE LESSONS

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

4 The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. 5 The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. 5 I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. 7 The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put
to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Reader The Word of the Lord.  
People Thanks be to God.

PSALM 31:9-16

Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.  
For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.  
I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors, a dismay to those of my acquaintance; when they see me in the street they avoid me.  
I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.  
For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.  
But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, “You are my God. My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.  
Make your face to shine upon your servant, and in your loving-kindness save me.”

SECOND READING: 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.  
People Thanks be to God.
THE PASSION GOSPEL: Matthew 27:11-54

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Narrator    Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him,

Pilate      Are you the King of the Jews?

Narrator    Jesus said,

Jesus      You say so.

Narrator    But when Jesus was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him,

Pilate    Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?

Narrator    But Jesus 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 the crowd,

Pilate    Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator    For Pilate realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests and the elders had handed Jesus over.

While Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him,

Wife    Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.

Narrator    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,

Pilate    Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

Narrator    And the crowd said,

Servant 1    Barabbas.

Narrator    Pilate said to them,

Pilate    Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Narrator    All of them said,

Servant 2    Let him be crucified!
Then Pilate asked,

Why, what evil has he done?

But the crowd 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 Pilate 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 Jesus 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 Jesus, 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, the soldiers came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry Jesus’ cross.

And when the soldiers came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him.

Over Jesus’ head they put the charge against him, which read,

This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Then two bandits were crucified with Jesus, 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 Jesus, 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 God wants to; for this man said, “I am God’s Son.”

The bandits who were crucified with Jesus 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.

Silence may be kept.

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!

THE SERMON

The Reverend Dr. William (Roy) Hills
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: FORM II

I ask your prayers for God’s people throughout the world; for Bishop Curry and Bishop Parsley; for this gathering; and for all ministers and people.
Pray for the Church.

Silence

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people.
Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.
Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.
Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the departed.
Pray for those who have died.

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored.
Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Silence

The Officiant adds a concluding Collect.

THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

The Officiant leads the People in reciting Psalm 63.

O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a barren and dry land where there is no water. Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might behold your power and your glory. For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise. So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your Name. My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips, When I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches. For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.
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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Officiant says

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

In union, O Lord, with faithful eucharistic people throughout the world, we offer you our thanks and praise. We present to you our souls and bodies, earnestly desiring that we may always be united with you. You promise, O Christ, to be present with us in the sacrament of your body and blood, so with confidence we claim your presence among us during this eucharistic fast. Come into our hearts and unite us with you and one another. May your healing grace abound. Let nothing ever separate you from us. May we live in you and you live in us, both in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Officiant and People

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

The Officiant concludes with the following

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

“THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY”

Charles Gounod
Margaret Kelly Cook, soprano

There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.
Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And died our sins to bear;
We trust in His redeeming blood,
And life eternal share.
We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear;
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might from our sins be freed,
Saved by His precious blood.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin,
He only could divine life give
And dwell Himself within.

Adapted from the Rite for Spiritual Communion by the Order of Julian of Norwich.

The worship is over. Now the service begins.