

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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Palm Sunday (Lent 6)

March 29, 2026

A GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK

Over the course of Holy Week, the Church reads the Passion narratives of all four Gospels in order. It is a great deal to absorb, and these notes are intended to help us follow the story with understanding. We may think of what follows under two headings: first, the theological meaning of the Passion; and second, its practical benefit.

First, the theological meaning. The main theme of the Passion narratives is forensic or judicial, the cross as an act of judgment—of Jesus condemned before earthly judges, the Jewish high priest and the Roman governor, then vindicated by the heavenly judge. And therefore the specific charges on which he is condemned by earthly judges are of the utmost importance, because it is these judgments that are overturned, and these claims that are upheld, when God raises him from the dead. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke's accounts of the Jewish trial, the high priest demands that he affirm or deny that he is the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus' answer (in Matthew and Luke) is a qualified affirmation: "Thou hast said," meaning, in effect, "Those are your words." In the first-century Jewish context, both titles could be misunderstood. "Son of God" was a recognized metaphor for the Messiah's special relationship with God, and "Messiah" could be interpreted in political and military terms, as a nationalist warrior-king. But Jesus then supplements this response with his own wording: "Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." To sit at the right hand of God is to share equally in God's authority. This is not a claim to an earthly kingdom like David's or Caesar's, but to the sovereign authority of God himself, as mediator of judgment and salvation. To his Jewish hearers, such a claim

was blasphemy. But to secure a death sentence from the Roman governor, the charge is translated into political language (sedition): "King of the Jews," a rival to Caesar. Pilate is reluctant to condemn Jesus and recognizes his innocence, but his resistance collapses when mob violence is threatened. In condemning a man he knows to be innocent, Pilate abandons Rome's claim to impartial justice, and makes himself the tool of the world in its rebellion against God. John's passion narrative (read on Good Friday) gives a fuller account of Jesus' interrogation before Pilate. What emerges is Pilate's growing and uneasy recognition that Jesus is not merely a human agent, but in some sense a divine one—the Son of God in more than a metaphorical sense, whose kingship is not from below, but from above. Though Pilate ultimately yields to pressure and condemns Jesus, he takes a kind of revenge by forcing the chief priests to declare, "We have no king but Caesar," an implicit denial that God is Israel's true king. Thus, Israel's claim to true religion is exposed, along with Rome's claim to impartial justice. In the world's judgment of Jesus, it is the world itself—both Jewish and Gentile - that is already judged.

There are also important differences in emphasis among the four Passion accounts. In Mark and Matthew, Jesus is depicted as the suffering servant who bears the alienation of human sin: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He is forsaken, that we who trust in him might never be forsaken. Luke softens this stark portrait and highlights instead the compassion of Jesus and the conversion he elicits, especially in the penitent thief, who becomes a pattern for our own response to the crucified Christ. In John, the

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Rector..... The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar
Associate Rector The Rev. Jonathan Jameson
The Rt. Rev. Paul E. Lambert [Retired].....(931) 327-5489
Hon. Assisting Priest..... Rev. J. Patrick Hunt
Hon. Assisting Priest..... Rev. David Thurlow
Organist and Choirmaster..... Mr. William Douglas
Verger Mr. B. Ray Summerell
Verger Mr. James E. Morris
Acolyte Dir./Master of Ceremonies..... Mr. Carter C. Hubbard

Sr. Warden: Mrs. James F. Holtzclaw (Sherry); Jr. Warden:
Mr. Douglas P. McManamy; Treasurer: Mr. Floyd
Whittington, Jr; Assistant Treasurer: Mrs. Stuart C.
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bert; Chancellor: Dolly Chisholm

The Vestry: Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara),
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Compton, Jr. (Chip), Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague (Mary),
Mr. Patrick Worsham, Dr. Janet S. Morris, Mr. R. Scott
Howard, Mr. Wiley A. Wasden III, Mr. Charles J. Ezelle,
Mr. Graham P. Sadler, and Mrs. Duncan Pindar (Terry);
Chancellor Emeritus & Vestryman Emeritus: M. Tyus
Butler, Jr., Esq.; Vestry Emeriti: Mr. George Fawcett,
Mr. Edwin H. Culver, Mr. J. Earl Gilbreath, Jr.

President, Women of St. John's: Mrs. Clarkson C. Logan
(Meta), Chancel Society: Mrs. Jeanne H. McMillan and
Mrs. Linda H. Pounds; President, Men of St. John's:
Mr. Benjamin W. Baxter

Mark Your Calendars for These Additional Upcoming Events

- **April 8, 5:30 p.m.** – Faith & Fiction, *Four Quartets* by T. S. Elliot, Green-Meldrim House
- **April 8, 15, 22, 29 & May 6, 13, 20, 27, 4 p.m.** – Green-Meldrim House & St. John's Church Combination Tour with Porch Refreshments
- **April 11, 18, 25, 8 a.m.** – Heart of the Historic District Walking Tour, begins at Green-Meldrim House, GreenMeldrimHouse.org
- **April 13, 27 & May 11, 18, 25, 4:30 p.m.** – Teatime at the Meldrims', Green-Meldrim House
- **April 15 & 29 and May 6., 4:30–6:30 p.m.** – Volunteers meet at P.A.C.K., 4 Mall Terrace, Savannah. May 6 will be the final packing day for the current school year.
- **April 24, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** – Hope Haven's Volunteer Training. Sign up at savannahrespite.com

UPCOMING WORSHIP Holy Week & Easter

Online Morning Prayer

8:15 a.m. Monday to Friday

Holy Monday–Holy Wednesday

Noon *Said Holy Communion & Sermon*, Chapel

5:30 p.m. *Sung Tenebrae & Sermon*, Church

Maundy Thursday, April 2

10 a.m. *Said Eucharist of the Lord's Supper*, Church

11 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. *Watch at the Altar of Repose*, Chapel

5:30 p.m. *Solemn Eucharist of the Lord's Supper & Stripping of the Altar*, Church/Online

6:30 p.m. – Midnight *Watch at the Altar of Repose*, Chapel

10 p.m. *Organ Improvisations on Stations of the Cross*, Church

Good Friday, April 3

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. *Confessions in the Chapel*

Noon *Solemn Liturgy of the Passion (Sung) & Veneration of the Cross*, Church/Online

2:30 p.m. *Sung Evening Prayer*, Church

3 p.m. – 4 p.m. *Confessions in the Chapel*

5:30 p.m. *Stations of the Cross in Madison Square (Meet at the arches on the side of the Church)*

Holy Saturday, April 4 (Last Day of Lent)

11 a.m. *Said Ante-Communion & Sermon*, Chapel

Sunday, April 5: Easter Sunday

8 a.m. *Holy Communion (Said)*, Church

9 a.m. *Flowering of the Cross*, Garden Mall

(Nursery available in Cranmer Hall for 9:30 a.m. service.)

9:30 a.m. *Family Sung Eucharist with Brass*, Church/Online

11 a.m. *Easter Egg Hunt*, Garden Mall

(Bring your own baskets)

(Nursery available in Cranmer Hall for 11:30 a.m. service.)

11:30 a.m. *Solemn Choral Eucharist with Brass*, Church/Online

PALM CROSS MAKING

*Saturday, March 28, 10 a.m. – Noon,
Garden Mall (Cranmer Hall Rain Location)*

Join us in the Garden Mall area next to the Church (rain location: Cranmer Hall, 1st floor, Fellowship Hall) to make palm crosses. All you need is a willingness to help and bring a pair of scissors if you can. All are welcome!

DECODING DEMENTIA CARE: A Neuro-PT's Guide to Safety & Socialization with Donna McMahan

*Tuesday, April 7, 10:30 a.m. to noon
Hope Haven, Cranmer Hall (FREE)*

Email savannahrespite@gmail.com to register.



MUSIC AT ST. JOHN'S

Maundy Thursday, April 2, 10 p.m.

Organ Improvisations on Stations of the Cross

Sunday, April 12, 5 p.m.

Music on Madison Square: The Tallis Scholars,
Director Peter Phillips. Tickets: stjohnssav.org/mms

Sunday, April 19, 5 p.m.

Solemn Choral Evensong with
Induction of Choristers

Sunday, July 5, 5 p.m.

Music on Madison Square: Fort Stewart Brass,
Patriotic Extravaganza. Tickets: stjohnssav.org/mms

EASTER BRASS & EASTER LILIES:

Forms are due March 29th

Easter lilies and brass donations are now being received for Easter Sunday, April 5. The Easter lilies are \$45 each, and you may contribute any dollar amount toward the Brass for Easter. Donation forms are available in the back of the church and in the Church Office, or you may give online using the QR codes. Your donation is greatly appreciated and helps decorate the church and provide beautiful, uplifting music this Easter. The list of donors will be published on the Sunday after Easter.



Easter Brass Form



Easter Lilies Form

Stations of the Cross

April 3 | 5:30PM



Join your neighbors and fellow parishioners for a solemn pilgrimage through Madison Square. This all-ages devotion follows the path of the Passion, inviting everyone—from children to seniors—to walk, pray, and reflect together. Through scripture, prayer, and collective silence, we will observe the Stations of the Cross in the heart of our city, honoring this sacred tradition as a unified community.

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

The nursery (infants to four-year-olds) is available from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on the 2nd floor of Cranmer Hall

8 a.m. Blessing of Palms & Said Holy Communion, Church

Breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following the 8 & 9 a.m. services this Sunday.

Blessing of the Palms: St. Matthew 21:1-9, BCP p. 91
The Collects, BCP pp. 134, 124
The Epistle and Gospel, BCP pp. 134-137

8:50 a.m. Meet outside the Church and process into the Church with Palms.

9 a.m. Palm Procession & Family Sung Ante-Communion, Church

Mr. Tyler Lonaker, our new Minister for Youth and Young Adults, will give the Children's Talk at 9 a.m.

10 a.m. All Ages Sunday School, St. Mary's Chapel & Cranmer Hall

11 a.m. Procession & Sung Ante-Communion, Church & Online.

5 p.m. Lenten Course: The Scripture Practice, Green-Meldrim House (Final Class)

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Vestry Offering Chair

8 a.m. Mr. B. Ray Summerell
11 a.m. Mr. Wiley A. Wasden III

Ushers

Mr. Joseph R. Ross (Rusty)
Mr. Patrick Worsham

Choir

9 a.m. Choir of Girls
11 a.m. Choir of Adults

Chancel Society

Mrs. Timothy E. Coy (Dorothea)
Mrs. Jayne G. Holland
Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Sr. (Barbara)
Mrs. B. Ray Summerell (Melanie)
Mrs. John G. Bradshaw (Sally)
Mrs. Nohl A. Braun, Jr. (Alyce)
Mrs. Jeanne Howell McMillan
Ms. Linda H. Pounds
Mrs. Morgan W. Murray (Anne)
Mrs. Rhett N. Willis (Wayne)
Mrs. Richard R. Schulze (Donna)
Mrs. John C. Wylly, Jr. (Margaret)

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emphasis falls on the sovereign freedom and authority of Jesus, who remains in control of events and brings his work to completion with the triumphant cry, "It is finished."

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the vindication of Jesus that is manifested in his resurrection begins immediately after his death, in the confession of the centurion: "Truly this man was the Son of God." In John, the vindication begins when the soldier pierces Jesus' side and blood and water flow out—signs of the cleansing and life-giving power of his death.

In broad strokes, this is the theological meaning of the Passion. The Epistle to the Hebrews directs us to the practical benefit of Christ's Passion, by placing the death of Christ within the framework of priesthood and sacrifice. Christ is both priest

FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY

The flowers in church this Sunday are given to the glory of God.

To offer flowers for the altar, please call the Church office. After Sunday, the flowers are delivered to the sick, sorrowing, and shut-ins.

and victim: who on our behalf offers himself to God as the perfect sacrifice, atoning for sin and establishing a new covenant of God and man. That is to say, he is our representative, he acts for us, and if we are united to him by faith, if we entrust ourselves wholly to him, his vindication becomes our vindication also. To unite ourselves to him by faith must be our priority in Holy Week—for in him (and only in him) do we pass over from wrath to favor, from sin to righteousness, from death to life.

– GGD