

Sermon Notes: March 28, 2021 **Focus:** Palm Sunday [Lectionary Readings](#)

Early in my clergy life, I railed against the modern practice of Palm Sunday. It seemed too confusing and too packed with themes to have the “right” impact. Back when I was full of righteous liturgical indignation, I would tell any colleague who would listen (they didn’t) that Palm Sunday should focus on Palms or Passion, but not both. I was an associate priest; therefore, I was just patted on the head. Now as a rector, I don’t have a choice: The Book of Common Prayer reminds me to “pipe down,” we must have both.

So, I’ve made my peace with the Palm Sunday and its whiplash effect: you start high (Hosannas and palm waving); go low (yelling crucify him); and then you come back up a little higher (at communion). Never being particularly content to leave well enough alone, in 2019 I wondered if communion should even be the third leg of this Sunday’s stool. I have re-learned: “Be careful what you wish for”

(2 years ago)

One thing I still have a liturgical itch about is Communion. NOT this year, but maybe in a year or two, I want to take communion away altogether on Palm Sunday. (You may now move to your fainting divan in order to collapse from the horror of the thought.) A seminary teacher said one time, “You can preach heresy from the pulpit without people batting an eye but move a candle and you’ll have World War III.”

In this alternate Palm Sunday sans Communion -- We sing Hosanna, have a Palm procession (everything is as it should be). But in the middle, we dive into a singing/ preaching meditation. Then we read the passion story at the end, only to send you out blinking -- metaphorically booted -- into the world for Holy Week. A different vibe, don’t you think?

Like I said, be careful what you wish for, because my Palm- Sunday-communion-deleting-wish is here. We can’t have communion, so we are thinking about how to make Palm Sunday a rich experience for you in 2021. Let us offer something special to you this Sunday. I won’t overexplain the meditations, but there will 4 meditations focusing on different parts of the Passion (wall, robe, cross, crown). Palm and yelling still included.

My hope is that the service will help you find the courage to face your own trials and tribulations, and to find your faith durable and strong.

Maundy Thursday @ 6:30pm

Good Friday @ noon & 8pm

Easter Vigil @ 8pm

Easter Morning @8am via the National Cathedral.

Peace,
Todd