

*You are invited to harvest a palm branch from your yard OR let your inner-artist loose and create one as part of today's celebration!*

PRELUDE

CALL to WORSHIP ~

With palm branches waving we join our voices with the faithful across the centuries and with people worshipping from home today in shouting and singing, "Hosanna!" Say that with me, "Hosanna!" On the first Palm Sunday, there was hanging in the air a mixture of praise and prayer. Same is true for each of us today. We gather with our prayers for God's liberating love in these days and to rejoice in the ways God continues to move in our midst. Come, all who can hear my voice, join in this moment of worship with open hearts, voices, and lives.

**Many: Hosanna to God in the highest. Again, we sing, "Hosanna!"**

OPENING HYMN

*Hosanna, Loud, Hosanna*

*(verses 2 & 3 are written by Chris Shelton, 2018, written shortly after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL)*

**"Hosanna, loud hosanna," the little children sang;**

**Through pillared courts 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.**

**"O save us, Lord! Hosanna!" the people cried and sang;**

**Through pillared court and temple, their urgent anthem rang.**

**To Jesus who stood by them, the One who heard their plea,**

**The people sang their longing, their hunger to be free.**

**They followed down the mountain, a cheering, chanting crowd,**

**Their palms raised high in protest, their voices clear and loud.**

**They sang no songs to Caesar; they gave the king no laud.**

**Instead the donkey rider, they hailed as blessed of God.**

OPENING PRAYER – *Note – this prayer invites us into the meaning of "Hosanna" as save us.* God of green branches held in the palm of our hands, God of singing that reverberates around us and within us, God of ancient words that today have new meaning. We gather on this Palm Sunday freshly aware of how our lives are linked to those who first welcomed Jesus centuries ago. Like our brothers and sisters long ago, we long for You to ride in to save us. We long for you to intervene in the brokenness, sharp shards of life, divisions, and pain that sits in our hearts. *Hosanna.* Amid empty shelves in the store, we have glimpsed scarcity and hoarding. *Hosanna.* Amid social distancing, we have sensed loneliness and felt fear lodged in the back of our throats. *Hosanna.* Amid information overload, we have witnessed leaders lash out at each other. *Hosanna.* And here in our own homes where we worship today, we have known moments of silence when tears fall from our eyes and our souls exhausted. We thirst for a word of hope, resurrection, and new life in this moment. As we enter this Holy Week guide us with a grace, surround us with a strength, and let us discover Your love that is woven into every service this week.

**Hosanna, save us, O God from that which causes wounds, hurts, and harms ourselves, others, and this world You so love. Amen.**

CONTEMPORARY READING

*Between Parades*

by Ann Weems

OUR ENCOUNTER with SCRIPTURE

Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples <sup>2</sup> and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” <sup>4</sup> They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, <sup>5</sup> some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup> They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. <sup>7</sup> Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup> Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup> Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! <sup>10</sup> Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” <sup>11</sup> Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

SERMON

Embodiment

PASTORAL PRAYER & SUNG LORD’S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

*All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,  
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!  
The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way;  
Our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you this day.**

**O Promised One of Israel, of David’s royal line,  
The one called, “God’s beloved,” of flesh and yet divine,  
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, receive our prayers today,  
Whose justice and whose mercy and sovereignty hold sway.**

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,  
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!**

BENEDICTION

*The flowers on the altar today are given by Sara Little and Barbara Shaver in celebration of Diane Miller and Sara’s birthday on Easter Sunday.*