

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
March 29, 2026  
Palm Sunday (Palmarum)  
Matthew 26 and 27

Jerusalem stands and greets her King. **Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! The King of Israel!** As we pray in the psalms, **Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.**

Many of the people met Jesus and greeted him as King because they heard the testimony that He had called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead. A Passover from death to life is what this King comes to bring. The city housed a great multitude at this time for the feast of the Passover, but the Passover which Jesus will accomplish on this Holy Week will be greater than the Passover of old. Deliverance from slavery and Egypt are good but deliverance from sin and death far surpasses it. The LORD who fought for His people of old, fights for them now on this Holy Week. And all they need to do is stand still and see the salvation of the LORD.

We heard the entire Passion narrative this day—from Jesus’ prediction that the **Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified**, and then through all the events leading up to that terrible and awesome event. We heard of the woman lovingly anointing Jesus for His burial, and Judas greedily taking payment for His betrayal. We listened as Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples and instituted a meal remembering and participating in an even greater salvation accomplished by his own sacrificial death. We heard our Lord’s painstaking prayers in Gethsemane, as He dreaded the horror that was ahead while remaining firm in His perseverance in God’s will. We saw our Lord allow the crowd to arrest Him, though He could have called down legions of angels, and though He could have slain His enemies with the breath of His mouth. Instead He went, He appeared before Caiaphas the High Priest, and suffered Himself to be called a liar and a blasphemer, even as He faithfully confessed He was the Son of God. He endured not only His disciples scattering at His arrest, but Peter, the great confessor, denying Him. He stood before Pilate, who only had authority because it was given Him by God, and He was victim of the largest miscarriage of justice in history, when the sinless One who built the earth’s foundation, was convicted by His own rebellious, sinful creatures, crucified, died, and was buried.

Christ was anything but a powerless victim in this events. His will was one with that of His Father’s. He willingly went to do His death. For this reason He had come. Though He lived and reigned with the Father and the Spirit from all eternity, **He made Himself of no reputation**, took the form of a bondservant, and came in the likeness of man for this purpose. **And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

Why did God send His only Son for this purpose? Why did the Father offer up His Son? Why did Jesus give Himself into death? So He could bring life to the dead. So He could bring us to

God. That we, who were dead in our trespasses, could be made alive together with Christ. For Christ, who was put to death in the flesh, was made alive by the Spirit, and left His tomb to be highly exalted, even to the right hand of God. **Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.** His death was for our sins. His resurrection was our justification. His victory He shares with us. He divides the plunder.

This we witnessed today, as little Lucien was baptized into Christ. Lucien was joined to Jesus in a death like His and was promised a resurrection like His. Christ suffered and died and rose so that we will be raised out of our graves even as Christ was raised out of His. Christ was crucified that we might pass over from death to life in Him, buried with Him through baptism into death, and **raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.** We who were dead in our trespasses, God has made alive together with Jesus, having forgiven all our trespasses.

So we meet our King today and always in the Church, with glad shouts of Hosanna! He is the Lord who saves. He is the King of Israel, the King of those who put their trust in God. He is righteous and having salvation. Humble he rode into the city to die. Humbly He comes today in water, bread, and wine, but soon He comes in glory on the clouds of heaven, to call not just Lazarus, but every person out of their graves to stand before Him. And we, the daughter of Jerusalem, will shout again for joy at His coming. **Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! The King of Israel!** He will come on that Last Day to save us and bring us into His eternal kingdom. Lucien, you who believe, and the entire great multitude of the saints, will be glorified and join Jesus in a resurrection like His.

We enter this most Holy Week, focusing on the cost of our salvation and the great love of Him who laid down His life for us. We see the betrayal, we go to dark Gethsemane, we see our Lord abused and crucified. We see the darkness that was over the land as He hung to die. We hear Him breathe His last. The Passion of Jesus was His Passion for you, for your forgiveness, to bring you to God. Amen.