

King of Glory Lutheran Church  
March 27/28, 2021  
Year B: Palm Sunday: Mark 11:1-11  
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***Mark 11:1-11***

*11 When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples <sup>2</sup> and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” <sup>4</sup> They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, <sup>5</sup> some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup> They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. <sup>7</sup> Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup> Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup> Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! <sup>10</sup> Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

*<sup>11</sup> Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.*

A few weeks ago I celebrated my birthday. One of the fun things about birthdays is that you get stuff. My birthday was on a Thursday and I had several meetings but I managed to sneak away and order a birthday treat. I got a free coffee from Starbucks. Grande, nonfat, vanilla latte. To some of you this may sound like a strange language but it's the way I like to order my coffee.

I'm used to being able to order exactly what I want at a coffee shop, or drive through or online. There is something great about ordering and then getting what you want. Getting something that is just the way you like it.

People love ordering things! Pull through the drive through, order your combo meal or latte or pizza with extra cheese just the way you like it and off you go. I want this and that and I want it this way or that way, thank you very much.

We are good at placing orders for what we want. It's what we do these days. We have been trained well.

I wonder if you have ever placed an order for something other than coffee or food. Have you ever placed an order for a king? A king who will do exactly what you want the way you want it. Why would I ask such a strange question?

Well today on this Palm Sunday we hear the story of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. He's riding a colt and the people are throwing down branches cut from the fields and clothes on the road for him to ride on. All signs of an important entrance by an important person.

And as Jesus rides through Jerusalem the crowd shouts, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Imagine the conversations and whispers as Jesus rides by. Jesus is here! The Messiah! The one who will save us from Rome! Our Savior! The one we have been waiting for! Our King!

Remember what were they shouting? "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!"

The crowd in Mark's gospel knows what they want. They want someone to bring in the kingdom they are hoping for. They want a king from the line of David who will be the kind of king they want.

It's almost like they are saying, "We'd like to order a king and here's what we want him to do for us. First he will kick out the Romans so that we will have our own kingdom again. Second it will be a kingdom where we can do things the way we want and live the way we want too."

But wait. What we have learned so far about Jesus from Mark's gospel in the first ten chapters doesn't quite fit with the kind of king this crowd wants to place an order for.

Jesus is making a dramatic entrance here with the crowds shouting Hosanna and palm branches strewn about. But that doesn't mean that he is coming to be a king from David's line in order to bring about a new kingdom just like David's kingdom.

From the beginning of Jesus' ministry he said that he came to save. He exorcised demons and he healed the sick. He called for repentance and he forgave sins.

But Jesus didn't say anything about overthrowing the current political powers or becoming a king that would put him on any earthly throne. In fact he comes to Jerusalem knowing that he has angered a lot of people who have every reason to hate him, be threatened by him and kill him. He has told his disciples again and again that he has to die.

We know it too. We know, just as Jesus knows, that this king is not going to Jerusalem to be put on a throne but on a cross.

So Jesus is not the kind of king the crowd gathered today is looking for. Jesus is not going to bring in the kind of kingdom they were hoping for.

What about you? Is Jesus the kind of king you want, the kind of king you would order up if you could?

Would you like a king who could bring you wealth or security or power? A king who could give you the kingdom you want to live in?

After this past week with yet more people brutally murdered in Boulder, people just shopping for groceries and doing their jobs, I wish I could order up a kingdom free from violence and tragedy and death. And I know we all long to live in a place free from pandemics, illness and suffering.

But we live in a world where there is evil, where there is sin, where there is brokenness. So God sent Jesus into the world, the world we live in, to confront suffering and live with us and save us and love us.

Jesus might not be the king you or I would order but he is the savior we need. He reveals to us a new kingdom. A kingdom that isn't about power or wealth or glory. It's not a kingdom ruled by violence or fear. Jesus' kingdom is centered in love and mercy and compassion.

Jesus' kingdom might not quite match what we think we want. In his kingdom, Jesus wants us to feed the poor and we would, more often than not, rather feed ourselves. Jesus asks us to welcome the stranger and we would rather ignore the people we don't know or don't care to know. Jesus asks us to serve one another

and we would rather be served. Jesus asks us to forgive those who hurt us when we would rather not forgive.

Jesus is not exactly the king we would choose for ourselves. And yet Jesus is exactly the king we need and his kingdom is the kingdom our world longs for. Because we are in need of a savior.

Sometimes we don't think that we need saving. We get busy taking care of ourselves and trying to live the life we want to live and create our own kingdoms.

But Jesus knows better. He knows that we need to be saved from ourselves. Saved from the kingdoms we think will make us happy and from the kings we think we want.

Because the truth is, our own kingdoms keep us prisoners of our own desires, of all the things we think we want and have to have. And that is not how God wants us to live. Jesus wants us to live in his kingdom knowing that we are loved and forgiven and free. Jesus wants us to live loving others and loving God, not just loving ourselves.

So today, on this Palm Sunday, we are reminded that Jesus is our king. He is the one who rules our lives and hearts and minds. When we listen to Jesus and watch him, we will learn what his kingdom is all about and the kind of king he is for us.

As we begin this Holy Week I pray that we might all follow Jesus to Jerusalem, to the table with his disciples on Maundy Thursday, to the cross on Good Friday and finally to the empty tomb on Easter Sunday. Because when we follow him and listen to him and learn from him our hearts will be touched and our lives will be changed and this world we live in will be transformed.

Walk with Jesus this week. Walk with the one who knows suffering and gave his life for us. Follow Jesus as he shows us his kingdom of peace and hope and love.

In Jesus' kingdom you and I have a home and a calling to continue Jesus' work, saving work, of love for this world. Blessings on your journey this Holy Week.

Amen.