

# Westminster United Church

Order of Worship

March 25, 2018

## We Celebrate Communion & Community on Palm/Passion Sunday

(\*invites people to stand as they are able; people's part in **bold** type)

### We Gather in this Sacred Space

#### Prelude

#### Welcome & Announcements

#### Entry Into Celebration



For the past five weeks of the Lenten Season we have been preparing for this moment in the story of Jesus' journey. Now we are one week from Easter.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

According to our Christian tradition, today – Palm Sunday – marks the day Jesus entered Jerusalem...just a few days before his death. The gospel stories tell us that as he made his way into the Holy City, riding on a donkey, the crowds shouted joyous blessings and heartfelt hosannas. The gospel stories tell us too that the people waved 'palm' branches, and spread their cloaks on the road.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

But that's not the whole story. According to our Christian tradition – today is also Passion Sunday – the day we solemnly remember, and reflect on the meaning and significance, of the biblical accounts of Jesus' arrest and interrogation...his pain and suffering...his enduring and his dying.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

Hymn MV 1 "Let Us Build a House"

### Opening Reflections

Jesus dared to live God's way in the midst of all the 'ups' and 'downs' of human life.

We too are called to proclaim our faith faithfully – by the way we live, and the way we treat each other.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

Jesus wanted his disciples to live passionate, justice-seeking, God-centred lives.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

Jesus, the human face of God, shared his life so that others might sense new signs of hope in their everyday lives.

#### **Quiet Reflection**

Hymn MV 33 "Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope"

### A Short Palm/Passion Sunday Conversation

Hymn VU 123 "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

### Readings from Our Faith Traditions

#### From the Gospels

Mark 11:1-11

John 12:12-16

#### From the Epistles

Philippians 2:5-11

#### From the World Around Us

"Tough Faith" by Bruce Prewer  
(in More Australian Psalms/86)



## Praying Today's Readings

May our hearts and minds be open to the wisdom of these texts from our faith traditions, both ancient and modern.

**And may our hearts and minds be fertile soil in which wisdom may grow and thrive...**

**Hymn VU 376**    "*Spirit of the Living God* "

**Anthem**        "*All Glory, Laud and Honour* "

**Sermon**    "*Re-thinking the Passion of Jesus* "  
Rev D Stewart

## Our Responsive Celebrations

**Pastoral Prayers** (Responsive)

On this Holy Day – on this Palm and Passion Sunday – we have come to this sacred place, bringing our joys and concerns. So, at this time, let us quietly reflect on those joys and concerns...

### ***Quiet Reflection***

As one heart is lifted,

**May we share its celebration.**

As one heart is burdened,

**May we share the pain it knows.**

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

**We Present Our Gifts and Offerings**

**Offertory Hymn VU 537**

*"Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands"*

**Offertory Prayer**

## A Palm/Passion Sunday Celebration of Communion and Community

### **The Peace**

May a heart of peace rest with you.

**And also with you.**



### **The Invitation**

Here today, through bread and wine, we renew our unity with one another, and all who have gone before us. And here today, through bread and wine, we renew our communion with Mother Earth, with one another, and with the broken ones of the world.

### **The Story**

Our faith-tradition tells us this story:

Long ago, on the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it; after which he said, *This Bread Is Broken As My Body Will Be*. Then he handed the bread to his friends, inviting them to eat, and to *Remember All That I Have Been To You*.

Long ago, on that same night, Jesus poured a cup of wine, offered thanks for it, and gave it to his friends. He said to them, *This Wine Is Poured Out, As My Life Will Be. Remember Me And Give Thanks For All I Have Given*.

### **Prayer Of Thanksgiving**

Creativity-God, Source of Life, we give thanks

**For all gifts simple and profound,  
in country and city.**

We who hold all such good things in trust join in the praise of all people:

**Holy! Holy! Holy! Heaven and earth are holy and good.**

Holy is peace.

**Holy is truth. Holy is love.**

In this season of transition – when the sun warms the earth, the ice melts, the snow disappears, and the days lengthen... and when budding trees and all the signs of spring begin to appear –

**We are reminded once again that new possibilities can arise from what has come to an end, and from our failures and disappointments.**

We give thanks for all the influences in our lives that have helped us see beyond the present – those influences that teach us to combine labour and rest...those influences that bring us cycles of time and season, that sustain us when we are in need.

**God loves in us; God loves through us; God laughs and cries in us, as nowhere else.**

Especially, we give thanks for Jesus of Nazareth – gatherer of people, breaker of bread, pourer of wine, weaver of lives. In his life, wisdom, stories and social vision we recall the words he spoke and the actions he took, which call forth in us respect for one another and the earth...loving compassion ...and an insatiable hunger and unquenchable thirst for justice in this world.

**We believe the same Spirit of God that came to visibility in Jesus also yearns for visible expression in us, through us, and by us.**

### **Communion Hymn VU 480**

*“ Let Us Break Bread Together ”*

*(Communion servers come forward at the beginning of v. 3)*

### **Bread And Wine**

Today – on this day which is known in our faith tradition as Palm and Passion Sunday – we too take the bread and wine...

*(The Bread is broken...the Wine is poured – in Silence)*

Bread broken...Wine poured out...for the life of the world.

Come, taste of this same bread and wine  
...gifts of the earth...work of human hands.

*(The people are served the bread and wine by intinction)*

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

We give thanks for this sacred place,  
and what we have done here today.

**And now, we return to our daily lives,  
renewed and enlivened.**

### **Closing Hymn VU 127**

*“ Ride On! Ride On in Majesty! ”*

### **Parting Words**

As we prepare to leave this sacred place,  
let us commit ourselves to taking on this week's  
life with renewed hope and imagination...

### **Quiet Reflection**

May our life's journeys

## Shine like a star.

May our days and our years

**Weave together a wonderful tapestry.**

May our unfolding stories

**Dance with the grace of every blessing.**

## Words of Blessing

May beauty delight you.

May tenderness cocoon you.

May love nurture you.

**Amen. May it be so.**

## Choral Sending Forth MV 209

*“ Go, Make a Diff’rence ”* (Refrain)

## Postlude

*Lectionary Readings for Friday, March 30, 2018*  
*~ Good Friday ~*

Isaiah 52: 13 – 53: 12    Psalm 22    John 18: 1 – 19: 42  
Hebrews 10: 16-25    or    Hebrews 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9

*Lectionary Readings for Sunday, April 1, 2018*  
*~ Easter Sunday ~*

Acts 10: 34-43 or Isaiah 25: 6-9    Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15: 1-11    or    Acts 10: 34-43  
John 20: 1-18    or    Mark 16: 1-8

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