

MONDAY, APRIL 6



John 12:12–15 ♦ Psalm 35:1–6, 9–10

So 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!” *John 12:13*

Glory, Laud, and Honor

The crowds cheered and waved their palm branches and gave Jesus glory, laud, and honor.

“All glory, laud, and honor To You, Redeemer, King” (LSB 442).

Our Redeemer, our King, deserves our greatest praise. But even as early as the Monday after Palm Sunday, people began to question Jesus’ actions. All week long, others plotted to arrest Him. And a crowd gathered later in the week to call for His death.

The nerve! On Sunday, the crowds of people honored Jesus. Throughout the week, these same people did anything but.

Sound familiar? On Sunday morning, we sing the praise of our Redeemer. Throughout the week, we shy away from His will. We ignore those who are arrested in His name. We deny Him in front of our friends and don’t wince as others mock Him, denying His death.

Lord, have mercy! We thank God that mercy is exactly why Jesus came to Jerusalem during Holy Week. He had mercy on us, and He battled for us against sin, death, and the devil. As people of His kingdom, we join in giving Him glory, laud, and honor.

O Redeemer King, You came to Jerusalem to defeat sin, death, and the devil. You have overcome, and Your kingdom will never end. In Your name I pray. Amen.

TUESDAY, APRIL 7



Mark 11:1–11 ♦ Psalm 88:3–9

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!
Hosanna in the highest! *Mark 11:10*

With Heart and Life and Voice

King David represented God to His people in the Promised Land. But then God's people lost the land due to their disobedience. God brought them back, but things were never the same.

God made a promise: the Son of David would come. Was Jesus this Son of David? Would everything return back to the glory days of David? Yes. And no.

Yes. Jesus is the Son of David, King David's greater King. Yes, He represented—and is—God to His people. Yes, Jesus would usher in the Kingdom with its glory. But it wouldn't be a restoration of King David's kingdom. He would restore the kingdom of God with a glory we can't comprehend.

We pray *Thy kingdom come*. Daily. But how does God's kingdom come? "God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity" (Second Petition, Lord's Prayer, Luther's Small Catechism).

Today, we praise our King with heart and life and voice. Filled with the Spirit, we praise Jesus and tell others about Him with literally everything God has given us. On the Last Day, we keep praising Him "there in eternity."

*O Son of David, You came to bring Your kingdom.
Fill us with Your Spirit, that Your kingdom comes
in us today as we wait for Your return. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8



Philippians 2:5–8 ♦ Psalm 89:20–27

And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Philippians 2:8

What God Has Done

The verse above was likely part of a hymn that the Early Church sang. It's no wonder. We've written hymns on this topic too.

“Can we fathom such deep mercy? Do we see what God has done?” (*LSB* 446:4).

Our minds simply cannot comprehend such a love and mercy that would bring God to lower Himself to become like us. To serve us. To endure the very worst.

Should this surprise us? How can we expect to understand the mind of God? As Jesus taught us, He showed us the life of God's child: love and service to others. As the Spirit works in us, this is the life we live.

Can we fathom such deep mercy? Not only does Jesus show us a love that only God could give, but the Holy Spirit also shows us this love in both Jesus' life and even in our own. We can live as children of the Father because the Son of God redeemed us.

As we live this life of love, others will look and see. They will not understand how we can show such love, and through us, they can learn of God, whose love knows no bounds.

*Heavenly Father, Your love and mercy are unbelievable to us.
Thank You for Your Son's ransom and Your Spirit's life in us.
Help us show others the love You give. In Your name I pray.*

Amen.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

HOLY THURSDAY



John 13:1–9 ♦ Psalm 22:16–21

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside His outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around His waist. *John 13:3–4*

Love

He knew what He was doing. It was Thursday, hours before He would endure the very worst to accomplish the very best. He had just a few hours left with His disciples before He would pay for their sins.

What did He do? He put Himself last. “Thoughts of self and safety scorning, Knowing how the day would end” (*LSB 445:1*).

Jesus took on the role of a lowly servant. He washed the filth off of the feet of His disciples. And He gave them a command: love.

After all, we are to love God and love our neighbors (*Luke 11:27*). In a word, love.

“By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (*John 13:35*).

But Jesus’ love was far more than a demonstration of love. He made it possible for us to love. Forgiven and free and filled with the Spirit, we truly can love as God’s servants. Just as Jesus served undeserving others, we, too, can serve and love.

*O Lord of love, You command us to love,
and You redeemed us to love. Send Your Spirit
that we may point others to Your love. Amen.*

FRIDAY, APRIL 10

GOOD FRIDAY



Isaiah 53 ♦ Psalm 135:1–4, 8–9

But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. *Isaiah 53:5*

Healing

It's a medical wonder that snake venom and rat poison have inspired medications for blood thinners and that antibiotic origins were found in mold, dirt, and even a sewer. But no one would think of helping a sick person by making another person sick. That's not how things work.

With sin-sickness, however, that's exactly how things work. Every single human ever is infected with sin-sickness. There is no antidote; sin demands death. The only way that death can be satisfied is if a person without sin would die. The pure blood of the sinless can heal every sin-sick person in the history of humankind.

Jesus was pierced for us. His wounds miraculously heal our own. In an incredible reversal, Jesus took all our sin on Himself and killed it on the cross. We are cured! We can now look forward to eternal life with Jesus.

Today, we ache with the pain of knowing that our sin was the reason Jesus died. But we also know that Jesus' body didn't stay dead. We know that even sin and death were no match for Him. And we await the celebration of that victory.

Great Physician, You have healed me with Your own wounds.

Forgive me for the sin that brought You to the cross.

Thank You for the life You give. Amen.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11

HOLY SATURDAY



1 Corinthians 1:18–25 ♦ Psalm 37:1–7

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

Cross of Folly

It is the strangest thing. Christians take an instrument of cruel torture, a weapon of excruciating pain, an archaic, barbaric instrument of death. And they mark their places of worship with it. They hang it on their walls and around their necks. They adorn it with gold, jewels, and other treasures.

Why? Why do Christians focus on the cross? After all, our precious Jesus died on it. Perhaps to others, it would seem we should revile the cross because it ended our leader, our religion. They see us as fools for treating the cross as a key point in our doctrine. And they would be right if the Scripture account ended with Good Friday. We would be stuck in an endless state of sorrow.

But on this Saturday, we're waiting. We know how the movie turns out. Tomorrow is Easter. In this bittersweet in-between, we are preparing the feast and warming up our voices. We are preparing the church for the next day.

Easter is tomorrow. And we know that the only folly related to the cross is that Jesus made the devil a fool. Sin is nothing. Death is powerless. The cross is connected to the empty grave as the most incredible victory of all.

Lord, You conquered death on the deadly tree and won life for us all. Guard us as we await the great celebration. Amen.