

# WORSHIP AT HOME

The Gift of Promise | The Gift of Law | The Gift of God's Son

## The Gift of the Promise

The son promised to Abraham is Jesus. He blesses those who curse him and in so doing blesses all the families of the earth.

## The Gift of the Law

When used to judge one another the Law is used to curse/harm. When used as a call to prayer we learn to confess our trespasses, turn to God, hear his voice, and receive His mercy, grace, and love.

## The Gift of God's Son

On the cross Jesus shows us God's love. He prays for those who persecute him. He loves His enemies. He does unto his others as he would have the do unto him.



## Prelude

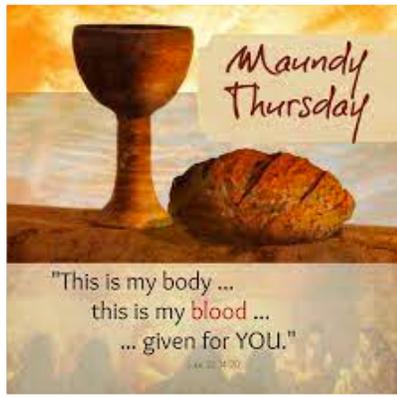
What does the Lord require for praise and offering? What sacrifice, desire, or tribute bid you bring? Do justly; love mercy, walk humbly with God.

## Lighting the Candles

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will parson a bd cleanse within; grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin.

To Be The Light of the World be mercy born of grace that shines in the darkness of sin.

## Special Music



## Worship Schedule

Beginning Sunday, March 21st we returned to ONE in person worship service, at 11 am. Covid19 policies remain.

Sunday school is in the fellowship hall at 10 am.

On Maundy Thursday, April 1st at 6pm, you are invited to experience The Old Covenant fulfilled through Jesus' New Covenant.

On Easter Sunday we will have one service at 11am. Special Music will be provided.

The Easter Cross will be adorned with flowers. Contributions to "The Flower Fund" help continue this Easter Tradition.

## Welcome

Welcome to Bethany, the House of Affliction. Jesus still spends nights in Bethany eating with sinners and tax collectors.

Welcome to the Temple of God. Jesus sets the captives of Bethany free by cleansing their hearts of fear inflicted with shame, guilt, and blame.

Welcome to the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus blesses those who curse him, He prays for those who persecute him. He loves his enemies.

Let us get off our high horse of power, control, and wealth. Let us be like the donkey. The donkey didn't experience any shame, guilt of blame in carrying the Lord to cleanse the Temple.

## Morning Prayer

Lord, like Simon the Leper, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus we have experiences of life in Bethany. (Silently Tell the Lord about your afflictions.)

(Waving a Palm Branch or Palms enfolded in Prayer call on the Name of the Lord.)

"Hosanna, O Lord save." You know our afflictions. Come cleanse our hearts, souls, and minds. Wash us in mercy. Deliver us from



Bethany. Lead us before your throne of Grace. Restore our souls to flow like a river teeming with Life shaped by unconditional love.

The Lord's Prayer

## Special Music

### Hearing God's Word: Matthew 21: 1-17

#### Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

**21** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. **3** If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away." **4** This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: **5** "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" **6** The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. **7** They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. **8** A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9** The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna[b] to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"[c]

"Hosanna[d] in the highest heaven!"

**10** When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" **11** The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

#### Jesus at the Temple

**12** Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. **13** "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,[e] but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'"[f] **14** The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. **15** But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. **16** "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise'[g]?"

**17** And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

## Instrumental Meditation

## The Message

Allow me to begin with Three Gifts. The gift of The Promise. The Gift of the Law. The Gift of Jesus.

God Promised Abraham a Son. "I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. You are to be a blessing to all of the families of the earth." Trusting God's Promise is the way of the Peace Maker. This is why Jesus says, Blessed are the Peacemakers. Could we agree that blessing the cursed is the gift of salvation?

God gave Moses the Law. God gave him 10 Commandments. Before God gave the Law at Sinai he gave Moses instructions. The instructions remain even today. God says, When my people break one of the commands tell them to turn and listen to me. Imagine! God gave us the Law to teach us our need to Pray! This is why Jesus tells us to ask and we shall receive, seek and we shall find, knock and the door shall be opened. Could we agree that hearing God's still small voice is the gift of salvation?

God gave us his Son. He fulfills the Law given to Moses as he prays from the cross. He fulfills the Prophets by setting the captives free from fear, sin, and death. He fulfills the Promise given to Abraham. Jesus blesses those who curse him. He prays for those who persecute him. He loves his enemies. This is why Jesus tells his disciples to pray for those who persecute them and love their enemies. Could we agree that God's Love is patient, kind, and generous, but never insists on its way?

God gives us three gifts. His Promise. His Law. His Son. Fear blinds our eyes from seeing God's gifts. Fear leaves us deaf to God's still small voice.

People were afraid of God long before Abraham received the gift of the Promise or Moses received the gift of the Law. Remember Adam and Eve. They became Persecutors and Enemies the moment they ate The Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Fruit of Judgement is fear of God and being found wrong, especially by our neighbor.

I contend that the root of Sin is fear of God. Fear drove God's children to ask Moses to be their judge. This is why the Teachers of the Law and Pharisees trust Moses. This is why Jesus says, our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law.

In this weeks Bible lesson we are confronted with God's Promise, The Law, and His Son. God's Promised Son rides a donkey into Jerusalem. On the other side of the city Roman soldiers ride horses. Jesus comes to make peace with sin, our fear of God, and our enemies. The Roman Soldiers come to keep peace by using fear, judgement, punishment, and death. Little has changed!

I find myself caught between Jesus' way of peace making and the way of government and religious peace keepers. Some days I am afflicted. Other days I am conflicted about how to set the captives free. Ultimately, I want to be reconciled!

Hear the Good News! Jesus spends his nights in Bethany, the House of the Afflicted.

Hear the Good News! Jesus denied himself and took up his cross to set the captives free from sin, fear, and judgement.

Hear the Good News! His mercy, grace, and love cleanses the temple of the human heart, soul, and mind.

Receive the Three Gifts! When people afflict you with shame, guilt, and blame deny it. Make no mistake denying their power to control and judge you will give you a cross to bear. Take up your cross, not your neighbors'. Take up your cross. Don't expect your neighbor to carry it for you. This is the way of the Peacemaker who follows Jesus.

Remember to rejoice and be glad when we are persecuted and reviled for denying shame, guilt, and blame to take up our crosses and follow Jesus. The Prophets were treated the same way.

Hosanna!

Robert

## The Offertory

Cash Report through March!

Year to date income = \$25,389

Year to date Expenses = \$30,824

Bank Balance = \$39,122

Through March our income/tithes averaged \$8463 per month. As you know we need about \$11,498 per month to meet budget. With Covid -19 closures we are doing far better than I expected! Together, 2021 should be a solid financial year.

## Postlude