

Palm Sunday

Prayer:

Almighty and everlasting God, in your tender love for us you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon himself our nature, and to suffer death upon the Cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and come to share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer

Reading:

Palm Sunday is the tremor before the earthquake of our resurrection celebration, the birth pangs. Palm Sunday, then, is not the time for the best songs, suits, or dresses. The palms and shouts of hosanna are a preparation for something greater, the acclamation that Christ is risen. But as the Palm Sundays have stacked one upon the other, more questions linger. What did Jesus want to teach us when he entered Jerusalem astride a donkey to the shouts of hosanna? Did he do it so that we would have a nice liturgical action of palm-waving to entertain the kids on the verge of Eastertide? Immediately following Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem amid waving palm branches, Matthew, Mark, and Luke record that his next stop is to clear out the temple. What does the clearing of the temple have to do with palms and the parade from earlier? Last and most importantly, what do these two events have to say to us as we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in churches divided by race and class? The temple and palms do speak with a common voice. They reveal God's vision for peace between the ethnicities and our reconciliation under the universal kingship of Jesus.

Esau McCaulley, *Suffering and Glory*