
St. James'-Rosemount United Church

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God's Compassionate Community Sharing Christian Faith



March 28th – Lent 6 – Love Builds Up
Worship Leader: Rev. Chris Fickling

Welcome!

Welcome to worship! We're glad you're here!

WE GATHER IN GOD'S HOPE

VU: Voices United

MV: More Voices

We acknowledge that we are on the Haldimand Tract, traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Prayers in this service are adapted from prayers *by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

Entrance to Jerusalem from Ralph Milton's Story Bible

"Have you heard about Jesus?" people were saying. Have you heard about the things he says and does? Everybody knows Jesus!" Jesus was becoming very famous. Some people began to wonder, "Is Jesus the Messiah? Is this the one God promised?" Many people thought the Messiah would be like an army general. The Messiah would gather soldiers and fight the Romans. The Messiah would kill the people they didn't like. Some of Jesus' disciples, like Peter, were sure Jesus was the Messiah. But even Peter sometimes thought the Messiah would be a general.

Because Jesus was famous, crowds of people came to see him wherever he went. So Jesus decided to show the people something important. "I am going to go into Jerusalem," Jesus said to his disciples. "I want you to get me a donkey, so I can ride it into the city." "A donkey? Why not a big, strong horse?" "No, a donkey. A small, young donkey. I don't want to go into Jerusalem like a general on a horse. I don't want to fight. If I ride on a donkey, people will know that I am coming to bring peace." The crowds gathered on both sides of the road when they heard Jesus was coming. They cheered and shouted as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Some of them threw down their clothes so the donkey could walk on something soft. Others cut down some branches from trees for the donkey to walk on. "Hosanna! Hosanna!" shouted the

crowds. Hosanna means "Save us now." Jesus didn't like that. "They still think I'm going to be a general," he thought. "They think I've come to fight the Romans." Most of the rulers didn't understand Jesus either. They thought a Messiah had to be a general who would fight people. They didn't understand what Jesus was trying to show them when he rode into the city on a donkey. When the rulers heard the people shout "Hosanna! Save us now!" they began to feel afraid. "If Jesus is going to be the Messiah, then he will be the ruler instead of us. We'd better find a way to kill him. Soon!"

Processional Hymn He Came Riding on a Donkey VU124

- 1 He came riding on a donkey,
he came riding into town;
slow and easy kind of lowly
he came riding with the dawn.
His disciples walked beside him,
staying close, a little shy;
not too sure where he would guide them,
on to live or on to die.
But all the morning sang his praises;
waking birds and dancing wind;
here he is, the Son of David;
riding on to take his throne.***
- 2 Then the children gathered, singing
shouts of laughter, bursting cheer;
in the streets their song was ringing,
'Hosannas' filled the morning air.
Timid adults strained to see him,
caught the Spirit, joined the song;
spread their cloaks along before him,
branches flashing in the sun.
So all the city sang his praises;
waking streets and dancing crowd;
here he is, the Son of David;
our Messiah, Son of God.***
- 3 In our fasting, and our feasting,
called to follow in his way;
called to walk his road to Easter,***

*called to live his cross today.
Hosanna to the Son of David,
hosanna in the heavens above;
blessed is he who comes to save us,
blessed is he who brings his love.
Let us join to sing his praises;
open hearts and souls to God;
he is with us, Son of David;
God's Messiah, Christ the Lord.*

Call to Worship

One: The story of faith is a story of courage.

All: It took courage for John the Baptist to prepare the way.

One: It took courage for Mary to say, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord."

All: It took courage for the disciples to drop their nets and follow Jesus.

One: It took courage for the paralyzed man's friends to lower him through the roof.

All: It took courage for Peter to walk on water.

One: It took courage for Zacchaeus to give half of his possessions to the poor.

All: It took courage for Jesus to enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

One: Faith has never been easy. It is a journey of courage.

All: Again and again, God, show us the way.

One: Let us worship a brave and courageous God.

Call to Confession

Glennon Doyle, famous author and writer, frequently uses the phrase, "We can do hard things." It's one of her many mottos in life. As a result, this declaration, "We can do hard things," has become an anthem for so many. You can buy these words on poster prints, on greeting cards, and even on coffee mugs. These five simple words aren't particularly radical, so when I stop to think about why they have caught hold for so many, I can only assume that it is because life and faith require courage. Vulnerability requires courage. Relationships require courage. Advocacy and justice require courage. Facing our privilege requires courage. Faith requires courage. Even confession requires courage. So

friends, let us do hard things. Let us confess together, trusting that God is always there, cheering us on, in every courageous act. Let us pray. . .

Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance

All: God of palm branches and hallelujahs:

We confess—we love a good Palm Sunday celebration.

We love the sound of a joyful parade.

We love shouting, “hallelujah!”

We love that Palm Sunday means Easter is just around the corner. We love good news.

However, if we slow down and pay attention,

We know that Palm Sunday was not a walk in the park for you. There was risk. There was fear.

There was the threat of violence. You were leading a peaceful protest against an unjust empire, and the whole world knew it.

Forgive us for glossing over the courage this day took.

Remind us that the story of faith is a story of courage, and even we can do hard things.

With hope we pray. Amen.

Silence

One: Even when we gloss over the truth,
Even when our courage fails us,
Even when we doubt that we can do hard things,
God believes in us. God loves us. God forgives us.
Hear and believe this truth:

**All: We are known. We are loved. We are forgiven.
Again and again and again. Amen.**

Hymn

In Suffering Love

VU614

**1 *In suffering love the thread of life
is woven through our care,
for God is with us, not alone
our pain and toil we bear.***

**2 *There is a rock, a place secure
within the storm's cold blast;
concealed within the suffering night
God's covenant stands fast.***

3 *In love's deep womb our fears are held;
there God's rich tears are sown
and bring to birth, in hope newborn,
the strength to journey on.*

4 *Now to our hearts your joy commit,
into our hands your pain;
so send us out to touch the world
with blessings in your name.*

5 *In suffering love our God comes now,
hope's vision born in gloom;
with tears and laughter shared and blessed
the desert yet will bloom.*

Story Time

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Minute for Mission

Readings from Scripture (NRSV) Mark 14:1-11

It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him; for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people." While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her." Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. When they heard it, they were greatly

pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

Reflection Love Builds Up – Courage and Purpose

Readings from Scripture (NRSV) Mark 14:12-25

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal. When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD AND LOVE

Invitation to Offering (Donate online at sjruc.ca)

Offertory **If ye love me** Tallis

Prayers of the People

If we could buy our way closer to you, we'd sell everything we have. If we could work our way to you,

we'd never take a day off. If we could walk our way to you, we'd keep our shoes on tight. But I know—we know—we cannot buy, or work, or walk our way closer to you. We must listen our way and follow the way closer to you. So holy God, as you have so often done again and again, open our ears.

Clear out the self-talk that keeps us from you.

Dust out the negativity and distractions.

Remove any doubt hindering our way.

For we refuse to believe that we are powerless.

We refuse to believe that injustice and hatred are simply the way it has to be.

We refuse to believe that we are better or more deserving than my neighbor.

We refuse to believe that our self-worth is rooted in my accomplishments or appearance.

We refuse to believe that the Church is dying, because we see God all around us.

We refuse to believe that the traditions of old are the only path for moving forward.

We refuse to believe that we cannot make a difference.

So with hope in my heart, I will strive to live a life of courage, conviction, and compassion, just as Jesus taught us, for it is in his name, we pray.

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, the power and the glory, Forever and ever. **Amen**

Readings from Scripture (NRSV) Mark 14:26-43

26 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 27 And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written, *'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'* 28 But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 29 Peter said to him, "Even

though all become deserters, I will not.” 30 Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” 31 But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same. 32 They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. 34 And he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.” 35 And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.” 37 He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? 38 Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 39 And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 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. 41 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. 42 Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.” 43 Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

WE GO OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS

Hymn My Song is Love Unknown VU143

**1 My song is love unknown, my Saviour'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?**

**2 He came from his blest throne salvation to bestow,
but people scorned, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my Friend, my Friend indeed,
who at my need his life did spend!**

3 Sometimes they strew his way,
and his sweet praises sing,
resounding all the day hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!' is all their breath,
and for his death they thirst and cry.

4 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.

Commissioning from the Black Rock prayer book

Mark 14:53 They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled.

One: The world now is too dangerous
and too beautiful for anything but love.
May your eyes be so blessed
you see God in everyone.
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament.
Your lips, so you speak nothing but the truth
with love.
May your feet be so blessed you run to those
who need you.
And may your heart be so opened, so set on fire
that your love, **your** love, changes everything.

Postlude



The building is closed but church isn't!
Visit sjruc.ca for online services and information.

Announcements

Holy Week with SJR

As our second pandemic Holy Week approaches, we have some different ways to make this very holy journey together. Today, Palm Sunday, March 28 attached to the last page of this bulletin you'll find a palm branch that you can colour and

print out and wave/make in preparation of Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem.

Maundy Thursday, April 1, we'll eat dinner together on Zoom (just like a chaotic family dinner!) and then share in Communion. We start dinner at 6pm and if you need the zoom link, please check your weekly worship email, or please email Rev. Chris @ revchris@sjruc.ca

Good Friday, April 2, a Youtube service will be posted to the website to unite us together on this most holy day.

Saturday, April 3, the Easter Bunny is coming to SJR! We are planning an outdoor, distanced Easter Egg Hunt – while advance sign up is required, we are unfortunately and miraculously full!

Easter Sunday, March 4, we'll share in two services to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. First, we will gather on the labyrinth at 7:30am to share in the joy of Easter communion. Masks, and distancing will be required.

A full Easter Communion service will also be available on Youtube on our website. May the blessings of Easter new life surround you!

Upcoming Services following Easter

April 11 – Holy Humour service with Teresa Carse, LLWL

April 18 – Earth Day service

April 25 – 67th Anniversary of SJR with Rev. Randy Banks

Food Bank Thank you to all who contributed to the Food Bank collection this week! We collected over 300lbs plus monetary donations. What an amazing way to show our love.

Faith Study Taste and See! Did you know that God is a foodie? Join us on April 14th, as we stimulate our taste buds while diving into delicious scriptures. We meet on Zoom – and please contact Rev. Chris to be added to the list!

Special Gifts – The Special Gifts Committee reminds everyone that applications for a share of any interest earned from the Special Gifts Fund are due March 31, 2021.

