

Church on the Hill

A Congregation of the
Reformed Church in America
167-07 35th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358

March 24, 2024

10:30 AM



Then They Remembered

By Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Inspired by John 12: 12-16

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Rev. Sally Ann Castle — Interim Minister

Mr. Sean Cotty — Music Director

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Palm/Passion Sunday

BOLD – Congregation responds

* – Congregation Stands



Prelude

Improvisation on "The Palms"

Sean Cotty

Welcome

Votum

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **Amen.**

Sentences of Scripture

Greeting

As Holy week begins, Peter, who we have wandered alongside in his pursuit of God, is no longer front and center. We imagine he is with the rest of the disciples when Jesus enters Jerusalem on a colt. The disciples are confused as they witness crowds shouting hosannas. When they look back on this experience, they will remember the songs. As we imagine ourselves in the crowd on this day, may we remember that they are supposed to be praising Caesar, but instead they are shouting for the one entering the city on a donkey. Their singing is subversive, courageous, and contagious. May our own singing be courageous as we face the difficult path ahead.

Liturgy of the Palms

Call to Worship

Sing songs of loudest praise! **Hosanna!** Sing songs that are unashamed. **Hosanna!** Sing songs without being afraid. **Hosanna!** Sing for the God of tomorrow and today. **Hosanna!** Let us worship the One worthy to be praised.

* **Palm Parade - Hymn No. 203**

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Prayer of the Day

Today, God, we rejoice with Christians everywhere that there was at least one day when Jesus received the recognition he deserved. We rejoice,

knowing that his triumphal entry means that truth cannot remain hidden and that good hearts everywhere recognize truth when it appears. We stand in hope with people on many continents, in many circumstances who are waiting for the day when their truth can be told. We stand with them in faith, knowing that the same God who could have commanded the rocks to shout truth in Jerusalem will not allow truth to be suppressed and good people to be crushed forever. Amen.

Anthem Fling Wide the Gates (from "The Crucifixion") John Stainer

*Fling wide the gates,
For the Saviour waits to tread in His royal way
He has come from above in His power and love, to die on this Passion
day*

*Fling wide the gates!
The Saviour waits!*

*Fling wide the gates!
The Saviour waits to tread in His royal way*

*His cross is the sign of the love divine
His crown is the thorn-wreath of woe
He lays his load on the sorrowful road
And bends 'neath the burden throne.*

*Fling wide the gates!
He waits! The Saviour waits!*

*Fling wide the gates, for the Saviour waits to tread in His royal way.
He has come from above in His power and love, to die on this Passion
day—*

To die on this Passion day.

Call to Confession

The Gospel of John tells us that crowds gathered to praise Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, singing and shouting with confidence. After describing the crowd, however, the Gospel writer zooms in on the disciples and tells us that while the crowds shouted praise at Jesus, the disciples were confused. The text says, "the disciples did not understand what was happening" (John 12:16). A lot of our lives may look like this: either we understand God's presence in our lives and want to shout it from the rooftop—or we're standing on the side of the parade missing our chance

to sing. That is why we need the prayer of confession. Because life happens fast, and without a doubt, we have stood where the disciples stood. So let us pray, for we don't want to miss our chance to sing:

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, we want to run into the streets and sing your praise! We want to be bold and unashamed of this good-news Gospel. However, too often we find ourselves standing against the wall. Too often we stay quiet. Too often we let others carry the song. Forgive us for the moments when we could lead the parade but instead find ourselves standing on the sidelines. Show us which songs are ours to sing. Show us which parades are ours to lead, and then give us the courage and conviction to do both. With hope and honesty we pray, Amen.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Words of Forgiveness

Friends, no matter where you are on the parade route—whether you are waving palm branches through the streets or standing against the wall, quiet and cautious—Jesus marched for you. Jesus' love, his striving for justice and mercy, it was for you. **We are included in this story and nothing can ever change that.** So hear these words and trust them deep in your bones: We have reason to sing, for Jesus Christ loved you yesterday. Jesus Christ loves you today. And Jesus Christ will love you tomorrow. **We are forgiven, claimed, and sent to serve.** Heed the call. Go out and sing. Go out trusting these words. **Amen.**

Hymn No. 205 (vs. 1-3)

Ride on, Ride on in Majesty
(paraments are changed to passion red)

Liturgy of the Passion

Prayer of Illumination

God of grace, your Word is like a song. It is the melody that we long to sing, the refrain that we pray will get stuck in our heads. So as we return to scripture once more, we pray that you would allow us to sink into this song. Allow us to hear the truth in between the words. Allow the cries of

the crowd's "hosannas" to feel like our own. With open hearts and open ears we pray, Amen.

Gospel Reading

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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Offering

* **Doxology** (verse 3)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!

Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

Here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

Unison Prayer of Dedication

God of grace, yours is the melody that we long to sing, the refrain that we pray will get stuck in our heads as we worship today. Allow the cries of the crowd's "hosannas" to feel like our own. As we call on you to save us, may we remember the sound of your call on our lives - a call to show mercy, love, and compassion to all those in need. May the gifts of our finances, of our time, and of our own selves that we bring help us sing of your grace always. Amen.

Organ Interlude

THE PASSION of our LORD JESUS CHRIST according to MARK Passion Players

Part I

Mark 14: 12-31

The Passover with the Disciples

Choral Anthem

When You Prayed Beneath the Trees

Lloyd Larson and Christopher Idle

When you prayed beneath the trees,

It was for me, O Lord;

When you cried upon your knees,

How could it be, O Lord?
When in blood and sweat and tears,
You dismissed your final fears,
When you faced the soldiers' spears,
You stood for me, O Lord.

When their triumph looked complete,
It was for me, O Lord;
When it seemed like your defeat,
They could not see, O Lord!
When you faced the mob along -
You were silent as a stone,
And a tree became your throne;
You came for me, O Lord.

When you stumbled up the road,
You walked for me, O Lord;
When you took your deadly load,
That heavy tree, O Lord;
When they lifted you on high,
And they nailed you up to ie,
And when darkness filled the sky,
It was for me, O Lord.

Part II	Mark 14: 43-72	The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus
Choral Anthem	Ah Holy Jesus	Craig Courtney

*Ah, holy Jesus, how hast Thou offended
That we to judge Thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by Thine own rejected,
O most afflicted!*

*Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon Thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone Thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied Thee;
I crucified Thee.*

*For me, kind Jesus, was Thine incarnation,
Thy mortal sorrow, and Thy life's oblation;
Thy death of anguish and Thy bitter passion,
For my salvation.*

Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay Thee,

*I do adore Thee, and will ever pray Thee,
Think on Thy pity and Thy love unswerving,
Not my deserving.*

Part III

Mark 15: 1-20

Jesus before Pilate

This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Choral Anthem *Were We There?* Craig Courtney and Pamela Martin

*Were we there, you and I, in the olive grove that night?
Was there silver in my hand to betray the Son of Man?
Did you run away and hide? In your fear, did you deny?
Were we there, were we there, you and I?
Were we there, you and I, boldly crying, "crucify?"
Did you mock Him with your scorn?
Did I weave the crown of thorns?
Did you strike Him in the face, spit on Him in His disgrace?
Were we there, were we there, you and I?
Were we there, you and I, on that hill the day He died?
Did you watch without a sound
When they brought the hammer down?
Did I turn to look away from his suffering and pain?
Were we there? Were we there?
Were you there? Was I, too,
On that morning at the tomb?
When we looked into His face,
Did we know He took our place?
Yes, He died for us as though
We were there so long ago.
We were there.*

Part IV

Mark 15: 21-38

Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

Moment of Silent Reflection

* **Hymn No. 221**

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Unison Prayer of Intercession

Unto you, Holy God, we come in praise through Jesus Christ: who for our sins was lifted up on the cross, that he might draw all people to himself; who by his suffering and death became the way of eternal salvation to all

who trust him. For all your children near and far we humbly pray. And especially for those whose needs are known to us: (time for silent intercessions). For the assurance of your care, for the comfort of your grace, we give you thanks. Hear us now as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

Prayers of the People

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.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom and the power
And the glory, forever. Amen.

* Hymn No. 822

Jesus, Remember Me

Blessing

May the blessing of God, who surmounts evil, bears our pain, and lives in us forever, fill you with a zeal for justice and passion for peace, this day and always.

* **Holy Week Benediction**

Now, my friends, go forth to a week where transformation will meet you and guide you. Do not hide when they recognize you, do not doubt when you see Christ, do not deny when you are confronted. Do not stop until you are at the cross, and there you will see the light; and the burdens of your heart will roll away. Until then, God be with you! Amen.

Response (please be seated) Fling Wide the Gates (from "The Crucifixion")

*Then on to the end,
My God and my Friend,
To suffer, endure, and die.
To suffer, endure, and die.*

****Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.
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Passion Players (in order of appearance)

- Narrator: Gerry Mendler
- Jesus: Victor Han
- Disciples: Angela Brunjes, Steve Sarran, and others
- Peter: Helmut Beron
- Judas: Simon Walsh
- Chief Priests and Scribes: Attila, Lia, and Maya Sanislo
- Servant Girl: Annabelle White
- Pontius Pilate: Nancy Gessner
- Crowd: Choir
- Roman Soldiers: Choir

Announcements

HOLY WEEK

Tuesday, March 26- 7 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Maunder Thursday, March 28- 7 pm Bible Study on Zoom

6:30 pm Gathering to share a meal together on Zoom

Good Friday, March 29- 12-3 pm Sanctuary open for meditation

Prayer stations of Peter- self-guided prayer walk, Sacred Music 12-1 pm

7:30 pm Good Friday Service- Song, Scripture, and Silence

Easter Sunday, Resurrection of Our Lord - March 31

7 am Sunrise Service at Bowne Park

10:30 am Easter Worship- In the Sanctuary

Join us for an Easter Egg hunt after the service!

NEXT SUNDAY

March 31st, 2024 - Easter Sunday

Wandering Heart: "And I Hope"

Focal Scriptures: Luke 24: 1-12

Theme Connections: We might expect that, after denying Christ, Peter would cower in shame—or perhaps even run away in an attempt to leave his past behind him. Instead, when he hears the news from the women, he doesn't dismiss them like the other disciples. He gets up and runs to the tomb. When he peers into the empty tomb and sees the linen cloth, he is filled with awe. Even after the biggest failures, even after



the worst-case scenario has happened, can we run toward hope? Like Peter, will we keep going? Will we keep looking for God in our midst?

CONCERT

On Saturday, April 6th, our music director, Sean Cotty, will present an organ recital dedicated to the masterworks of J.S. Bach. This will take place at 2:00 pm in the sanctuary of COTH. There will be a reception to follow in Gessner Hall.

BIBLE STUDY

Lenten Bible Study- Tuesday, March 26th at 7 pm on Zoom - Psalm 118: Waiting
Maundy Thursday March 28th - Psalm 116: Listening

And Good Friday Psalm 22: Being Alone or Abandoned

Pause, Spending Lent with the Psalms by Elizabeth F. Caldwell

Check the Weekly Email for Zoom information!

CHILDREN AT WORSHIP

Children at Worship is ongoing! The class is for children ages 6- 13. During the service, the children will process out and be led to Room 2-E. Coinciding with the 6 Sundays in Lent, Children at Worship will be having a Lenten study!

Special Pre-K Class on Palm Sunday — There will be a special Palm Service Children's class for 4 and 5-year-olds. It will be led by Rev. Dr. Ian Rottenberg. We will meet in church first.

COFFEE HOUR

Please join us for coffee hour after the service, downstairs in Gessner Hall. Thank you to Sarah and Annabelle White for putting together today's Coffee Hour!

OFFERING

If you feel called to give, offering plates are located in the rear of the sanctuary, where you can leave your offering upon entry or exit of the sanctuary.

BARGAIN BOUTIQUE

The Bargain Boutique is open on Saturdays from 10 am- 1 pm. Donations are accepted on Saturdays only. *We are unable to accept: Electronics, TVs, Furniture, Textbooks, and Large Toys/Stuffed Animals* Find us on Instagram @cothbargainboutique for a fun look inside the Boutique and to find out about special sales and hidden gems!

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

Be sure to sign up for our email list to keep up with the latest Church on the Hill happenings through the weekly email and the Beacon. A sign-up form can be found on **churchonthehill.org**

Prayer Requests

If you would like to add a loved one to the prayer list, or if your loved one no longer needs to be on the prayer list, please contact the church office at office@churchonthehill.org

Karin Bennitt

The Bermudez Family

Diane Blagburn

Hank Boechmann

Katie and Clayton Buckley

The Cappellano Family

Richard D.

Thomas Degnen

Gabriel DeMelo

Lucas Ditta

Joanne Dunckhahn

Alison Friedman

Michael Gittens

Adam Gonzalez

The Greer Family

Rudy Jakob

Mary Kansfield

The Family of

Rev. Norm Kansfield

Mike Kenny

Susan Laurita

Donna Lemay

The Liao/ Lin Family

Gessa Markantonis

Rose McLain

Donna McLernon

Christian Mender

Kathy Mender-Murphy

Paul Mobius

Mary Moder

Lillian Mukai

Marti and Tom Pearce

The Family of Rev. Bob Perless

Iris and Ralph Prager

Nina Proschel

Patrick Sullivan

Ed Surujballi

Virginia Young



The sanctuary is looped for the hard of hearing. In order to connect to the system, please sit in the north set of pews (on your right when you enter the sanctuary) and set your hearing device to the "T" setting.

PALM/PASSIONSUNDAY
Wandering Heart: "Songs of Loudest Praise"

Courage

We summon every ounce of courage.
We give ourselves pep talks
and we call our friends.
We dig deep within.
We practice the words out loud,
rolling them around in our mouths,
imagining the response.
We deal out every "what if" card our brain holds on to
and spend absurd amounts of time
imagining all the ways it could go wrong.
And then finally, blessedly, we say it:
I love you.
To speak the truth of your heart takes courage.
It always has.
But please,
summon your courage,
join the parade,
and speak with conviction.
For God has been saying to the world since day one:
I love you.
What is your response?