

In the midst of the world's bad news,

# THE GOOD NEWS!

Beautiful Savior's Weekly Worship & News

4/1/2020

## PASTORS' PEN:

As of 3/31, per our government's advice, our Board of Directors' voted to continue "ALL activity at Beautiful Savior has been paused and postponed" until the end of April when it will be reexamined. SO, continue to STAY IN - STAY SAFE - STAY WELL! Please use the resources below and listed elsewhere in this mailing for you and your family's daily and Sunday worship. Pray for protection and healing for all the world; pray for an end to this virus; pray that God uses these times to move this generation and culture, and all the world - nonChristians AND Christians - to reexamine their priorities and all that we consider most important and precious! Just like Snow White and the apple, this world offers all kinds of shiny alluring treasures and desires that lead only to death - now and forever! Only one thing offers and guarantees LIFE - Jesus Christ the LORD! There is nothing more important, now or ever - nothing! Hear Him, believe Him, trust Him, receive Him, look to Him, share Him, live Him! Jesus is LIFE; Jesus is our LIFE; Jesus is the only reason for LIFE! THANK YOU Jesus!

## NEWS:

I recently received this email -

### "Martin Luther on Responding to Pandemics

Sixteenth century Reformer Martin Luther wrote almost 500 years ago about responding to pandemics. When Luther was confronted by questions about how to respond to the Black Death Plague, he responded in words that should serve to inform our approach to the pandemic crisis our nation and the world is now facing today.

In a letter to Rev. Dr. John Hess, found in Luther's Works, Volume 43 p. 132, as "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague," Luther writes: "I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash no foolhardy and does not tempt God."

Today in the 21st century, the faithful should go and do likewise."

ALSO in recent news, "My Pillow CEO Mike Lindell spoke at the White House coronavirus briefing Monday evening (2/30/20) and said Americans should use their time in isolation to read the Bible and build a relationship with God. "God had been taken out of our schools and lives, a nation had turned its back on God. I encourage you to use this time at home to get back in the word. Read our bibles and spend time with our families." AMEN.

### Catechism Review: Apostles' Creed w/meaning to 3rd Article (for meditation and prayer)

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean? I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

## SUNDAY WORSHIP AIDS

(include with worship insert)

### **PRAYER:**

Dear God, You speak through Your dear Son: Blessed are those who hear Your Word! How easy it would be were we to unceasingly praise and thank You with joyful hearts that You have so benevolently and fatherly revealed Yourself to us lowly creatures, speaking with us concerning the greatest and best of all matters, namely, eternal life! You never cease to call to us through Your Son, creating in us a desire to hear Your Word, since He said, "Blessed . . . are those who hear the Word of God and keep it" (Lk 11:28) - as if You would make our ears do without it! We, who are but earth and ashes, need Your blessed Word. Oh, how unspeakably great and wondrous are Your benevolence and patience. Open our hears to hear, our hearts to believe, and our lives to live Your Word! Amen.

### **DEVOTION/SERMON: John 12:12-16 - "Why Palm Sunday?"**

As we heard, the people celebrated Jesus coming to Jerusalem by taking "branches of palm trees." John is the only Gospel to mention specifically "palm branches;" Matthew says just "branches," Mark uses "leafy branches," while Luke doesn't mention them at all. So, the Church's 2000 year old Palm Sunday tradition of waving palm branches comes from this one single verse! No, not really - the crowds that day witnessed it firsthand, many waved palm branches themselves, and then they passed on the tradition to the generations that came after them.

So, still today we wave palm branches on Palm Sunday, because that's what the first crowd did. But why did THEY wave palm branches? According to scholars there are a couple of explanations. "One is that it was common practice in the ancient world to welcome home a king or war hero by laying out a path of branches for him to ride/walk on - similar to rolling out the red carpet today in English-speaking countries. Others suggest that Romans honored champions of the games and the military with palm branches. Another explanation is that it is a reminder of the Festival of the Booths commanded in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. For this festival the Israelites were commanded: "And you must take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of splendid trees, the fronds of palm trees and the boughs of branchy trees and poplars of the torrent valley, and you must rejoice before Jehovah your God seven days" (Lev 23:40). The palm branches were used as a mark of rejoicing. The temporary booths were a reminder that Jehovah had saved his people out of Egypt, to live in tents in the wilderness." Other sources say, "The palm branch is a symbol of victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life originating in the ancient Near East and Mediterranean world. A palm branch was awarded to victorious athletes in ancient Greece, and a palm frond or the tree itself is one of the most common attributes of Victory personified in ancient Rome," and, "According to the tradition of floriography, the language of flowers, palm leaves signify victory and success." Jewish history from the Apocrypha (Maccabees) tells us that the Jews used palm branches in the rededication of the Temple and in their celebrations and worship. In our text the crowds used palm branches to celebrate with joy their coming King!

We use palm branches for the exact same reason. On Palm Sunday, like them, we also celebrate and worship the coming of our same King - Jesus Christ the LORD! As King, though, He didn't come to enslave but to love! Though King He came to this fallen sinful world for His doomed servants and slaves, like you and me. Due to sin we are damned to physical and everlasting death! But our King came to suffer and die for us, in our place - the King died for and as a slave! Our King died our death; our King endured our hell. But then being God, our King rose to victory and resurrected life! In love our King blesses us with faith, forgiveness, and life now and forever! We will also rise to resurrected life! This is our King; this is His love for you and me - our King is Jesus Christ the LORD! So, among other things, we wave palm branches on Palm Sunday in our celebration and worship, just as we will in our heavenly home. Revelation reads, "Behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (7:9-10). We wave palm branches now and forever as a "symbol of victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life," for Christ our King has freely blessed us with "victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life." AMEN.

*"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.*

*In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).*