

Trinity Episcopal Church

Cranford, in the Diocese of New Jersey



"The Procession in the Streets of Jerusalem" — James Tissot

Palm Sunday: The Sunday of the Passion

Holy Eucharist - Rite II - March 29, 2026 at 10 AM



The Reverend Andrew David Kruger - Rector & Presider

Anthony J. Rafaniello - Director of Music & Organist

Casey Woodruff - Senior Warden & Kathleen M. Murray - Junior Warden

I. Gathering of God's People

Welcome

Andrew Kruger

Handbell Prelude

"All Glory, Laud and Honor" – arr. Cynthia Dobrinski

Palm Sunday Acclamation

Matthew 21:9

Presider Hosanna to the Son of David,
People **the King of Israel.**

Presider Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
People **Hosanna in the highest.**

Introduction

Common Worship

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Savior, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with Christ in suffering, we may share the Lord's risen life.

Blessing the Palms

CW

Presider Please raise your palms for the prayer of blessing:

Eternal God, ✠ bless these palms to our use: grant that we who have received them may ever hail as King, and love as Savior, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Palm Gospel

Matthew 21:1-11

Presider ✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"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."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The 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!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Palm Procession

CW

My brothers and sisters, we have heard how the crowds who welcomed Christ to Jerusalem cut branches from the trees to do him honor. During the procession, let us hold up our palms, and praise Christ our King and Savior.

Presider Let us go forth in peace.
People **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The People process from the parish hall to the church, holding their palm branches.

Processional Chant

“Hosanna, ho!” – Ben Allaway

Cantor *All* *Cantor* *All etc.*

Ho - san-na, ho! Ho - san-na, ho! Ho - san-na, ho - san-na! Ho - san-na, ho - san-na, ho - san-na! Ho-san - na, ho-san-na! Ho-san - na, ho-san-na! Blest is the one who comes, in the name of the Lord, ho - san-na! In the name of the Lord, ho-san-na!

Preparatory Collect

Book of Common Prayer 272

Presider Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose most dear 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.**

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re - deem - er, King!
to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1 Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,
2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels is prais - ing thee on high;
3 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;
4 To thee be - fore thy pas - sion they sang their hymns of praise;
5 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Repeat Refrain

1 who in the Lord's Name com - est, the King and Bless - ed One.
2 and we with all cre - a - tion in cho - rus make re - ply.
3 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
4 to thee, now high ex - al - ted, our mel - o - dy we raise.
5 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King.

Collect of the Day

BCP 219

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider 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 People sit. Children PreK-3 through Grade 4 gather in the crossing for the blessing.

Blessing of the Sunday School Children and their Teachers

Andrew Kruger

Presider May God bless those who teach and those who learn,

✱ in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

II. Proclaiming and Receiving the Word of God

First Reading

Isaiah 50:4-9a

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. 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. 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

In te, Domine, speravi

Plainsong Psalter

All sing the Antiphon and Psalm.



In - cline your ear to me, O LORD; make haste to de - liv - er me.



TONE VII.3

- 9 Havē mērcy on me, O LORD, for Í am in tróuble; *
my eye is consumed with sorrow,
and also my thróat and my bēlly.
- 10 For my life is wasted with grief,
and my yéars with síghing; *
my strength fails me because of affliction,
and my bónes are cónsumed.
- 11 I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors,
a dismay to those of mý acquáintance; *
when they see me in the stréet they avóid me.
- 12 I am forgotten like a déad man, óut of mind; *
I am as useless ás a bróken pot.
- 13 For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;
féar is áll around; *
they put their heads together against me;
They plót to táke my life.
- 14 But as for me, I have trústed in yóu, O LORD. *
I have said, “Yóu are mý God.

15 My times are in your hand; *
 rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
 and from those who persecute me.

16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *
 and in your loving-kindness save me." [Ant.]

Second Reading

Philippians 2:5-11

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians.

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.**

Proclaiming Hymn

Cross of Jesus

Hymnal 160

1 Cross of Je - sus, cross of sor - row, where the
 2 Here the King of all the a - ges, throned in
 3 O mys - ter - ious con - de - scend - ing! O a -
 4 Cross of Je - sus, cross of sor - row, where the

blood of Christ was shed, per - fect Man on
 light ere worlds could be, robed in mor - tal
 ban - don - ment sub - lime! Ve - ry God him -
 blood of Christ was shed, per - fect Man on

thee did suf - fer, per - fect God on thee has bled!
 flesh is dy - ing, cru - ci - fied by sin for me.
 self is bear - ing, all the suf - fer - ings of time!
 thee did suf - fer, per - fect God on thee has bled!

The Passion According to St Matthew

Matthew 26:14—27:66

The People sit. The Passion is read in parts, led by the narrator who begins by saying:

Narrator: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.
One of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

Judas: “What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?”

Narrator: They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying,

Disciples: “Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

Narrator: He said,

Jesus: “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’”

Narrator: So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal. When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said,

Jesus: “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

Narrator: And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another,

Disciples: “Surely not I, Lord?”

Narrator: He answered,

Jesus: “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.”

Narrator: Judas, who betrayed him, said,

Judas: “Surely not I, Rabbi?”

Narrator: He replied,

Jesus: “You have said so.”

Narrator: While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said,

Jesus: “Take, eat; this is my body.”

Narrator: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying,

Jesus: “Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Narrator: When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: “You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: “Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.”

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: “Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.”

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.”

Narrator: And so said all the disciples.
Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples,

Jesus: “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”

Narrator: He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated.
Then he said to them,

Jesus: “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.”

Narrator: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed,

Jesus: “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.”

Narrator: Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter,

Jesus: “So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Narrator: Again he went away for the second time and prayed,

Jesus: “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”

Narrator: Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them,

Jesus: “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

Narrator: While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,

Judas: “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.”

Narrator: At once he came up to Jesus and said,

Judas: “Greetings, Rabbi!”

Narrator: and kissed him. Jesus said to him,

Jesus: “Friend, do what you are here to do.”

Narrator: Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

Jesus: “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?”

Narrator: At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

Jesus: “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.”

Narrator: Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said,

Accusers: “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”

Narrator: The high priest stood up and said,

High Priest: “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?”

Narrator: But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him,

High Priest: “I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Narrator: Then the high priest tore his clothes and said,

High Priest: “He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?”

Narrator: They answered,

Chief Priests: “He deserves death.”

Narrator: Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, saying,

Chief Priests: “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?”

Narrator: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said,

Servant Girl: “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.”

Narrator: But he denied it before all of them, saying,

Peter: “I do not know what you are talking about.”

Narrator: When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders,

Servant Girl: This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Narrator: Again he denied it with an oath,

Peter: “I do not know the man.”

Narrator: After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter,

Bystander: Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.”

Narrator: Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath,

Peter: “I do not know the man!”

Narrator: At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said:

Jesus: “Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.”

Narrator: And he went out and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said,

Judas: “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

Narrator: But they said,

Chief Priests: “What is that to us? See to it yourself.”

Narrator: Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said,

Chief Priests: “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.”

Narrator: After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”

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 he 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 he 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 them,

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

Narrator: For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him,

Pilate's 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 they said,

Congregation: **"Barabbas."**

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

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

Narrator: All of them said,

Congregation: **"Let him be crucified!"**

Narrator: Then he asked,

Pilate: "Why, what evil has he done?"

Narrator: But they shouted all the more,

Congregation: **"Let him be crucified!"**

Narrator: 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,

Pilate: "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

Narrator: Then the people as a whole answered,

Congregation: **"His blood be on us and on our children!"**

Narrator: So he 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 him 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,

Soldiers: "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Narrator: They spat on him, 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.

At the mention of Golgotha, the congregation stands and remains standing for the remainder of the reading.

Narrator: As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

Bystanders: "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."

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him,

Chief Priests: "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 he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'"

Narrator: The bandits who were crucified with him 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,

Jesus: "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?"

Narrator: that is,

Jesus: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Narrator: When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

Bystanders: "This man is calling for Elijah."

Narrator: 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,

Bystanders: "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

Narrator: Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. 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,

Centurion: “Truly this man was God’s Son!

Narrator: Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb. The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

Chief Priests: “Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead,’ and the last deception would be worse than the first.”

Narrator: Pilate said to them,

Pilate: “You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.”

Narrator: So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

III. Responding to the Proclaimed Word

Silence is kept.

Prayers of the People

Common Worship

The Presider says

Lord Christ, grant us the grace to be vessels of your humility and nurture in us a mind like yours so that our prayers will be in tune with your heart.

The Intercessor prays

Lord Jesus, you emptied yourself, trading in the form of God for the form of a slave; form us into a Church willing to let go of prestige, so that we will truly embrace your saving power.

Our lives are in your hands: **We trust in you, O Lord.**

Lord Jesus, every ‘tongue’ in heaven and on earth, and under the earth declares your glory; help us to discern the worship in the sparrow’s song and the daffodils dancing in the breeze.

Our lives are in your hands: **We trust in you, O Lord.**

Lord Jesus, you were born in human likeness, and revealed to us the pinnacle of humanity; inspire Donald, our president and all the leaders of the world to follow your example.

Our lives are in your hands: **We trust in you, O Lord.**

Lord Jesus, in your exaltation, you were given the name that is above every name;
in your name we pray for those who are in need of healing.

Our lives are in your hands: **We trust in you, O Lord.**

Lord Jesus, you became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross;
console those who grieve and grant rest to those who have died.

Our lives are in your hands: **We trust in you, O Lord.**

The Presider concludes

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. **Amen.**

Peace

BCP 360

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The People greet one another in the Name of the Lord.

Announcements

Andrew Kruger

IV. Celebrating at the Lord's Table

Offertory Sentence

Romans 12:1

Presider I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your
bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offering of bread and wine to the Holy Table.



*The Ushers pass the collection plates among the people.
Another option is to give to Trinity online –
scan the QR code and go directly to our Breeze link.*

Offertory Anthem

“Thy Will Be Done” – Craig Courtney

Our cup was filled with darkness. Our cup was filled with death.
Christ took our cup and drank it, and gave us life, and gave us hope. Gave us Himself.

My Father, let this cup pass from me. Yet not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.

In blackest night we hear Him in dark Gethsemane.
Pleading with the Father for one more way, For one more hope, for one more day.

My Father, let this cup pass from me. Yet not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.

That they took our Savior, and led Him to a tree;
And there they broke His body, poured out His life, Put Him to death to rise again!

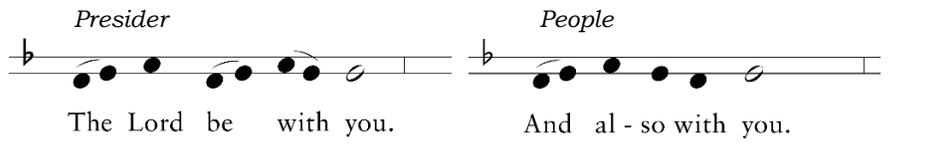
My Father, let this cup pass from me. Yet not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.

The People stand. The ushers bring the collection plates to the ministers.

Eucharistic Prayer for Lent

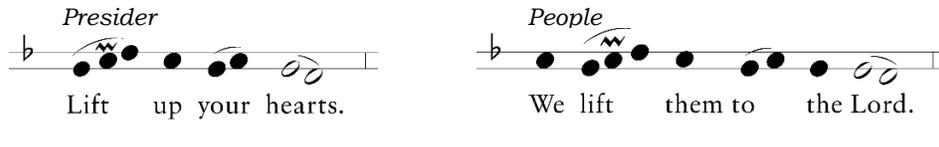
Celebrating Sunday alt.

Presider *People*



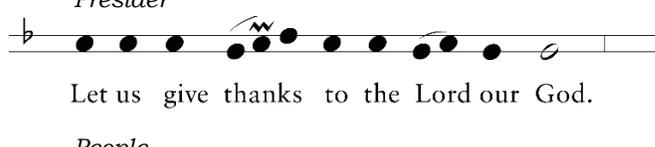
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Presider *People*



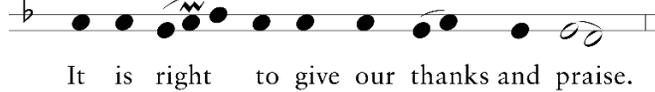
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Presider



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People



It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

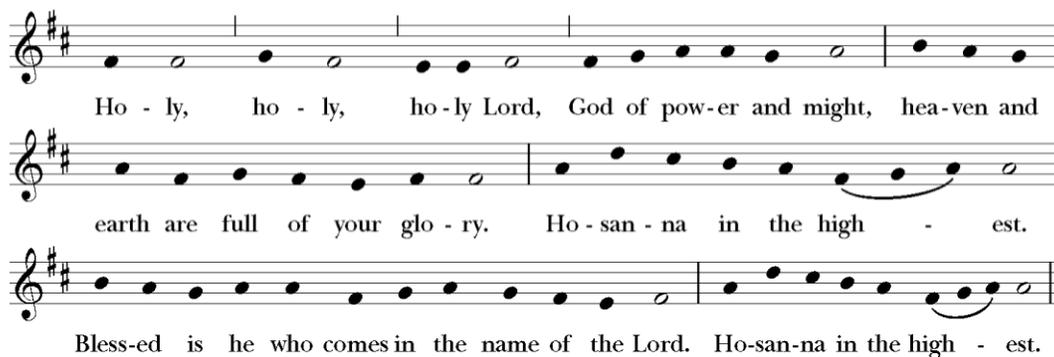
For our sins he was lifted high upon the cross, that he might draw the whole world to himself; and, by his suffering and death, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who put their trust in him.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

David Hurd

Hymnal S 124



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Glory and thanksgiving are yours, most loving and gracious God, for Jesus Christ in whom the world is reconciled. He is the Lamb of God who takes away our sin and gathers us into the abundant new life of your forgiveness. Lifted on the Cross, his suffering and forgiveness spanned the gulf our sins had made.

Through Christ's dark struggle, death is swallowed up in victory. Christ the First-Born freely offered himself as the Passover Lamb for the sins of the whole world. By his loving sacrifice he inaugurates the reign of eternal light and abundant life.

By his blood he reconciled us: by his wounds we are healed.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, at a meal recalling the night of Israel's Passover release, Jesus took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body; it is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

After supper, he took the cup, again he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you and for all, that all sin may be forgiven. Do this to remember me."

We now obey your Son's command.

**We recall Christ's passion and death.
We celebrate Christ's resurrection.
We look for the coming of Christ's Kingdom.**

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts:

With them we offer ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon the bread and wine we offer, that, overshadowed by his life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son.

By your grace, open our ears to hear you calling us home, arouse in our hearts the desire to return to you, and kindle within us the fire of your love that renews us for the service of Christ's Kingdom.

**Help us to live and work to your praise and glory.
Make us grow together in unity and love
until at last your creation is renewed and restored.**

Then bring us with Mary the Mother of our Lord and all the hosts of heaven, to our true eternal home where we may praise you forever.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

People



A - men.

Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

Breaking of the Bread

BCP 364

The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread and a period of silence is kept.

Agnus Dei

David Hurd

S 161

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:
 have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
 sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
 you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Invitation

BCP 364

Presider The Gifts of God:
 People **for the People of God.**

First Communion Hymn

Jesus, meine Zuversicht

Hymnal 313

1 Let thy Blood in mer - cy poured, let thy gra - cious
 2 Thou didst die that I might live; bless - ed Lord, thou
 3 By the thorns that crowned thy brow, by the spear-wound
 4 Wilt thou own the gift I bring? All my pen - i -
 Bo - dy bro - ken, be to me, O gra - cious Lord,
 cam'st to save me; all that love of God could give
 and the nail - ing, by the pain and death, I now
 tence I give thee; thou art my ex - alt - ed King,

Refrain

of thy bound-less love the to - ken.
 Jes - us by his sor - rows gave me. Thou didst give thy -
 claim, O Christ, thy love un - fail - ing.
 of thy match-less love for - give me.

self for me, now I give my - self to thee.

Second Communion Hymn

Rockingham

Hymnal 474

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross where the young
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were an

Prince of Glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
 cross of Christ, my God: all the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down! Did e'er such love and
 of - fering far too small; love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Prayer over the People

Book of Occasional Services 14

Silence is kept; then the Presider says

Bow down before the Lord.

The people kneel; then Presider continues

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

V. Going Out as God's People

Sending Hymn

Herzlich tut mich verlangen

Hymnal 168

The people stand.

The musical score is written for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) and a basso continuo. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line with lyrics and a basso continuo line. The lyrics are as follows:

1 O sa - cred head, sore wound - ed, de - filed and put to scorn;
2 Thy beau - ty, long - de - sir - ed, hath va - nished from our sight;
3 In thy most bit - ter pas - sion my heart to share doth cry,

1 O king - ly head, sur - round - ed with mock - ing crown of thorn:
2 thy power is all ex - pir - ed, and quenched the light of light.
3 with thee for my sal - va - tion up - on the cross to die.

1 what sor - row mars thy gran - deur? Can death thy bloom de - flower?
2 Ah me! for whom thou di - est, hide not so far thy grace:
3 Ah, keep my heart thus mov - ed to stand thy cross be - neath,

1 O coun - te - nance whose splen - dor the hosts of heaven a - dore!
2 show me, O Love most high - est, the bright - ness of thy face.
3 to mourn thee, well - be - lov - ed, yet thank thee for thy death.

Dismissal

BCP 366

Presider Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Please note: Keep your blessed palms. They will be burned at next year's Mardi Gras to form the ashes used on Ash Wednesday.

For Friends, Visitors and Newcomers

Welcome to Trinity Episcopal Church in Cranford, New Jersey. Thank you for joining us in worship. The bulletin is designed to make you feel at home and includes everything you need for the service (liturgy, hymns, rubrics, etc.). Please connect with us; introduce yourself to the ushers so they can make you feel more comfortable. All are invited to Fellowship Hour in Sherlock Hall immediately after the service. An email blast is sent every Thursday by 2 PM with hyperlinks to sign-up sheets, methods to contribute to the parish or other charitable organizations, ways to contact individuals or receive information. Please contact the parish office to receive it or alternative methods of communication.

What you need to know today...

Sunday School During the 10 AM Eucharist, children in PreK-3 through Grade 4 are invited to join in making pretzels in Sherlock Hall.

Children's Choir There is rehearsal today at 11:30 AM in the church; there is no rehearsal on Easter Sunday.

Join Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe The online vigil is at 8 PM tonight to pray for the continued conversion of our hearts and for God's blessing on our witness during Holy Week. Check this week's email blast for more information and to register.

"Wells & Water Systems" Outreach is collecting for the Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) project, ending April 12. The goal is to raise \$750 for a share of a well. More information is in the email blast. Please donate online or make out checks to Trinity Church with "Wells" in memo line.

What you need to know this week...

The Daily Offices Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are offered online from Monday to Thursday at 8:30 AM and 5 PM this week; there are no offices on Good Friday. Please see details in the following section on Holy Week.

Parish Office Hours Office Manager Marion Nechuta is available Tuesday through Thursday from 12:30 to 3:30 PM. Please call before arriving; at other times she may still be contacted via parish email.

Handbells and Choir Rehearsals Wednesday, April 1; there is no rehearsal for Handbells (usually 7 to 7:50 PM); however, the Adult Choir rehearses at its normal time from 8 PM to 9 PM.

What you need to know in the future...

Knitting Circle Saturday, April 11 from 10 AM to 11 AM in Witherington Hall. Outreach has organized a knitting circle knitting hats and scarves for the Seamen's Church Institute. Beginners, immediate and expert knitters are invited to join. If interested, contact Marion Nechuta at marionnechuta@yahoo.com.

Enrollment for Baptism Sunday, April 12 at the 10 AM service. Baptism will be offered on Pentecost Sunday, May 24. The Baptismal Preparation Class is on Saturday, April 25, from 9 AM to 11 AM in Witherington Hall.

Trinity's Spring Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner Friday, April 17 from 5 PM to 8 PM. (gluten-free available). Come for a delicious meal and fun evening. 50/50 and basket raffles available. Tickets for adults are \$20; children under 12 are \$5. To purchase tickets, see Cynthia Kolby after the 8 AM service, see Kathy Murray or Susan Nelson after the 10 AM service.

Outdoor Workday Saturday, April 18 (Rain date April 25) from 10 AM to 12 noon. A new landscape bed will be created along the front of Trinity Episcopal Day School (TEDS). To participate, please contact Paul Trader (paulsvny@yahoo.com or 845-499-6674).

Garden Team A group is being organized to help maintain the gardens and plants around Trinity. To join the team or learn more, contact Paul Trader (paulsvny@yahoo.com or 845-499-6674).

Trinity Senior Youth Mission Trip Saturday, June 20 through Friday, June 26 for high schoolers and includes whitewater rafting and serving impoverished communities in West Virginia. Check this week's email blast for more information.

Holy Week & Pascha/Easter at a Glance

Palm/Passion Sunday March 29; Rite I Holy Eucharist at 8 AM and Rite II Holy Eucharist at 10 AM.

Passions of the Soul Evensong Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week (March, 30, 31, & April 1) at 7:30 PM in the Church; services with a simple soup dinner.

Maundy Thursday April 2, the liturgy, including the washing of the feet is at 7:30 PM in the Church. This year we welcome the Calvary Lutheran congregation who will join us for the service, and their pastor, the Reverend Kathryn S. Irwin will preach. Maundy Thursday marks the beginning of the Triduum. The Triduum should be thought of as a single service that spanned Maundy Thursday evening until the break of dawn on Easter Sunday morning. The Maundy Thursday liturgy includes three major liturgical actions: Foot Washing; Holy Eucharist; and the stripping of the Holy Table including the procession of reserved sacrament to the Altar of Repose.

Maundy Thursday Vigil Immediately after the Maundy Thursday service; it's an opportunity to keep vigil in the church, just as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane. Please sign up for one of the hours of watching and praying.

Stations of the Cross Friday, April 3 at 8:30 AM in the Church. This liturgy concludes the Maundy Thursday vigil and is a devotion to the Passion of Christ which recalls the series of events at the end of Jesus' life from his condemnation to his burial. The Stations of the Cross (also known as "The Way of the Cross") imitates visiting the places of Jesus' Passion in the Holy Land by early Christian pilgrims.

Clergy Council Good Friday Service April 3 at 12 noon, hosted this year by Calvary Lutheran Church.

Good Friday Solemn Liturgy April 3 at 3 PM. The liturgy traditionally includes the Passion according to St John; The General Intercessions; the Veneration of the cross; and Communion from Reserve Sacrament. This year it will include the Orthodox tradition of the "Deposition from the Cross" – which is the solemn liturgical commemoration of Christ's body being taken down from the Cross and processed to the tomb.

Good Friday Offering Each year, on this day, offerings are invited from across The Episcopal Church to support the four dioceses in the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Funds are used to promote peace and mutual understanding through pastoral care, health care, and educational programs throughout the region. Its history reaches back to 1922 and is an expression of our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Christ who keep the faith alive throughout the Land of the Holy One. Please make checks out to *Trinity Episcopal Church*; the contributions are then directed to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.

Paschal Vigil Holy Saturday, April 4 at 7:30 PM. This year we are invited to join Calvary Lutheran (108 Eastman St, Cranford). Come and support Fr Andy who will be preaching at this service. From earliest times Christians have gathered on the eve of the Paschal/Easter season to recall the story of God's saving work, from creation through to the death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Paschal Vigil marks the end of the emptiness of Lent and Holy Week and leads into the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The Vigil Liturgy contains four main parts: The lighting of the Easter Candle from the Easter fire; hearing the great Hebrew stories of the faith while gathered around the Easter fire; the Liturgy of Initiation (everyone will have the opportunity to renew their Baptismal vows); and Holy Eucharist.

Easter Sunday April 5, Rite I Holy Eucharist at 8 AM and Rite II Holy Eucharist at 10 AM. Easter Sunday at Trinity is always a wonderful celebration, don your Sunday best and come and proclaim our risen conquering Lord! At the 10 AM service, children will have the opportunity to participate in an Easter egg hunt on the church grounds during the sermon. Also, during that service, and as is traditional at Trinity, everyone will have the opportunity to sing the 'Hallelujah Chorus' at the conclusion of the liturgy.

Lectionary & Liturgy

- † **Cover art** – “The Procession in the Streets of Jerusalem (Le cortège dans les rues de Jérusalem)” by James Tissot (1836–1902) is a significant work which is part of the tumultuous artistic context of the end of the 19th century. Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper. Brooklyn Museum, purchased by public subscription.
- † **Prelude** – Cynthia Dobrinski (1950-2021) was an American composer and arranger of handbell music with over 175 works in print; a graduate of Texas Christian University and Northwestern University, she taught for 15 years at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. “She was one of the most famous handbell composers in the world,” said Byron Corcoran of Martinsville. “She was just an exceptional organist, composer, Fulbright Scholar and just on and on and on.”
- † **Processional Chant** – Words: Matthew 21:9. Music: © 2007 Ben Allaway This American composer is a native of Santa Barbara, California and studied at the University of Illinois, St. Olaf College, and Westminster Choir College. He studied conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt, Kenneth Jennings, Frauke Haasemann, and composition with John Bertalot, Charles Bertalot, Charles Forsberg and Stefan Young. His choirs have appeared on national and state conventions of ACDA, with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and Garrison Keillor. Since 1988, Ben has been composer-in-residence and Director of Worship and Music at First Christian Church, Des Moines, Iowa, Ben has completed over 70 commissions in many genres. Research in Kenya and Tanzania on the role of singing in strengthening community and solving conflict produced his extended work BANDARI: Inside These Walls, which established him as a leader in the development of cross-cultural choral repertoire. Central to Ben’s UNESCO -based Thresholds Choral Festivals, his eclectic body of work reflects a passion for cross-cultural experiences as well as for the great Western musical traditions.
- † **Processional Hymn** – Words: Theodulph of Orleans (750-821), Charlemagne’s chief theological adviser, was deeply involved in many facets of Charlemagne’s desire to reform the church, for example by editing numerous translated texts that Charlemagne believed to be inaccurate and translating sacred texts directly from the classical Greek and Hebrew languages. He defended the *Filioque* clause which describes the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father “and from the Son” and which caused the division between Eastern and Roman churches. Music: melody Melchior Teschner (1584-1635); harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889)
- † **Service Music** – Words: Public Domain. Music: Dr. David Hurd, Organist and Music Director, St. Mary the Virgin (“Smokey Mary’s”), NYC, is one of the foremost church musicians and concert organists in the country, with a long list of awards, prizes, honors and achievements. From 1976 to 2016, he taught at General Theological Seminary, NYC. –[© 1979, GIA Publications]
- † **Collect of the Day** – Inspired by the Epistle, “this Collect is the nearest thing to a statement of the doctrine of Atonement to be found in the Prayer Book, and it is significant that it associates it with Christ’s Incarnation no less than his Passion. The stress upon the ‘humility’ of Christ in coming into the world for our redemption is noteworthy.” –[Massey Shepherd Jr., *Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*]
- † **Proclaiming Hymn** – Words: William J. Sparrow-Simpson (1860-1952). Music: John Stainer (1840-1901). First published in an oratorio, *The Crucifixion*. “Speaking generally, it is characterized by extreme pietism and glowing sentiment, especially in the hymns.” –[*The Musical Times*, 1887]. Titled “The mystery of the divine humiliation,” as it focuses on the seeming incongruity of a God and King being crucified for sinful humans. – [Chris Fenner, *Hymnology Archive*, November 2018]
- † **The Passion according to St Matthew** – Many parishes read the Passion in parts on Palm Sunday or Good Friday. Nothing is changed from the texts but broken into parts for dramatic reading. The congregation is generally the “crowd.” –[NRSV Bible ©1989]
- † **Offertory Anthem** – Following a three-year stay in Milan, Italy, he was invited to join the music faculty of the famed Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, serving as piano teacher and accompanist for the woodwind and brass department. His composition, Peace I Give to You, was awarded 1st place in the 2003 John Ness Beck Foundation competition. He currently lives in Columbus, Ohio.
- † **First Communion Hymn** – Words: translated by John Brownlie (1859-1925), Scottish minister and a translator of many Greek hymns into English. “Mr. Brownlie’s translations have all the beauty, simplicity, earnestness, and elevation of thought and feeling which characterize the originals.” – [John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, 1907] Music: Johann Crüger (1598-1662). During the Thirty Years’ War, Crüger and his family endured many hardships; he fell ill with plague, and almost died, losing 5 children and his wife in 1636. In 1637, having recovered from it, he married a second time, to the 17-year-old daughter of an innkeeper, with whom he had 14 children, most of whom died at a young age
- † **Second Communion Hymn** – Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748) from *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, based on Galatians “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” His crowning achievement, “It surely must be agreed that this is the most penetrating of all hymns, the most demanding, the most imaginative. It these things precisely because its style is so simple. It is drawn throughout in strong, clear, simple lines and colors.” –[Erik Routley] Music: Edward Miller (1731-1807), son of a stone mason who left home to become a flautist in Händel’s orchestra, published an anonymous tune, renaming and revising it. “This fine warm tune is one of the best of its period.” –[Nicholas Temperley] “Our cultural associations with triple-meter tunes dispose us to perceive them as reflective, strengthening a sense of participating in the meditation on the image of the crucified Christ.” –[Carl P. Daw, Jr.]
- † **Sending Hymn** – Words: William J. Sparrow-Simpson (1860-1952). Music: John Stainer (1840-1901). First published in an oratorio, *The Crucifixion*. “Speaking generally, it is characterized by extreme pietism and glowing sentiment, especially in the hymns.” –[*The Musical Times*, 1887]. Titled “The mystery of the divine humiliation,” as it focuses on the seeming incongruity of a God and King being crucified for sinful humans. – [Chris Fenner, *Hymnology Archive*, November 2018]
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Holy Week

Holy Week is such a significant week in the Christian year because it's a week when we discover, in a way we don't at any other time, just who we are and just who God is. We do this in the worship of the Church in very dramatic ways, the tradition of the ceremonies and liturgies of Holy Week are meant to take us through a journey. We begin with identifying ourselves with the people who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday. We bless palms and palm crosses, we shout Hosanna, and for that moment we are the people on the first Palm Sunday; we're glad to see Jesus and welcome him in. And then things pivot and we have to come to terms with the fact that when Jesus actually does arrive in Jerusalem he turns out not to be so welcome after all and we have to ask ourselves, 'What about us?' When Jesus arrives in our world, in our lives, are we actually glad to see him? If Holy Week is going well, we really begin to understand why it is that Jesus can seem threatening and dangerous to our safety; and why we, just like the people in Jerusalem in the first Holy Week, don't want him around.

The three great services of the Triduum begin with Maundy Thursday, and the central liturgical action of the Washing of the Feet. We remember how in that last great event of Jesus' meeting with his Disciples he shows himself to be literally and completely at their service. He kneels down to perform a menial task for them and so in the worship of Maundy Thursday evening, the most senior cleric present is the first to wash the feet of a member of the congregation. A reminder of how in Jesus' Gospel; power, authority, and significance is always connected with service and that there is no kind of Christian power that doesn't express itself in service. Then we move into the darkness of the vigil where we keep watch with Jesus in Gethsemane and like those first disciples who fell asleep and then ran away; once again we have to face the fact that we are not heroes, that we are rarely willing to walk with Jesus to the Cross, that we want to be somewhere else most of the time.

When the Eucharist is over, the Holy Table and the Sanctuary, are stripped; the decorations are taken away and the Church is left absolutely bare. It will remain bare for the whole of Good Friday, right up to the beginning of the vigil before Easter. It is as if we have come at this point to a moment of real nakedness. We're down to the basics; we have to face the most essential facts about ourselves, our need, and our poverty. Therefore, it is no time for having flowers, sculptures, iconography and decorations. We take away all the inessentials – the bare walls, a bare table, and ourselves are left face to face with the terrifying reality of our Lord's betrayal.

Then on Good Friday, when St John's Passion is read, we are impelled to identify with the crowd in Jerusalem who shout out, 'Crucify him!' It's the ultimate moment of identification with those who wanted Jesus' death. It's the moment when our sinfulness, our failure, is really laid bare to us and that's why for so many people Good Friday is a moment of deep self-discovery when we have to face in ourselves all those same motives that led people two thousand years ago to shout for the death of Jesus. So we've gone on a journey from the superficial enthusiasm, which welcomes Jesus, to the recognition that Jesus feels dangerous and difficult to us and that a lot of the time we turn away from him. But of course, on Good Friday we are not only discovering something unwelcome about ourselves, we are also seeing Christ's arms extended to us on the tree of life. We look at Jesus as the source of new hope because we see in his sacrificial love what God is willing to do for us. We see that he knows and understands our darkness more fully than we do ourselves, and still embraces us with a love that becomes absolutely real and concrete in the events of Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday morning.

We gather in darkness on Holy Saturday evening to listen to the story of how God brought light out of darkness at the very beginning, and how God's pillar of cloud and fire led God's people through the desert. We refuse to forget the way in which God set the people free in the story of the Exodus, and we remember all the prophecies of how God will bring all things to completion in Jesus. Thus, we are drawn into the great mystery of Pascha illuminated by the light of the Easter fire and the radiant Paschal Candle.

We've been taken on a journey all week from darkness to light, from the darkness of not really understanding ourselves to the light of seeing God's face clearly, and seeing ourselves; from the darkness of recognizing our own failures and our sins, into the light of hope and forgiveness. That is why as the principal Eucharist of Easter Day begins we pull out all the stops and celebrate with all the zeal we can muster because the risen Jesus is standing with God the Father pouring out, in the Holy Spirit, God's love on the whole world. On Easter morning, and for all the seven weeks of the Paschal season we bask in the radiance of the resurrection. Amen.

A Pastoral Letter from Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe

The bishops of The Episcopal Church gathered from March 17-24, 2026 at Camp Allen Conference Center in Navasota, Texas. Our gathering included 122 bishops and bishops-elect, representing 89 dioceses and special ministries across 17 countries and territories. As we conclude our meeting, we give thanks for the mutual affection and fruitful collaboration we experience during our time together, and we renew our commitment to bear witness with clarity and unity to the transforming power of the Gospel.

Our gathering was focused primarily on the challenges and opportunities before us as a church. We welcomed 12 representatives from Episcopal seminaries and local formation programs to engage in thoughtful dialogue about the state of theological education and our need to better integrate traditional and innovative modes of discernment, recruitment, and training for future clergy and lay leaders. We explored possibilities for expanding the work of church planting and the redevelopment of existing congregations. We reflected on our relationships within the Anglican Communion, including discussion of The Nairobi-Cairo Proposals and expressed our concerns regarding the urgency to change the definitions and structures of the communion. We rejoiced in the election of the Rt. Rev. Alba Sally Sue Hernandez Garcia as primate of the Anglican Church of Mexico. Finally, we issued a courtesy resolution celebrating the installation of the Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Dame Sarah Mullally as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury.

While engaged in this important work for the church, we gathered each day to pray for the church and the world. We prayed for a swift conclusion to the armed conflict with Iran; the wars in Ukraine, Sudan, and Myanmar; and all hostilities across the globe. We prayed for peace in the Holy Land, for Archbishop Hosam Naoum, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, and for all those living in the reality of violence in that region. We prayed for healing and reconciliation among the nations of the world, that there may be justice and peace on the Earth. We prayed for those who are victims of injustice and discrimination, terror and war, and the pervasive degradation of human dignity. We prayed for strength and courage to continue the robust and tangible response in our respective dioceses to the myriad and varied challenges before us. And yet, in the face of these challenges, we are not without hope.

We find our hope in God's promises as made known to us in the words and actions of Jesus Christ. Christian hope is the sure and present confidence, grounded in the resurrection of Jesus, that suffering is not the end. Hope is the stubborn trust that God is not finished. Even in the shadow of the cross, God is already at work, bringing life out of death.

This promise of hope is central to the story of the raising of Lazarus [John 11:1-45]. Jesus stands before the tomb of his friend, surrounded by grief and despair, and a community aching for his intervention. It is precisely in the moment when all hope seems lost that Jesus speaks the Word of life. There is hope because "even in death, Lazarus has access to the voice of life." Jesus, the Word of God, commands Lazarus to "come forth," and that same divine Word calls the gathered community to "unbind him and let him go."

In our present moment, in a world ravaged by war and the degradation of human dignity, Jesus is still speaking the Word of life. There is hope in this moment, because even in the face of grief, death, and despair, we have access to the voice of life – the voice of the One who calls us to participate in the Gospel mission of unbinding those who are held captive by the bonds of injustice and ensnared by the cords of corruption and oppression. We do not raise the dead; God alone does that. But we are summoned into the tender, deliberate work of unbinding, of participating in resurrection by loosening the grave clothes that still cling.

It is in this hope, as those who have received life and heard the voice of life, that we go forth in faith to bear witness to the resurrection, to unbind what is still bound, and to trust in Christ's promise to make all things new. As we prepare to celebrate the Paschal feast, with the hope of the resurrection ever before us, may the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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