

MARCH 28, 2021
PALM SUNDAY

PRELUDE — *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

Refrain:

*All glory, laud, and honor to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!*

*Thou art the King of Israel, thou David's royal Son,
who in the Lord's name comest, the King and blessed One.*

Refrain

*The people of the Hebrews with palms before thee went;
our praise and prayers and anthems before thee we present.*

Refrain

*To thee, before thy passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
to thee, now high exalted, our melody we raise.*

Refrain

*Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring,
who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King!*

Refrain

CALL to WORSHIP

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

One: Look, your king is coming—humble and riding on a donkey.

All: **Hosanna to the Son of David.**

One: Lay your cloaks before him, spread palms to honor him.

All: **Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**

One: Raise your voices, lift your hearts, rejoice—our Savior comes!

All: **Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

Suffering God, the way of the cross is a hard road. It is draining, it is demanding, it is fraught with danger. You ask us to stay by your side as you walk toward Calvary, but weariness and fear overtake us. Like the first disciples, we are quick to betray you, to deny you, to abandon you. Forgive us, God, and strengthen us for the journey ahead. As darkness gathers, renew our faith, fill us with hope, and startle us with your grace.

(Time for silent prayer and confession.)

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: In a time where certainty about what is right and wrong is hard to come by, hear the good news of the Gospel: Christ came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. Walk in love, as Christ loved us.

All: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.**

RESPONSE to GOD'S GRACE — *Glory to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE READING — *Mark 14:32-42*

Rev. Abigail Visco Rusert

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.' He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM — *Gethsemane* - Gordon Young

Quartet

*"And they came to a place named Gethsemane
and Jesus saith unto His disciples:
"Sit ye here while I shall pray."*

— Mark 14:32

*Could ye not watch with me one hour?
Could ye not tarry for my sake?
Could ye not feel the tempter's power?
Could ye not tarry for my sake?*

*Blessed Jesus, come to me, let my heart adoring be.
Take my life and let it be safe through all eternity. Jesu... Jesu...*

MEDITATION

Rev. Abigail Visco Rusert

AFFIRMATION of FAITH — *Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

MUSICAL MEDITATION — *To Mock Your Reign, O Dearest Lord*

TALLIS' THIRD MODE

*To mock your reign, O dearest Lord, they made a crown of thorns;
set you with taunts along that road from which no one returns.
They did not know, as we do now, that glorious is your crown;
that thorns would flower upon your brow, your sorrows heal our own.*

*In mock acclaim, O gracious Lord, they snatched a purple cloak,
your passion turned, for all they cared, into a soldier's joke.
They did not know, as we do now, that though we merit blame
you will your robe of mercy throw around our naked shame.*

*A sceptered reed, O patient Lord, they thrust into your hand,
and acted out their grim charade to its appointed end.
They did not know, as we do now, though empires rise and fall,
your Kingdom shall not cease to grow till love embraces all.*

-- F. Pratt Green

*My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.
O who am I that for my sake
My Lord should take frail flesh, and die?*

*He came from heaven's throne salvation to bestow;
The world that was his own would not its Savior know.
But O my Friend, my Friend indeed,
Who at my need his life did spend!*

*Sometimes we strew his way, and his sweet praises sing,
Resounding all the day hosannas to our King.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath,
And for his death we thirst and cry.*

*Unheeding, we will have our dear Lord made away,
A murderer to save, the prince of life to slay.
Yet steadfast be to suffering goes,
That he his foes from thence might free.*

*Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine:
Never was love, dear King, never was grief like thine.
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend.*

QUESTIONS for REFLECTION at HOME

- When have you spent time in the darkness, praying?
- How might you prepare your heart to travel alongside Jesus in the week ahead?

OTHERS PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Tim Carpenter – Director of Music

Justin Hartz – Organist

Quartet – Kathryn Thomas, Carol Carpenter, Peter Heckman, Ian Highcock

Handbells – Nancy Powers, Kristine Schmidt, Beth Curtiss, Kathryn Jervis, AK Rosenbaum, Carol Carpenter
Video Ministry Volunteers

Photos may be found on unsplash.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

****Please note all announcements for Sunday bulletins are due by noon the Tuesday before they are to be published. Please email announcements to Bulletin@MPCusa.net.***

TODAY WE WELCOME REV. ABIGAIL VISCO RUSERT TO OUR PULPIT

Abigail Visco Rusert is an ordained minister in the PC (USA), currently serving as the Director of the Institute for Youth Ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary. Abigail and her spouse, Thomas, live in Doylestown with their three children: Dorothy, Solveig, and Frank. They worship at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, where Thomas is the Lead Pastor. We are thrilled to welcome Abigail back to MPC. She led our Women's Retreat in 2018.

MPC SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Calling all high school seniors and college students – did you know MPC provides six scholarships to high school seniors and college students? Scholarship information and applications are now available on the MPC website. Scholarship application deadline is April 15, 2021. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Alex.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING COLLECTION

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by *One Great Hour of Sharing* (OGHS) — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People — all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent, each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.

One Great Hour of Sharing, makes a difference in the world and in our own community.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA) - 32%

Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees.

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP) - 36%

Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE (SDOP) - 32%

Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues.

This offering will be collected on Easter Sunday, April 4. Please indicate your offering as "OGHS" whether you are using a check or online at www.mpcusa.org/give. As in the past, thank you for your generous support to this offering.

"Grounded in the grace of God, we are a vibrant Christian Community, disciples of all ages, gathered in worship and nurture, scattered to serve and to love."

HOLY WEEK AT MPC

During this coming week as we complete our Lenten journey, we travel with Jesus toward the cross and we gather for worship. We remember Jesus' final meal with his disciples and the way he washed his disciple's feet. We remember his prayer in the garden and the betrayal he experienced among his dearest friends. We remember when he was handed over to the authorities and crucified on the cross. And we remember that three days later, Jesus rose from the dead, delivering us from death to life eternal! Please plan to join us for the following services of worship. More information and Zoom links will be provided next week via email. If you do not receive our church email and would like to participate in any of these services, please contact the church office at office@mpcusa.net.

MAUNDY THURSDAY—April 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

This service of worship will be held over Zoom (look for the link in next week's email). Together, we will celebrate Holy Communion as we remember the last meal that Jesus had with his friends. Please bring a piece of bread with you to worship.

GOOD FRIDAY—April 2, 2021

Our current circumstances allow us to worship virtually with other communities all around the country and the world, reminding us just how vast the body of Christ truly is. On Good Friday we encourage you to worship somewhere new—perhaps at the church of a friend, neighbor, or family member. We will also provide several links for Good Friday worship—both at Noon and in the evening. These links will be provided in next week's email.

EASTER SUNRISE—Sunday, April 4, 2021 at 6:15 a.m.

Join us in the Memorial Garden for Easter worship "while it's still dark." Though masked and socially distant, we will worship the risen Christ. And we will do so as the sun rises around us, reminding us of the incredible gift of God's love and the power of God's resurrection that first Easter day. Please bring a lawn chair if you are able. Also, please know that ushers will be in the parking lot to help anyone who needs assistance getting to the garden.

EASTER WORSHIP ONLINE—Sunday, April 4, 2021; available all day

A service of worship for Easter Day will be available on our website (mpcusa.org) throughout the day. We hope you will join us for worship as we're led into the glorious good news of Easter through music, scripture, prayer and preaching. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!