



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

March 28th, 2021 A.D. – Palm Sunday

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the psalm and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm

(Psalm 118:19-21)

Open to me the gates of righteousness,

that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

²¹ **I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.**

²² The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

²³ **This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵ **Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!**

²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!

We bless you from the house of the LORD.

²⁷ **The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!**

²⁸ You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you.

²⁹ **Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!**

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(John 12:L12-19)

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" ¹⁴And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

¹⁵ "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!"

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. ¹⁷ The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹ So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

Sermon – † *The Servant King* † (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

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 Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life † everlasting. Amen.

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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

- The Sharp family and all other missionaries sharing God's Word
- Maren Elm - recovered after surgery
- Brenda Heims - cancer free

Entrusting into God's Care

- Darrel (father of Janet Hoech) - hospice care
- Barbara (mother of Jim Heitland) - hospice care
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the world

Healing

- Kim Neuhaus - health issues
- Nancy Owens - health issues
- Karen (mother of a Bethany friend) - cancer
- Tammy (relative of Bonnie Bubke) - radiation and chemo
- Al Bachman - recovering at Cottage Grove after hospitalization
- Blaine (friend of Bev Linman) - health issues
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at home after surgery
- Pat Krekeler - health issues
- Faye Sieck - health issues
- Kent Zenor - recovering after eye surgery
- Dave Christian - recovering after surgery
- Kris Dunn - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Darlene Eckert - at home

Mourning

- Betty Hein - mourning the death of her brother, Harold, 3/6
- Nate Ackerman - mourning the death of his uncle, Jim on 2/22

Serving Our Country

- Tailor & Charlie (grandsons of Kim Neuhaus) - serving in U.S. Armed Forces
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck)- serving in U.S. Armed Forces

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in their hands, gathered to greet Your dearly beloved Son when He came into His Holy City, grant that we may ever hail Him as our King and, when He comes again, may go forth to meet Him with trusting and steadfast hearts and follow Him in the way that leads to eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *The Servant King* ✠

If we were to take a brief poll of everyone listening to me right now, I don't think many of us would be surprised to find out that Jesus of Nazareth is significantly better known than two other men named Judas Maccabee and Simon bar Kokhba. Today, this might not be surprising because we are Christians and disciples of Jesus Christ. But if we were to go back in time to around when Jesus lived, this might have been shocking, given the fact that Judas Maccabees and Simon bar Kokhba were two famous military leaders of the Jewish people, one before and one after the time of Jesus.

Judas Maccabee was the third son of a Jewish priest, at a time when the Holy Land was ruled by the Seleucid Empire. In the year 175 B.C. the ruler of the Seluecids, began to issue decrees outlawing the Jews from practicing their faith in Jerusalem. In 167 B.C. a revolt broke out and eventually Judas Maccabee led the Jewish people to a series of stunning victories, culminating with the recapture Jerusalem and the purification of the Temple, an event still celebrated by the Jewish people today in Hanukah. These victories have led some to proclaim that Judas was the greatest military hero of the Jewish people since Joshua or King David.

Several hundred years later, Simon bar Kokhba led the Jewish people in a successful revolt against the Roman Empire, who occupied the Holy Land, in 132 A.D. When the Emperor Hadrian tried to prevent Jews from living in Jerusalem and circumcising their children, Simon led an army that destroyed several Roman legions and established an independent nation for over two years.

Simon bar Kokhba and Judas Maccabee were famous Jewish military heroes, leading armies to victory after victory. Yet today, almost no one who is not very familiar with Jewish history has ever heard of them. But right in the middle of the lives of these two men is another whose adoptive father was not a powerful priest, but rather a carpenter. This man did not lead armies to victory, but a group of disciples as He taught them and the crowds. And as we read

today from our Gospel lesson, He did enter the city of Jerusalem being hailed as a king, but not on a warhorse, but rather a simple donkey. And of course, by the end of the week, this man whom the people hailed as king, would be crucified as a common criminal. Yet, whether they knew how true it would be or not, the Pharisees watching the Triumphal Entry of Christ were right when the said, “*Look, the world has gone after Him*”.

Of course, the entire world does not and never has followed Jesus. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that today the Christian church can be found on every continent and in almost every nation on Earth. From the largest cities to the most remote jungles of our planet, you can find people who follow Jesus Christ, this man who rode into Jerusalem humbly on a donkey and was killed almost 2,000 years ago. Contrast that to every other great king or ruler. Contrast that to all of the other religions that spread through conquest, the Empires that rose and have fallen, the philosophies and worldviews that flaunt their knowledge and then come and go like the wind. The simple fact that today 1 billion people call upon the name of Jesus as their Lord and Savior, when after He was killed even those who were closest to Him hid out of fear, should lead everyone to ask, “Why?” Why do many in the world still follow the crucified Christ and not others who led more glorious or successful lives?

Acknowledging that faith in Jesus is something that God Himself gives to us and not something that we figure out or choose to do ourselves, the answer to why Christ’s followers endure today may lay in the fact that there was and still to this day is nothing like what Jesus taught and how He lived. Today there are all sorts of messages that compete for your following to make you happier, wealthier, or to live longer. But Jesus taught that by following Him the world will hate you, mock you, think you a fool. In their time Simon bar Kokhba and Judas Maccabee were looked at as messianic figures themselves, but they led armies in battle to liberate the oppressed. But while Jesus could have called down thousands of angels to fight for Him, St. Paul says in Philippians that *though Jesus was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant*. He goes on in Philippians, “Rather He let Himself be crucified and tells His followers to be ready to take up their own crosses.”

This message of the cross sounds so strange because it goes against the ways of the world that craves attention, likes, and followers. Many believe and teach that following God should not lead to scorn and persecution – but Jesus tells us and shows us that it is how the Kingdom of God works in a world that is filled with sin. Last week we heard Jesus tell His disciples that to be the greatest in the Kingdom of God, one must be a servant to all. It would be one thing if Jesus were just to say that, but that is also how Jesus lived. His entire life and death were not carried out to bring glory to Himself, but He lived as a servant so that we might have the glory and riches of His Kingdom. Glory and riches not according to the standards of the world. If you are looking for that than you are better off running after the likes of Simon and Judas or following the latest influencer. But the riches of the world are here today and gone tomorrow. And all of the great leaders in history, even the likes of Maccabee and bar Kokhba are dead, and still are to this day.

But the grave of Jesus is empty today. Three days after He was killed, the women and the disciples could not find His body, as He had risen and defeated death. That victory He won for the whole world. It was only after Jesus was glorified, or had risen, that the disciples then understood everything that He taught and did. They then understood that His life of humility and service was lived so that He could die for our sin, and that we may share in His resurrection. There is nothing that we have to do to share in this victory over evil and death. No army to join, no spiritual quest to take, no knowledge to discover. Christ our King – Christ our humble servant

who came into Jerusalem on a lowly donkey – has done what only God could do; destroy evil and death itself.

Today, Christ still comes to us. And just as He did years ago, it very often is not as the powerful, almighty King that He truly is. Very often it is humbly, still coming to us to serve and not to be served. With a king, with a God, who laid aside all of the glory and splendor of heaven to suffer and die for us, how can we do anything but to take up our crosses and follow Him? This is never easy, but the victory that we share with Him is eternal and it has already been won and given to us by our Lord and Savior. Amen.

