

BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

You have a place here!

*"Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love.
Here and now God dwells in all of our lives,
bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."*

PALM SUNDAY

9:00 am Sunday, March 29, 2026

Pastor Dave Johnson

TODAY'S REFLECTION



Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

*We hope that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling
and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy*

▼ **Prelude Reflections for Meditation**

▼ **Welcome Greeting—Prayers and Praises**

▲ **Opening Hymn**

“All Glory Laud And Honor” page 10

▲ **God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 21:1-11

Glory to you, O Lord.

When they 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:

“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.”

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

▲ **Blessing of the Palms**

The members of the congregation raise their branches.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

We praise and thank you, O God, for the great acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was acclaimed Son of David and King of kings by those who scattered their garments and branches of palm in his path.

We ask that you bless these branches and those who bear them, and grant that we may ever hail him as our Lord and King and follow him with perfect confidence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

▲ **Confession & Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence for Reflection

Compassionate One,
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not
always reflect you and your love for the world.**

**We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us.
We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all
people.**

**We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again.
We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.**

Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross.

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
 God's arms are always stretched open wide
 to welcome the wandering ones home.
 In † Christ your sins are forgiven.
 You have a place in God's house forever.
Amen.

▲ Hymn

"Create in Me a Clean Heart," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 7

▲ Prayer of the Day

Psalm 51:1-12

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

▼ Children's Sermon

▼ Hymn

"Jesus Name Above All Names," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 28

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song

God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 21:1-11

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

▼ **Sermon—Lectio Divino**

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 30, twice through

▲ The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

▲ Prayers of the Church

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence

O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day, especially for those we name before you now (either in silence or out loud). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week.

Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

Amen.

▲ **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

▼ **Offering and Presentation of the Gifts**

January—March Mission Designation ~ **World Hunger**

▼ **Offering Prayer**

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
 You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.

**Through these gifts of bread and wine,
 draw us into the death and life of your Son,
 who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.**

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

▼ **The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

▼ **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 and ever.
Amen.

▼ **Invitation and Distribution of Communion**

All who are hungry, come!
The feast of grace is spread.

▼ **Communion Hymns**

"Purify My Heart," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 32

"Sanctuary," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 33

▼ **Post Communion Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you
and keep you in His grace until He comes again. In the name of the Father,
and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

▼ **Post Communion Prayer**

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and
strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we
become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

▼ **Closing Hymn**

"Grace Alone," Hymns of Praise booklet, page 34

▼ **Announcements**

Anyone is welcome to make announcements at this time.

▲ **Blessing and Dismissal**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

In the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

Thanks be to God.

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain



All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
- 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
- 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Refrain



now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
 Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

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ONLINE BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH OFFERING DONATIONS

are available following these easy steps from our secure Website or Facebook Page

norwaybethany.org: Click the donate button on the upper right side of the page to directly access Bethany's secure PayPal Account.

facebook.com/BethanyLutheranChurchElca: Click the "Shop Now" button on the upper right corner to directly access Bethany's secure PayPal Account.

MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed

Service Assistant to advance projected bulletin slides

Maintenance chores around the facility

Christian Education Volunteers

BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
Tuesday	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room 9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom
Wednesday	10:00 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM
Thursday	7:00 am Men's Breakfast and Bible Study in Great Room 10:00 am Women's Bible Study in Conference Room

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