

Holy Week – Palm Sunday Worship Service 10:15 AM March 24, 2024

Quiet Time Prayer

God, our church is composed of people like me. We help make it what it is. It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, of compassion, charity and mercy if we are filled with these same things. Help me to be what I want my church to be. Amen.

Welcome

Prelude “Processional” *William Mathias*

Greeting God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Question of the Day What is particularly holy about this week for you?

*Call to Worship

For everything there is a season,

and a time for every matter under heaven.

There is a time to rejoice.

We give thanks to God for our many blessings.

There is a time to speak and a time to keep silent.

We ask God for wisdom to rightly discern the times.

There is a time to weep.

We ask for God’s strength in difficult times.

There is a time to mourn, a time to die, a time to be reborn.

We pray for God’s grace for what we cannot always understand.

*Prayer of Invocation

Gracious God, in every time and season, remind us that you are with us.

O Spirit, transport us to Jerusalem today that we may spend some time with Jesus. Help us to hear his teaching, to follow his example. Let us meet Jesus in our hearts that we may take Christ into our world today. Now we open our lives so that you may take us where we need to go, making Jesus the Christ real for us. Amen.

***Hymn #529 UMH** “How Firm a Foundation”

Mark 13:1—14:11 *New Revised Standard Version*

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nations will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

“As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will

betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

“But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; the one on the housetop must not go down or enter the house to take anything away; the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that it may not be in winter. For in those days there will be suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days. And if anyone says to you at that time, ‘Look! Here is the Messiah!’ or ‘Look! There he is!’ – do not believe it. False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be alert; I have already told you everything.

“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the home will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; for they said, “Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.”

While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some were there who said to one another in anger, “Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her. But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her? For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”

Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

***Hymn #730 UMH** “O Day of God, Draw Nigh”

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

Let us approach the throne of grace in full assurance of faith,
for God has promised to be merciful.

Prayer of Confession

God of grace, all around us are wars, and rumors of wars, and we are afraid for ourselves and our world. We follow after false leaders and grasp for whatever security we can find. Forgive us, Lord, for we are quick to forget that all of life is in your hands. Renew our hope, increase our courage, and keep us watchful for the signs of your just and peaceful reign that is to come. *Time of Silent Prayer*

Assurance

Hear the good news! We are forgiven! Live in peace, forgiven, and freed.

Thanks be to God!

As the forgiven children of God we pray with Jesus our Lord:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our 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, forever. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day What is particularly holy about this week for you?

Time of Offering *Easter offering envelopes: 50% to UMCOR; 50% to NL Library Fund*

Offering Prayer

How can we thank you, O God, for all that you have done? You give us life; you give us hope; you give us your very self. Take our offerings – and our very selves – that your will may be done in our church, in our community, and throughout your wide and beautiful world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Song of Offering #587 UMH “Bless Thou the Gifts”

Sermon “The Fig Tree's Lesson” Rev. Joyce Rich

***Commission and Blessing**

Beware. Keep alert. Keep awake.

God is doing awesome things we do not expect.

And Christ is coming near with great power and glory, and with tenderness.

May God strengthen us to the end;

Christ draw near to our very gates;

and the Holy Spirit awaken our spirits;

until, with eager longing, we greet the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. **And Amen.**

***Hymn #2083 FWS** “My Song Is Love Unknown”

Announcements

Postlude “Procession to Calvary” *Sir John Stainer*