

Calvary United Methodist Church

Sunday, March 28, 2021; 10:15 am

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Dee Freeman

Call To Worship

Leader: Let us worship the Lord—not just with our voices, but also with our entire being.

People: **We gather to worship the One who is highly exalted and whose name is above every name, Jesus the Christ.**

Leader: Your presence demands our participation. Our worship is never wasteful.

People: **Be gracious to us, O Lord. We are your servants; empty us for your use. We are Christ's servants and may we be of the same mind.**

All: **We declare that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Praise be unto God!¹**

Invocation of the Spirit

Second Testament Lesson

John 12:12-16

“The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!” His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.” (NRSV)

Declaration of Praises

A Blessing of Gifts

Sharing of Prayer Concerns

Prayer Time

¹ Alexis Carter, *Lenten Liturgical Resources from African Writers*, edited by Safiya Fosua, 2020.

Lenten Reading

Leader: We place at the cross today the palm branches that welcomed Jesus as He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. The people loudly shouting, “Hosanna!” expected to be saved by a conquering hero. Palm Sunday reminds us of our self-centered expectations.

People: Lord Jesus, we confess our misguided, impatient expectations. We expect You to deliver us from suffering. We expect You to bless our materialism. We expect You to destroy our enemies. Help us say “No” to our self-centered, unholy expectations. Help us say “Yes” to the cross.

Leader: Palm Sunday is about worship. We worship the One most holy. We worship the One for whom we are willing to die.

People: Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that, although we worshiped You on Sunday, we denied You on Friday. Like Peter we promised to die for You; You have died for us. Help us say “No” to worship without sacrifice. Help us say “Yes” to the cross.

Leader: Palm Sunday is about worship. But the people turned the triumphal entry into a political parade.

People: Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that the heroes we most admire ride in chariots pulled by white horses. We confess that we don’t want to follow leaders who empty themselves of power, and ride on donkeys. Help us say “No” to “might making right.” Help us say “Yes” to the cross.

Leader: Palm Sunday is about worship. But we follow Jesus, hoping for positions of power on his right and on his left.

People: Lord Jesus, Holy Week reminds us that we want Your power without accepting the cup of suffering that You drank, without the obedience to the point of death. We want your Kingdom to come, but we fear it will cost us too much. Help us say “No” to our weak disobedience. Help us say “Yes” to the cross.

Leader: Let us pray together...

People: Almighty God, we confess that we love parades of power; Your parade was humble. We confess that we worship conquering heroes; You were conquered. We confess that we grasp whatever advantage we can get; You emptied Yourself for us. In Jesus Christ You have brought us mercy! Teach us to be merciful to one another. Burn our palm branches into ash; help us take up our cross daily and follow You. Amen.²

² <http://www.crivoice.org/lentliturgyYearB.html>

Scripture Lesson

Romans 8:31-39

"What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NLT)

Sermon

Rev. Matthew Williams

Shalom To You: Nothing Can Separate Us!

Closing Hymn

Near to the Heart of God

Benediction

Postlude

Dee Freeman

Near to the Heart of God

1. There is a place of qui - et rest, near to the heart of God;
 2. There is a place of com - fort sweet, near to the heart of God;
 3. There is a place of full re - lease, near to the heart of God;

a place where sin can - not mo - lest, near to the heart of God.
 a place where we our Sav - ior meet, near to the heart of God.
 a place where all is joy and peace, near to the heart of God.

Refrain

O Je - sus, blest Re - deem - er, sent from the heart of God,

hold us who wait be - fore thee near to the heart of God.

Announcements

- Please take the bulletin(s) that you have touched home with you.
- **Maundy Thursday Service**
Calvary will be hosting a joint Maundy Thursday Service this week with Westmont UMC. Join us at 7pm as we remember what our Savior has done for us and we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion.
- **Baptisms Last Week**
Sophia Mae, daughter of Matthew and Heather Lohr, was baptized on March 20. Layla Klaire, daughter of Ryan and Kaitlyn Kennedy, was baptized on March 21. Our best wishes to the families on these dedications.
- **West End Food Pantry Donations**
Today is the last day for your non-perishable food items for our local food bank. Thank you for your donations.
- **Camp Allegheny Shoe Drive**
We collected 100+ pairs of shoes for Camp Allegheny. A big thanks to all who donated. We have helped put shoes on feet around the world!
- **Just My Smile Donations**
Just My Smile is a new nonprofit operating in our County. Their mission is to ensure that every family with a newborn is offered support and resources in the crucial first year of life. They are seeking donations such as diapers, bottles, etc. *A list of items is available in front of the sanctuary.*
- **Feed the Need**
Our church family contributed donations totaling \$200 to the Johnstown Christian School "Feed the Need" project. JCS is partnering with an organization to provide meal kits to families in need. Students will be taking a day to pack these meal kits as a mission opportunity. Thank you to those who financially supported this mission project.
- **The Greatest Love**
This free booklet of 10 Easter Reflections from Our Daily Bread is available, in front of the sanctuary.