

Palm / Passion Sunday 2008

THE LITURGY OF THE PALMS

We assemble in the garden at the front of the church.

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

Hosanna in the highest!

If we were silent,
the stones themselves would shout aloud:

Hosanna in the highest!

A welcome is given to guests and any greetings to the congregation are delivered.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Merciful God, as we enter this Great and Holy Week of Passiontide,
we greet your Son, who entered Jerusalem to the acclaim of the
crowds. As we join our voices to their cries of "Hosanna",
give us the courage to follow him still, even when the crowds turn
away and his enemies close in.

**May the gates of our hearts always be open,
that he may enter in triumph and reign in peace.
Amen.**

Proclamation of the Entrance into Jerusalem

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 21. 1-11 is read.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Processional Psalm | 118.1-2, 19-29

Give thanks, the Lord is good, God's love is for ever!
Now let Israel say, "God's love is for ever!"

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

Open the gates of justice, let me praise God within them.
This is the Lord's own gate, only the just will enter.
I thank you for you answered me, and you became my saviour.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

The stone the builder's rejected has become the cornerstone.
This is the work of the Lord, how wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad.
Lord, give us the victory! Lord grant us success!

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the one who comes, who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the Lord's house.
The Lord God is our light: adorn the altar with branches.
I will thank you, my God, I will praise you highly.
Give thanks, the Lord is good, God's love is for ever!

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

We begin to process into the church, waving branches, banners, or clothing.

Song 724 *Hosanna in the highest* by Carl Tuttle (Key: "G")

1. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Lord we lift up your name, with hearts full of praise.
Be exalted O Lord our God!
Hosanna in the highest!
2. Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings.
Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings.
Lord we lift up your name, with hearts full of praise.
Be exalted O Lord our God!
Glory to the King of kings.

Once inside, branches and clothes may be laid around the cross. All find their seats but remain standing.

Hymn *Ride on, Ride on* by John Bell and Graham Maule

1. Ride on, ride on, the time is right:
The roadside crows scream with delight;
Palm branches mark the pilgrim way
Where beggars squat and children play.
2. Ride on, ride on, your critics wait,
Intrigue and rumour circulate;
New lines abound in word and jest,
And truth becomes a suspect guest.
3. Ride on, ride on, while well aware
That those who shout and wave and stare
Are mortals who, with common breath,
Can crave for life and lust for death.

4. Ride on, ride on, though blind with tears,
Though dumb to speak and deaf to jeers.
Your path is clear, though few can tell
Their garments pave the road to hell.
5. Ride on, ride on, the room is let,
The wine matured, the saw is whet;
And dice your death-throes shall attend
Though faith, not fate, dictates your end.
6. Ride on, ride on, God's love demands,
Justice and peace lie in your hands.
Evil and angel voices rhyme:
This is the man, and this the time.

Please be seated.

It was on this day that
the Christ entered the holy city to shouts of 'Hosanna!'
It was in this week that
he entered the Temple, the place of worship, and cleansed it;
it was in this week that
he gave the meal of thanksgiving to his disciples;
it was on the Friday of this week that he humbled himself,
and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Prayer of Confession

The Lord says:
"The kind of fasting I want is this: Remove the chains of oppression
and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your
food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor.
Then my favour will shine on you like the sun and your wounds will be
quickly healed."

When we confess you amongst your friends
but deny you when your enemies close in:
Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

When we clamour for your crown,
but refuse to shoulder your cross:
Christ, have mercy: **Christ, have mercy.**

When we would rather crucify the prophets
than un-weave the web of injustice.
Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

Silence.

We come to you, O God, for you alone can restore us.
We are not able to heal ourselves.
We are not able to forgive ourselves.
We are not able to restore ourselves.
We are not able to sanctify ourselves.
We are not able to satisfy ourselves.
We come to you, O God,
for you alone can make us whole.

Assurance of forgiveness

The minister holds the cross before the people.

The God who vindicates us is near. We shall not be put to shame.
With the Lord God as our help no one can declare us guilty.
Sisters and brothers, Christ has this word of grace for everyone who
turns to him for mercy and help: Your sins are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

Doxology 705 *Behold the Lamb of God*

News and notices

Children Anthem *Hosanna*

Homily

Affirmation of faith *A Pilgrim People*

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

**We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen one,
confessing him as Lord
to the glory of God the Father.**

**In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the church,
the head over all things,
the beginning of a new creation.**

**We acknowledge that we live and work between
the time of Christ's death and resurrection
and the final consummation of all things which he will bring.
We are a pilgrim people,
always on the way toward a promised goal;
on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,
and we have the gift of the Spirit
in order that we may not lose the way.**

**We will live and work within the faith and unity
of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,
bearing witness to that unity
which is both Christ's gift and his will.**

**We affirm that every member of the church
is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
Together with all the people of God,
we will serve the world for which Christ died.
And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Adapted from the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia

Offertory

Prayers of the People

I ask you to pray for the peace of Jerusalem,
and for all the nations of the world.
Pray for enemies to be reconciled and for justice to be done.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

I ask you to pray for candidates for baptism and confirmation,
and for Christians everywhere.
Pray for courage and integrity in following the way of the cross.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

I ask you to pray for all who offer their gifts to Christ,
and for those who have betrayed his trust in them.
Pray for love and loyalty in all our relationships.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

I ask you to pray for the sick and all prisoners,

and for people preparing to die.
Pray for healing, freedom, and hope.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

I ask you to pray for the forgiveness of our sins
through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Pray for pardon and peace.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

I ask you to give thanks for all the saints,
and for the resurrection light that shines on them.
Remember those who have died.

Silent prayer

Lord, hear us. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Holy God, hear the prayers of your Church.
Forgive our sins, and send us the grace we need
to be faithful followers of our crucified and risen Lord,
for we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Hymn 336 *O bride of Christ, rejoice*

Blessing and sending

Keep alert, stand firm in your faith,
be courageous, be strong.
Let all that you do be done in love.

The blessing of God be with you all,
that of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Liturgy of the Passion

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

We gather around the cross, on which candles are lit.

Greeting and introduction

Hymn of praise 335 *To Christ, the prince of peace*

Prayer of gathering

Since we live as people of the light;
in faith, hope and love let us pray to the Lord:



As this Holy Lent enters its final great week
and we maintain our pilgrimage of renewal and repentance
through self-examination, prayer, meditation on the scriptures,
acts of mercy, fasting, and dedication to the ways of justice and
reconciliation;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

Joining our voices with the deep groans of creation
yearning for redemption;
with the traditional owners of this land, the Wurundjeri people,
and with all faithful custodians of the earth;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

With all who suffer with Christ under the weight of the sin of the
world: those subjected to injustice and deprivation, those seeking
refuge, freedom and peace;
with all who bear the wounds of a broken world
and yearn for healing and renewal;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

With all who serve the earth and its inhabitants: with leaders, policy-
makers, activists, with workers, students, artists and story-tellers;
with the world's children, with the aged and infirm, with all who know
their need of others;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

With each one gathered here in prayer and with our absent brothers
and sisters;
with the whole of Christ's church, from the Yarra banks to the ends of
the earth; and especially with our persecuted sisters and brothers;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

With God's faithful servants of every time and place, who year by year,
generation after generation, have prepared for the celebration of our
immersion into the mysteries of Christ's death and resurrection by

faithfully observing this season of Lent;
let us pray to the Lord:

Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Scripture Isaiah 50: 4-9

Psalm 31. 9-16



Pity me, Lord, I hurt all over;
my eyes are swollen, my heart and body ache.
Grief consumes my life, sighs fill my days;
guilt saps my strength, my bones dissolve.

**In you, O Lord, I found refuge;
let me nevermore be put to shame.**

Enemies mock me, making me the butt of jokes.
Neighbours scorn me, strangers avoid me.
Forgotten like the dead, I am a shattered jar.
I hear the crowd whisper, "Attack on every side!"
as they scheme to take my life.

**In you, O Lord, I found refuge;
let me nevermore be put to shame.**

But I trust in you, Lord. I say,

"You are my God, my life is in your hands."
Snatch me from my enemies, ruthless in their chase.
Look on me with love, save your servant.

**In you, O Lord, I found refuge;
let me nevermore be put to shame.**

Philippians 2. 5-11

The Gospel Proclamation of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

During Lent we have been preparing, by works of love and sacrifice, for the celebration of the most profound mystery of our faith: our Lord's Passover from death to life. The meaning of Christ's resurrection can never be truly understood apart from his suffering and death. Therefore, tonight, as we enter the Great Holy Week of Passiontide, you are invited to meditate on the stories of the final days during which Jesus completed his work under the ever darkening shadow of the cross.

The gradual extinguishing of the lights reminds us of the advancing darkness that came over Jesus with the flight of the disciples, the bitter hatred of his enemies, and the looming certainty of torture and death. The time of total darkness recalls the time when he was in the tomb. The relighting of a single candle is a prophecy of the coming Day of Resurrection.

So come, let us journey with our Lord on the way of the cross so that, sharing his sufferings, we may be united with him in his risen life.

Where Christ walks, **we will follow.**
Where Christ stumbles, **we will stop.**
Where Christ cries out, **we will listen.**
Where Christ suffers, **we will hurt.**

Where Christ dies, **we will bow our heads in sorrow.**
When Christ rises again in glory, **we will share his endless joy.**
There is no other way; **Christ is the only way.**

Hymn *You are the Prisoner* by Robin Mann

1. You are the prisoner shackled and bound;
Soldiers mistreat you, you make no sound;
They lead you captive for all to see;
You are the prisoner, and I am free.
2. You are abandoned, left all alone;
Your friends are faithless, hearts made of stone.
Blood from your crown seeps down on your face;
You are abandoned, I am embraced.
3. You are condemned to carry a cross;
'Guilty' the verdict, this is the cost:
Thirty-nine lashes, hung amongst thieves;
You are condemned, and I am reprieved.
4. You are brought down and you are despised,
Humiliated, dehumanised;
Cruel is your suffering, bitter your cup;
You are brought down and I am raised up.
5. Let me look closely into your pain,
Learn of your suffering, know all your shame;
Let me attend to all of your wounds—
Jesus you'll never suffer alone.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 26.14 – 27.66

The reading will be divided into twelve scenes and done in the style of the ancient *Tenebrae* liturgies, where the growing darkness of Christ's journey to the cross is symbolised by a progressive extinguishing of the lights. The following refrain is sung after each reading:



The Sermon of Silence [Lights go out]

At the conclusion of the reading, we will observe five minutes of complete silence in the darkness for contemplation and reflection. You may sit or kneel as you are comfortable during the silence.

Some lights are then put on again.

Hymn *Lord Jesus Christ, shall I stand still?* by John Bell

1. Lord Jesus Christ, shall I stand still
And stare at you, hung on the tree;
Or shall I move to where you move
And die and live again for me?
Shall I to sin and failure cling,
Consorting with the guilt I hate;
Or on your shoulders shall I fling
The wrong I breed and contemplate?
2. Shall I your story read and tell
To note your mark on history;
Or shall I make your story mine

And live by faith and mystery?
Shall I embrace the love you show
And covet this sweet holy thing:
Or of that love shall my heart speak,
My hands relate, my being sing?

3. Shall I retreat from where you fall
And seek a safer path through life;
Or shall I meet you in the world
Where peace is scarce, injustice rife?
Lord Jesus Christ, the God who lives
To love and die and rise again,
Make me the who, and you the why,
Your way the how, and now the when.

Confession of Faith

Let us stand to affirm the faith of the Church.

***We believe in God,
creator of all that is and shall be,
redeemer of all that is less than it could be,
sustainer of our living, our loving, our being.***

***We believe in the cross of Christ,
drenched in hatred and cruelty,
yet overflowing with God's unquenchable love.
We believe in the bread of life:
broken and shared it opens our eyes to the presence of Christ
and strengthens us for the journey.***

***We believe in the pain suffered by Christ:
all our hurts, torments and betrayals***

***magnified in the purity of love,
and embraced by him that we might be free.***

***We believe in the joy of the Holy Spirit,
poured into the hearts of those who,
with courage and resolve,
refuse to trade integrity for popularity.***

***We believe in the gospel,
good news offered to us in Jesus,
despised by the world but leading us in the way of life.***

***We believe in love: the nature of God,
a gift unsurpassed,
but a mystery only fulfilled
when everything else is relinquished.***

***We believe in light shining from darkness.
in mercy vanquishing bitterness,
in life bursting free where death reigned.***

How then shall we live?
How shall this faith take flesh in the world?

The cross? ***We will take it.***
The bread? ***We will break it.***
The pain? ***We will bear it.***
The joy? ***We will share it.***
The Gospel? ***We will live it.***
The love? ***We will give it.***
The light? ***We will cherish it.***
The darkness? ***God shall perish it.***

Choir Anthem *Praise to thee Lord Jesus* by H. Schutz

The Prayers of the People

Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess, for we have a great High Priest who has gone into the very presence of God — Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

***By God's grace, we share in Christ's priesthood,
praying for the world day and night
until earth and heaven are reconciled
and all things are made one in Christ.***

That we may remain humble in our preparation for the blessings of the Paschal celebration, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear us: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

That we may treasure the Word spoken into our hearts, learning to understand and live it out, that we may learn to know Christ, who came to save all who are lost, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear us: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

That we may face our sin with truth and humility, that we may turn from evil and embrace the good, that the Holy Spirit, who searches the hearts of all people, may strengthen our weakness with the power of God, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear us: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

That this preparation for the feast of Christ's resurrection may change our hearts, empowering us to love even the least, that our families and friends may be converted to faith in Christ, and receive from him the peace that passes all understanding, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear us: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

That the world might be healed of its grievous wounds, that wars would cease and sorrow and mourning flee away, that all whom we carry in our hearts might be gathered into our prayers, let us lift up to God the names of those for whom we would especially seek God's care:

Silent prayer.

Lord, hear us: ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

That we may learn to pray as our Saviour prays, let us pray the prayer he taught us:

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.***

SENDING OUT OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Lenten Covenant

When God's calls, ***we shall listen.***

Where God sends, ***we shall go.***

Where Christ goes before us, ***we shall follow.***

When the way becomes rough,
we shall call on the Spirit for courage.
When the way becomes dark,
we shall look to Christ for light.
When the way becomes lonely,
we shall lean on our brothers and sisters.
When the way seems impossible,
**we shall not give in,
for nothing is impossible for God.**

Hymn 256 *The Servant King*

Go now and follow Christ.
Have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus;
keep your ears open to God's teaching;
Be humble, even in the face of hostility.
Though the road before you leads to the cross of Jesus,
do not turn back. Christ walks with you.
God will help you and keep you from disgrace;
Christ Jesus will lead you through the gates of justice;
The Holy Spirit will keep you in God's steadfast embrace.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Please feel free to remain in silent prayer and contemplation for as long as you wish.

This liturgy was written by Garry J. Deverell & Nathan Nettleton. If you wish to use it in some way, please ask permission at E: gjdweb@gmail.com. Web: www.deverell.net