

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
Richmond, Virginia
Vestry Meeting
March 27, 2007
Palm Sunday, April 1, 2007
Bruce A. Gray, Rector

A Palm Sunday Poem

Palms and hosannas,
shouts and joy.
This is the week that was.
This is the week that is.

A Holy Week,
a sacred time;
welcome Jesus, into Jerusalem
gather round while he teaches and heals.

The week is full;
all mixed up with tragedy and joy;
with success and failure,
with friends, yet lonely.

Thursday comes with its meal to share;
a Passover moment,
a remembrance of exodus
and a new covenant with God.

We share the lamb
and the bitter herbs;
we eat the bread
and drink the wine.

Jesus brought his friends to the table,
and invites us to the table today;
come to the table,
be Jesus' friend.
Come and eat,
it's all we need to be full.

Then to the garden;
his friends slept on.
He's already alone
when Judas comes.

The soldiers take him,
and off to trial;
not much justice,
not much hope.

Peter hangs on;
on the fringe of the fire;
No I don't know him;
I'm not his friend;
I wonder if Jesus heard?
I wonder if he wept?
Peter heard the cock crowing
and he went out and wept.

Then to Friday;
I wonder why we call it good?
Good for Jesus?
Or good for us?

The Cross is hard and cruel;
the pain is real.
He didn't deserve this,
but he died for us.

Death is real;
it waits for us all;
It is sometimes patient
but always triumphant.
It comes in a moment,
or it waits for a lifetime.

And his friends?
They're gone.
Their fear takes hold;
they wait in hiding.
His mother's there,
along with John;
Mary Magdalene too,
and a few other women.

The soldiers scoff.
They know the power of the cross.
He won't come down
till they take him down.

This is the week that was;
this is the week that is.
It was wrapped in failure;
wrapped in death;
wrapped in a shroud
and put in a tomb.

And now we wait;
we watch at the cross.
Our hopes were so high;
the new David was here.
The Messiah of freedom
would lead the new Exodus;
we would be free;
and Israel restored.

We're ready for Easter;
but we can't be there yet.
It's not quite time.
So we spread our palms;
And shout hosanna;
We sing with joy;
eat bread and wine;
gather with the crowd;
and shout "crucify him."
The end has come;
the failure complete.
"It is finished."

The tomb is cold;
it's hard as rock;
tomorrow, after the Sabbath,
the women will come
to wash and anoint,
to love and to cherish
their friend to the end.