

Order of Service for the Public Worship of God

Palm Sunday ~ April 1, 2007

Eleven O'clock, A.M

Pastor: Dr. James E. Swanson Liturgist: Mr. Thomas Davidson
Organist / Choir Director: Miss Beverly Antis

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To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and want fellowship; and to all who will come, this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
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THE PRELUDE *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* Hans Arnold Metzger
 My Song Is Love Unknown Robert J. Powell
 All Glory, Laud, and Honor Georg Friedrich Kaufmann

THE CHORAL INTROIT *Antiphonal Hosanna* G. Alan Smith

*THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 88
 All Glory, Laud, and Honor VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

*THE PRAYER OF ADORATION

THE PSALM 118:1-2, 19-29

THE CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor: We have gathered as children of God's promise, yet we come as sinners and strangers to the truth. We come to confession with confidence, because in Christ we are set free from the law by the grace of God. Let us pray together:

THE PUBLIC PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, you know us better than we know ourselves. You know how alike we are, and yet how very different: rebels and conformists, shouters and whisperers, party-lovers and wall-flowers. Yet we come most humbly, just as we are, into worship this hour to stand with Christ. How like the crowds who gathered in Jerusalem, we are -- both exhilarated and afraid; excited to shout Hosannas hailing Jesus, but all too ready to deny Him.

Hear us as we confess our faults before You, Father, and acknowledge that which holds us back from full commitment and discipleship. Forgive us, and set us free to follow where Christ leads. In his precious name we pray.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: We have opened our hearts wide in God's holy presence. Here and now we have offered our failures, our faults, and our secret sins, seeking divine mercy and forgiveness. Friends, this is the good news of the gospel:

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in the true human, Jesus, to reconcile and make new, who works with us and others by the Holy Spirit. We trust in God, who calls us to be the church: to celebrate the Spirit's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our Judge and our Hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*THE GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

Kindly pass your written prayer requests to the center so they may be placed into the basket. These will be forwarded to the Prayer Cordon for special attention. Thank you.

THE SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord

Felix Mendelssohn

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Zechariah 9:9-16 (*Pew Bible p. 837*)

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord. All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE ANTHEM

The Palms

J. Fauré

*O'er all the way green palms and blossoms gay
Are strewn this day, in festal preparation.
Where Jesus comes to wipe our tears away,
E'en now the throng to welcome Him prepare;*
[CHORUS]

*His Word goes forth, and people by its might
Once more regain freedom from degradation.
Humanity doth give to each his right,
While those in darkness are restored to light.*
[CHORUS]

*Sing and rejoice, O blest Jerusalem.
Of all thy sons sing the emancipation.
Through boundless love the Christ of Bethlehem
Brings faith and hope to thee forevermore.*
[CHORUS]

[CHORUS] *Join all and sing, His name declare,
Let ev'ry voice resound with acclamation: Hosanna!
Praise to the Lord!
Bless Him who cometh to bring us salvation.*

THE EPISTLE LESSON 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (*Pew Bible p. 156*)

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of the Epistle. All: **Praise be to you, O Lord.**

*THE GOSPEL LESSON Luke 19:28-40 (*Pew Bible p. 79*)

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord. All: **Glory to You, O Christ.**

*THE CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE - Hymn 321, vs. 1 SONG 13

*Holy Spirit, truth divine, Dawn upon this soul of mine;
Word of God, and inward light, Wake my spirit, clear my sight.*

THE SERMON “*MUCH MORE THAN A PARADE*” Dr. Swanson

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD’S PRAYER (using “debts” and “debtors”)

THE RECEIVING OF “ONE GREAT HOUR” OFFERINGS AND
THE PRESENTATION OF REGULAR TITHES AND GIFTS

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Agnus* Steve Dobrogosz

*THE DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

*THE UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, open our eyes to see the grace of your gift to us through Jesus Christ. In faithfulness, we respond by offering up these gifts. Bless, we pray, the special offerings for One Great Hour of Sharing. As we open wide our hearts in response to the needs of our brothers and sisters in places far and near, we proclaim your love for those who are hungry, and homeless; broken by disease and despair. In faithfulness, we await the day when all people will know and proclaim your shalom: true peace. Amen.

*THE RECESSIONAL HYMN 89 *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* ELLACOMBE

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE CHORAL RESPONSE *May The Road Rise Up To Meet You* Robert Lau

*THE TIME OF SILENCE

*THE CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: Let us now depart, embraced by the steadfast love of God, encouraged by the humility and obedience of Jesus Christ, filled with the immeasurable power of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Blessed be the name of the Lord!**

Pastor: The Lord’s name be praised in all the earth and in heaven above!

People: **Hosanna in the highest! Thanks be to God!**

THE POSTLUDE Ride On, Ride On, in Majesty Hans Arnold Metzger
AND DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS

*Those who are able, please stand.

GREETINGS to all this day who worship the God of past, present and future. We want to get to know you. Please introduce yourself to others sitting nearby during the passing of the peace.

THE GREETERS TODAY - Greeting our members and visitors before the Sunday worship services in April are Jo and John Towns.

THE FLOWERS:

In the Sanctuary are provided by Ann Morrison in honor of her son Benjamin's 20th birthday celebrated on March 30.

In the Assembly Room (reception table) are the flowers from yesterday's Lenten concert, courtesy of Nancy Jo Moorhead.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR immediately follows this worship service downstairs in the Assembly Room. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. Hosting Palm Sunday's Fellowship Hour is Nancy Jo Moorhead.

THE ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERNG will be **received during this morning's worship service**. A remittance envelope has been provided in this bulletin if you have forgotten yours. Please make checks payable to Covenant Presbyterian Church designated *One Great Hour of Sharing* in the memo portion. If you are enclosing cash, please remember to place your name on the envelope to receive proper credit for your contribution. Thank you for your support.

THE COVENANT CHOIR will rehearse this Wednesday, April 4, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary in preparation for the Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday services.

EASTER DECORATING - The Fellowship and Outreach Committee will meet at the church **this Saturday, April 7 at 9:30 a.m. to decorate** the church for the Easter Service.

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITH GRATITUDE: Thank you to Reverend John Porter, Associate Pastor of Hill Presbyterian Church for leading the Special Needs Communion on behalf of Pastor Jim and to our "Special Needs Task Force": Beverly Antis, Larry Morrison, Connie Brown, Jane Hall, Donna Hobaugh, and Virginia Lokovich. Everyone contributed their best effort to make the service meaningful and the lunch & fellowship a delight for our shut-ins and their caregivers. THANK YOU!

HALLELUJAH: THE BIBLE AND HANDEL'S MESSIAH (After Easter)

RESUMES WEDNESDAYS @ 1:00 PM: April 18, April 25 and May 2
(Topic: Resurrection of Jesus Christ)

April 18 - Covenant Church (led by Rev. Meloy)

April 25 - Faith Presbyterian (led by Pastor Jim)

May 2 - St. Andrews Presbyterian (led by Pastor Jim)

EASTER FLOWERS - Today is the last day to sign up for Easter flowers. Please use the yellow sign-up sheet enclosed and make your check payable to Covenant Presbyterian Church designated "Session Flower Fund" in the memo portion.

Suggested Donations for Covenant Cupboard in April

Peanut Butter and / or Jelly

Baskets for your donations are located at the front entrance on E. Jefferson St.

In The Life of Our Church

Prayer Concerns . . .

Leah Swanson for improving health
Frank "Bud" & Julie Bruno health concerns
Dorothy Hitchcock at home, prayers for peace and comfort
Mary Timmons continued prayers for strength and comfort

Celebrating birthdays this week . . .

James L. Coulter - April 1
Tim Snyder - April 3
Beverly McClaine - April 3
Karen Daugherty McJunkin - April 3
Rebecca Brook King - April 3
Lois Reefer - April 7
Lisa Schlicht McPeak - April 7

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please accept our apology. If you would like us to publish the date in the Chronicle and bulletin, please call the church office at 724-287-7731.

No anniversaries to report this week.

Seekers Class Explores & Discusses PBS videos

The Seekers Class is currently viewing "*From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians*," the original series broadcast on PBS which explores the life and death of Jesus and tells the epic story of the rise of Christianity. The Seekers will view each video for a half-hour and then discuss how Christian faith can be reconciled with the "historical approach" to the Bible and to Jesus.

Inquiring minds are always welcome at the Seekers Adult Class which gathers each Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. in the Assembly Room. Tea, coffee and a snack are served from the small kitchen before class.

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL SERVICES



HOLY WEEK

Thursday, April 5th at 8:00 p.m. - Maundy Thursday Service of Darkness based on the ancient tradition of extinguishing the lights one by one until the worshipping congregation sits in total darkness in anticipation of Good Friday.

Friday, April 6th at 12 Noon - The Joint Good Friday Service scheduled with other Presbyterian churches will be held at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 201 E. Jefferson St. Pastor Jim will take part in the service and members of our congregation are encouraged to attend.

Sunday (Easter Sunday), April 8 at 11 a.m. - We will celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



The Calling of the King

A Palm Sunday Reflection

*by Fr. John Foley, S. J.
of the Center for Liturgy*

Merlin the magician knew there are two kinds of kings. We find this out in T. H. White's story of King Arthur (*The Once and Future King*). One kind enjoys power, wealth, war and pride, leaving little room for the people's welfare. At the other end of the spectrum is a king/queen who has empathetic care for each person, for the well-being of the populace.

Arthur is meant to be the good kind of ruler, not the power monger. As you know, Merlin kidnaps him as a baby from his father's great castle and begins to train him in a far away bedraggled court. The rest of that story remains for another day, but it is interesting to note that nearly the same thing happened to Jesus—minus the kidnapping. He was brought up in quite modest circumstances, and he loved the small and beautiful parts of his dusty childhood.

This Sunday, however, Jesus starts off as anything but modest. He receives the pomp and glory of power and he accepts it!

To honor a kingly person in those days, people lined the sides of the roadway. The custom was for him to ride a colt, or as it is often translated, donkey, which was not supposed to be a sign of humility but of kingly status. People would strew their cloaks on the roadway along with the tall palms fronds they had picked to shield the King from the dirty roadway.

As we hear in the Processional Reading, Jesus did not shy away from these honors; in fact he caused them to happen. He sent disciples to get the colt. He chose to ride it into Jerusalem. The people clothed the roadway in cloaks and palms. They hailed him as savior king.

Jesus had always been very wary of this kind of treatment. He had often warned the disciples not to tell anyone about the miracles he was doing, so that he would not become a celebrity. So, why the exception in this case?

The answer can be found in that which follows the royal entrance. Minutes after the special opening procession of Sunday's Mass, we hear not homage, but demonization (*Christ's Passion from the Gospel of Luke*).

Suddenly the great king is betrayed. Peter the Rock, who promised never to deny him, does so three times. Jesus says out loud that he, Jesus, must be “counted among the wicked” (Luke 22:37, quoting Isaiah 53:8-12). He sweats blood in the garden and hands himself over to evil. He puts himself in the devil’s hands, saying, “This is your hour, time for the power of darkness.” A mock trial follows, and the supposed king joins simple thieves in bloody death. The kingship was false.

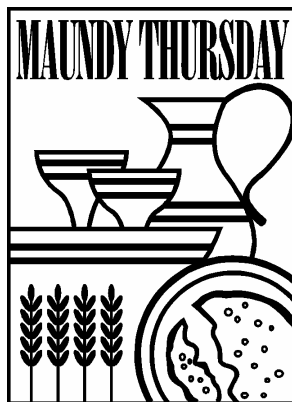
Or was it? All leadership has service at its root. The reason for kingship is not dominance, riches, honor or power. These give siren calls to entice the leader into their way, but kingship and all leadership exist in order to secure the welfare of the kingdom and especially the welfare of those who are ruled.

Jesus had come to bring this kind of kingdom, one of service and humility, not of pride and competition. The way of the cross was the greatest fulfillment of his kingliness, as opposed to the way of cheering and accolades.

The royal entrance was to show that he was indeed a king. The passion shows us what kingship means. It shows the mildness that dwells within the deepest structure of each human person, even in the midst of evil.

Listen in quiet this Sunday.

In the Christian calendar, Holy Thursday - also called “Maundy Thursday” and, in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, “Great Thursday” - is the feast or holy day on the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles. It is followed by Good Friday.



On this day four events are commemorated: the washing of the Disciple's feet by Jesus Christ, the institution of the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist (Holy Communion) at the Last Supper, the agony of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the betrayal of Christ by Judas.

This Thursday, April 5, we will recall again the events of Jesus' last hours and acknowledge the mystery of Christ's presence in the bread and the cup, shared with all. (Our worship begins at 8:00 pm. Please be with us for this "Service of Darkness," a powerful and moving experience.

PALM SUNDAY



April 1, 2007

"Hosanna in the highest!"
That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer,
who came as Servant-King.
O may we ever praise him
with heart and life and voice.
He walks life's pathways with us.
Come, let us all rejoice!

The Reverend Dr. James E. Swanson

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