



# DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

## Week of March 26, 2023 (Matthew 25:31-46)

### Prayer for Groups & Personal Devotion:

May we wave palm branches and shout hosanna and proclaim you lord and follow you as love enters the world, as Justice come among us, as peace finds its way and truth becomes known. May the story of then happen now.

So in the places of hunger and famine may we who can ride in with sharing reveal a new way of living together.

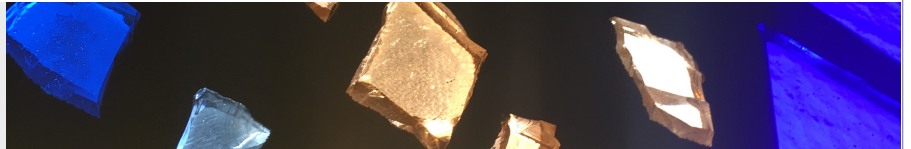
In places of loneliness may we who can ride in with compassion reveal a better way to share together

In places of conflict may we who can ride in working for peace reveal a safer way to live with each other.

May we be like you and proclaim God's Good News and tell the world about the work of love and what it does.

May our hosannas be good news for those in the world who need your care and hope.

Hear us pray for the world...



## Devotions for Life

**Context:** This week we move backwards in the Narrative Lectionary. This is one of those times when the Narrative Lectionary stays aligned with the Revised Common Lectionary, because Palm Sunday traditionally falls the week before Easter. In the story it's a very short time between the Palm Sunday and Easter. But so much happens in that short time that to tell the story properly we need to include the events that occur in that time, so we always skip over the Palm Sunday story some time in Lent and then come back to it on the liturgical Palm Sunday. So today we skip back over all those parables we looked at over the last few weeks to Chapter 21.

This story is one of few that occur in all four Gospels (the communion doesn't even occur in all four!). Traditionally the story is read through Jesus entering Jerusalem where people lay their cloaks down and wave palm branches and stops there. This is unfortunate and a discredit to the story. The story keeps going and takes a big turn. Everything Jesus has done up and until now has contributed to tensions between him and religious structures of the day, and it is in this story that Jesus finally enters the temple to call out and dismantle its corrupted system.

This story is massive both theologically and narratively. This is the moment which leads the religious leaders to have had enough and do something about Jesus. As we wave our branches and proclaim Jesus "king", we must

... and for our friends and family those who are ill and those recovering.

Hear us in Jesus' name.  
Amen.

### Compassion & Justice

It's April! Thanks to all who contributed cereal and grocery bags as part of our joint effort with Spirit of Christ for STEP and MN FoodShare Month. This month we are raising funds for Every Meal. This is an amazing organization that sets up kids with weekend food packs to help curb the lack of meals many kids experience on the weekends. Check them out at [www.everymeal.org](http://www.everymeal.org).



**EVERY  
MEAL**

also let in just what kind of king he will be and what it will cost him.

### Questions for Reflection & Discussion:

1. What do you notice about this "Palm Sunday" story that is different from your memory? What is or isn't there that surprised you?
2. How does Jesus' entry contrast to that of a typical king?
3. After all that's happened, how do you think the religious and governmental leaders were feeling about the people crying out "Hosanna" (save us) to the "Son of David"?
4. When you picture angrily turning tables over, how do you feel? What might it say about what we think about modern day protest and civil disobedience? Is Jesus obeying "law and order" here?
5. Is Jesus being loyal to his "church"? How and/or how not?
6. What do you think Jesus means by "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of robbers"?
7. Palm Sunday is a day we celebrate Jesus as a king and savior, but what is necessarily messy about that? How is authority and power functioning here? How does power and authority work in our world, both in religious and civic contexts, today?

*(Prayer for Groups and Personal Devotion ©2015 Spill the Beans Resource Team)*

