

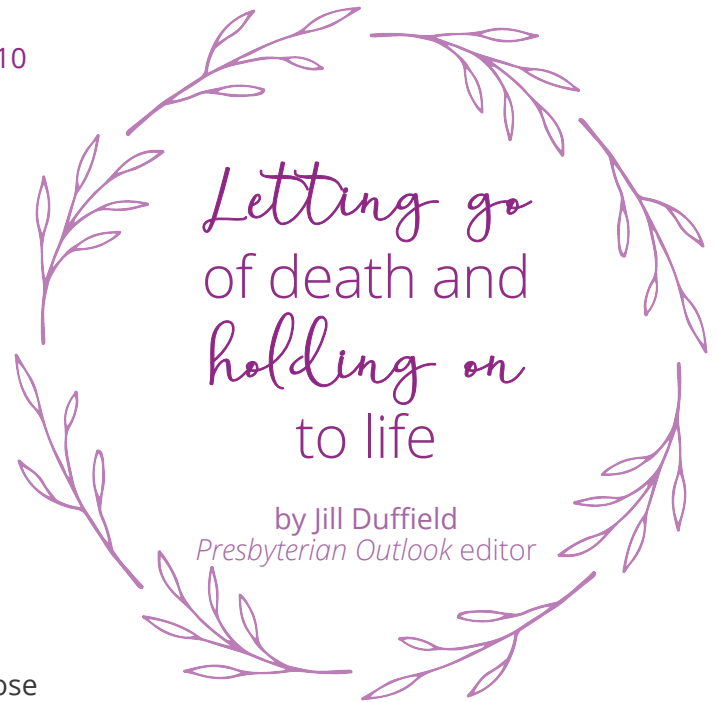
Palm Sunday | JOHN 10:7-10

Jesus brings life abundantly. God never skimps or withholds. Over and over again, we see Jesus offering more than enough for everyone. His first sign at Cana affords us a glimpse of the lavishness yet to come. Lots of really good wine is emblematic of how Jesus operates. He will feed the crowds, all will be satisfied, there will be baskets of food left over. Living water overflows. Forgiveness will be granted to tax collectors and adulterous women. Those blind from birth will see. Lazarus, dead and buried, will walk out of the grave. Heavenly banquets will host those formerly living on the streets and lost sheep will be sought, found and reunited with the flock.

Abundance, not scarcity, defines the Kingdom of God. Lavishness, not parsimony, reflects the character of Christ. Generosity, not meanness, marks the community of Jesus. As we move closer to Jerusalem, the gratuitous love of God comes into clear focus. Truly, there is nothing God will not do to put us in right relationship and bring reconciliation. God is trustworthy. Jesus leads us to green pastures. We do not need to hoard our resources or hold back our feelings. We, like the Shepherd who leads us, can be generous with all we have, all we are, sharing widely, loving wildly, living abundantly.

On Palm Sunday, Passion Sunday, wave your palm unabashedly, throw your cloak on the road without worry, shout "Hosanna!" loudly, follow Jesus closely, knowing that God holds nothing back from the world, so we can joyously give our all in return.

Hosanna in the highest, we praise you without reserve and with all we have. Accept our shouts, our palms, our cloaks and our worship even knowing our propensity to turn away from suffering. You forgive our fickle following from the cross and we marvel at the abundance of your grace, your mercy, your sacrifice that gives us life abundantly. Amen.



PRAYERS FOR HOLY WEEK

Prayer for Monday

Gracious God, as we begin this Holy Week, we stop to reflect on our Lenten journey. We remember the times we felt your close presence and the moments when we could not sense you near. Help us to abide in you, even as you abide in us, assuring us that you are here, even when we cannot feel your presence. Amen.

Prayer for Tuesday

Lord Christ, how did you feel after your triumphant entry into Jerusalem, as you readied for the last meal with your friends and contemplated the betrayal and cross yet to come? Were your thoughts fraught with doubt and pain? Knowing you took on all our humanity, we thank you that none of our feelings or prayers, our questions or suffering, is unknown, off limits or unredeemed. Amen.

Prayer for Wednesday

In the middle of this holiest of weeks, distraction creeps close and we are tempted to act as if nothing exceptional is afoot. Lord, we forget that you are on the cusp of crucifixion and that we are to be intent on following you. Nudge us from obliviousness and heighten our awareness of the divine in the midst of the ordinary, in the center of this exceptional week. Amen.

Prayer for Maundy Thursday

Servant Lord, your willingness to kneel at our feet astounds and confounds us. Rarely do we choose the lesser, lower place. Often, we succumb to whatever inflates our egos. You tell us that people will know we are your followers by our love. May our tangible acts of service witness to our love for you and your love for creation. Amen.

Prayer for Good Friday

God whose giving knows no end, today your Son goes to the cross in our stead and for the sake of the world. He utters forgiveness with his last breath, unwilling to succumb to vengeance or hate. As we contemplate his sacrifice, we pray for the faith to imitate his endless compassion and unfathomable mercy. Amen.

Prayer for Holy Saturday

When all hope is lost and we see no way for goodness to overcome evil, God, come to our aid. When darkness overwhelms us and paralyzing uncertainty fells us, God, come to our side. When the liminal space between cross and resurrection feels eternal, God, come abide with us. Amen.

Prayer for Easter Sunday

Alleluia, a new day dawns, all we thought God-forsaken and dead pulses with divine life and light. Risen Lord, we went to the graveyard expecting to mourn and attend to the rituals of death, but instead discovered the tomb empty and your living presence. God's power to reverse and upend our greatest fears and assumed intractable realities shock us and all we can do is shout for joy. Amen.