



Sunday March 24th is Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday. It is the start of what we know as Holy Week or Passion Week—the most important week of the year for Christians. This week is so important that three gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) devote one third of their contents to reporting the events of this week and the fourth gospel, John dedicates its entire last half to the Passion History.

Early Sunday morning at the beginning of the Jewish Passover celebration, Jesus made his dramatic public entry into the city. This was the end of any privacy and safety his ministry had afforded previously. It marked the beginning of what would be an inevitable collision course with the religious and political authorities: both Jewish and Roman. The events of Palm Sunday vividly remind us CHRIST IS KING!

We at Christ Lutheran Church have several “traditions” associated with Palm Sunday. One of those is receiving palm frond crosses to wear on our lapel or collar. The palm frond crosses are a labor of love made by members of the Bolvin family and we wear them during Holy Week as a reminder of our Lord’s suffering and his love for us.

We also begin our Palm Sunday worship service in Luther Hall. Here we pin on our palm crosses and are given palm fronds to wave in the procession of palms as we walk together from Luther Hall to the sanctuary. Pastor John will begin the service with a litany of praise and thanksgiving and the blessing of the palms. Scripture tells us the people cut palm branches and waved them in the air, laid them out on the ground before Jesus as He rode into the city. The palm branch represented goodness and victory and was symbolic of the final victory He would soon fulfill over death. On the short walk from Luther Hall to the sanctuary, holding our palms high, we will repeat the responsorial. Pastor: “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”; Congregation: “Hosanna in the highest.” When the people shouted “Hosanna!” they were hailing Christ as King. That word actually means “save now,” and though in their own minds they waited for an earthly king, God had a different way in mind of bringing true salvation to all who would trust in Him. *“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!”* as the Psalm for this Sunday says in Psalm 118: 19-29.

Another tradition at CLC is to have a luncheon or other special gathering following the Palm Sunday worship service and this year we will have a very special luncheon honoring our Pastor, John Thompson, and celebrating his ministry among us for the past three years. Pastor John is retiring from active parish ministry and we pray that God will continue to richly bless him. How fitting it is that Pastor John chose this holiest of weeks, culminating in the festival of the resurrection on Easter Sunday to be his final week with us as our Pastor. Please join us for the luncheon to honor and express our gratitude to Pastor John.

Palm Sunday reminds us that the reign of Christ is far greater than any the mind of man could ever conceive or plan. Man looked for someone to fight their battles in the present-day world. Yet God had the ultimate plan of sending His Son to fight the final battle over death. This is the greatness of why we celebrate this week. Because of Christ's ultimate sacrifice, we can be set free of death. *“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,” John 11:25*

We have so much to be grateful for. In this Holy Week, may God direct our thoughts and attention towards what matters most, Jesus Christ our King. Let's choose to focus on worshipping our Lord, thanking Him for the gift of His sacrifice, celebrating the power of the Resurrection, and the new life found in Him alone. Grace.

See You Sunday! Wave a palm frond; shout “Hosanna in the Highest”; wear your Palm Frond Cross as a symbol of Christ’s victory over death; and sing jubilantly “All glory, laud, and honor to Thee Redeemer King”.

***Palm Sunday Procession from Luther Hall to the sanctuary 10 AM Sunday
Luncheon in Luther Hall honoring Pastor John following the worship service***