



Clifton Presbyterian Church Palms to Crosses Table Worship

10 AM

March 29, 2026

Fellowship Hall

WE GATHER TO PRAISE GOD

Welcome and Table Discussion

Share your name and a time when you have been a participant in a big celebration, like a parade. Why were you there? What was it like? How were you changed, if at all?

Palm Sunday Scripture John 12:12-16

Gathering Song: Jesus is Coming!

by Dave Bresla

Jesus is coming; pave the way with branches. Jesus is coming. Hosanna!

Jesus is coming; pave the way with branches. Jesus is coming. Hosanna!

Chorus: Hosanna! Jesus is coming. Hosanna to the Prince of Peace.

Hosanna! Jesus is coming. Hosanna to the Prince of Peace

Freedom for captives, pave the way with branches...

Home for the lonely, pave the way with branches..

Strength for the weary, pave the way with branches...

From Palms to Crosses

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

At the table, you are invited to open each of the "Resurrection Eggs." Read the associated scripture and reflection and discuss what you think of. This version of Resurrection Eggs is adapted from *Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection* by Traci Smith (Chalice Press: 2021, All Rights Reserved).

Symbols of Jesus' Life

1. WATER BEAD

Read Matthew 3:16-17 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Reflect Water is essential for life! Did you that the human body is 60 percent water? Our brains and hearts are about 73 percent water, and even our bones are 31 percent water. Without water, human beings cannot survive. We use water everyday for drinking, washing, cleaning, and cooking. Water is an important symbol of our faith, too. We are baptized with water, just as Jesus was. Jesus' first miracle was transforming water into wine. Jesus calmed the waters during a storm. Jesus gave several important teachings around water. When we use or drink water, we can remember Jesus' life and teachings. *You may want to take a sip of water and notice how refreshing it is.*

2. BREAD

Read John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Reflect Do you have a favorite type of bread?...There are so many different types of bread in the world. Some are hard on the outside and soft on the inside. Some are unleavened, which means they don't rise; they are flat. Some breads have meat or cheese inside. Some are sweet.

Jesus talked about bread and used bread quite a bit in his teaching. In the special prayer that he taught us, Jesus said we should ask God for bread every day. He also performed a miracle in which he fed more than five thousand people with just five loaves of bread. Before he died, Jesus said to his friends that eating bread together was one of the ways that they could remember him. *You may want to share at table what your favorite bread is.*

3. TOWEL

Read John 13: 4-5 [Jesus] got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

Reflect: Have you ever washed somebody's feet? Have you ever had someone wash your feet? Feet can get dirty from the dust and mud outside. They can get stinky in our shoes and socks. Some people have ticklish feet! Jesus washed his friends feet to care for them and show them love. At first, Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, didn't want Jesus to wash his feet, but later he agreed. Jesus used a towel to dry their feet. When we see a towel, we can remember the love and care Jesus showed to his friends. *As you hold the piece of towel, think about what a gift it is to use your hands to serve God and other people.*

4. FISH

Read Luke 5:4-6 [Jesus] said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst.

Reflect Some of the earliest followers of Jesus were fishermen. They left their fishing nets to follow Jesus. Fish are an important part of the story of Jesus. There are three different miracles involving fish. One involves a miraculous catch of fish. One is a mysterious story where a money coin is found in the mouth of a fish. The third is when Jesus fed five thousand people with bread and fish. There is one more very special way that fish is a symbol for Jesus. For this, you need to learn a little bit of Greek, the original language of the New Testament. In Greek, The words, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior,” are Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ. The first letter of each word in Greek makes the acronym **ΙΧΘΥΣ** (IKthUS), which means fish! For this reason, the earliest followers of Jesus used the sign of a fish to represent their faith in Christ.

*You may want to draw the letters **ΙΧΘΥΣ** in Greek to spell “fish.”*

Symbols of Jesus’ Death

5. CANDLE

Read Luke 23:44-46 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun’s light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last.

Reflect During his life on earth, Jesus performed many miracles, taught many important things, and became friends with many people. When he died, his friends became so sad. In this scripture we hear that the sun’s light failed, and the whole earth was in shadow - all the light went away. Sometimes when we are sad after someone has died, it feels like we are in shadow, too. It feels like a cloud has covered our hearts. Former President Roosevelt’s wife and mother died on the same day. On that day he wrote in his journal, “All the light has gone from my life.” Perhaps his disciples felt the same way.

You may light the candle and look at the flame for a few seconds before you blow it out. After you blow it out, pray, “God, even when the shadows cover the earth and the light is gone, help us to know that your Spirit is always with us. When we miss someone who has died, give us comfort. Amen.”

6. Spices –

Read John 19:39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

Reflect The gospel story of Mark says that Nicodemus and Joseph prepared Jesus’

body for burial with spices and linen cloth. Nicodemus was the one who brought the spices, which were a mixture of myrrh and aloes. He brought a lot of them. So many, in fact, that they weighed one hundred pounds! That is a lot of spices! Myrrh is one of the same spices that the magi brought to Jesus when he was just a small child. Everyone begins their life as a baby, and everyone eventually dies. Most people live to be old before their death. When we smell spices and perfumes, we can remember that everyone is born and lives and dies. Our spirit comes from God and returns to God, always. *Smell the spice and imagine it surrounding Jesus' body after death. What does it smell like to you?*

7. Linen Cloth –

Read John 19:40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Reflect Nicodemus and Joseph took some time with Jesus' body after he dies. Even though it can feel very hard and different, it is a holy gift to be near someone's body after it dies. We might feel scared, but we can remember that death is normal and natural. When an insect or a bird dies, we can respect its life by respecting its body. We can carefully bury it or move it somewhere safe. When Jesus died, Joseph and Nicodemus respected his body and took good care of it. They did so by wrapping it with strips of linen cloth and spices. When they did this, they noticed that the body did not have any more signs of life. He was not breathing, his heart was not beating. His body was cold and pale. He did not look like he did when he was alive. When someone dies, their heart stops beating and their lungs stop taking in new air. Their body is present, but their spirit is gone. When Nicodemus and Joseph spent time with Jesus' body and prepared it with spices, they showed their love for Jesus. *Hold on to a band of cloth and remember how Nicodemus and Joseph showed love and respect to Jesus' body after he died. If there is someone you have lost, remember them, too.*

8. ROCK

Read Matthew 27: 59-60 So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away.

Reflect In Jesus' time, when someone died their body was put inside a tomb. A tomb is like a dark cave. The tomb was a safe resting place for Jesus' body. Joseph laid Jesus' body, wrapped in spices and cloth, into the tomb. After that he rolled a big rock in front of the entrance. The rock was meant to protect Jesus' body and keep it nice and safe. Was it hard for Joseph to roll the rock in front of the tomb by himself? The gospel of John doesn't say that he had help, but perhaps he did. *Hold the rock in your hand and notice if it is warm or cold, rough or smooth. As you hold it, think about the large rock that covered Jesus' tomb and remember Jesus and all the ways he shared God's love.*

Symbols of Jesus' Resurrection

9. SUNRISE

Read Mark 16:2 And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb.

Reflect Have you ever seen the sun slowly rising in the morning? It can be a magnificent sight. The sunrise happens slowly and majestically, with colors coming into view bit by bit. The darkness eventually fades away until the light of day is everywhere. When the women went to Jesus' tomb, it started out dark, but bit by bit, the light came. It was a majestic morning. They came expecting death but instead found life. *If you have ever watched the sun rise, think about that experience and share what it was like.*

10. GARDEN

Read John 20:11-18 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Reflect When Mary saw Jesus after he had risen from the dead, she mistook him for a gardener... The garden is an important symbol in the Bible. The first humans lived in a garden, the Garden of Eden, where there were all kinds of wonderful vegetation and animals. During his ministry, Jesus talked about seeds growing in different kinds of soil. Jesus also cares for his people with tender care and mercy, like a good gardener. *The seed paper can be planted in the earth to serve as a reminder of the resurrection of Jesus in a garden. It will take some time for the seeds to sprout. As you wait for them to grow, remember what it means to wait and hope.*

11. JESUS' HEAD CLOTH

Read John 20: 6-7 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus's head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

Reflect When Peter went into the tomb to find Jesus, he wasn't there. There were,

however, some of the cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus' body and one special cloth that had been around his head. That special cloth was rolled up and in a special place all by itself. No one really knows why. Maybe there was a special meaning in that headcloth wrapped up and placed to the side. *What do you think?*

12. EMPTY TOMB

Read Luke 24: 2-3 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body.

Reflect When the disciples went to the tomb to look for Jesus, he was not there. The tomb was empty. This is very good news! The disciples didn't understand at first, but then they saw Jesus and talked with him and experienced him. Jesus ate fish with them and shared many more things about God's love. The Bible says that Jesus shared so many wonderful things and did so many miracles that there are not enough books to contain them. *When you open the plastic egg, notice that it is empty. It is round, like a tomb. Think about the empty tomb and rejoice in the good news of the resurrection.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

WE ARE SENT FOR SERVICE

Charge and Blessing

Thanks to those leading us in worship -

Diane Hendricks, pastor

John Kim, music

Mary McKey, assisting

Beth and Ed Corish, hosts

Rene Law, nursery volunteer

Clifton Presbyterian Church is a welcoming Christian community driven by compassion, generosity, resilience, and service to others.