

Sermon Title: **“Hosanna! (Save Now)”**

Bible: **Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 & Mark 11:1-11**

When: on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024

Where: about 25 people (plus YouTube viewers) at Gilroy UMC

### **Opening Prayer**

O Lord, let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock, and our Redeemer. Amen.

### **1. Do You Trust Your Doctors?**

Have you been to see doctors abroad? Or have you been to an ER abroad by any chance? As an immigrant, even though I have Kaiser Health Insurance, to see doctors is always challenging. First of all, there is a language barrier. I know many medical terminologies in Korean, but only some in English. So, sometimes, I need to listen very carefully to what doctors say. Second, the health care and health insurance systems are different. Korea has a nationwide health care and health insurance system. However, in the States, it is different depending on what health care plan and health insurance each person has. Even if some of you might have Kaiser Health Insurance, your Kaiser Health Insurance and my Kaiser Health Insurance cannot be the same, because even within itself, it has different plans. I do not want to be sick. I believe that nobody wants to be sick, but it is inevitable that we will be sick, and we need to learn about our own health care and health insurance. So, I am learning one by one about my Kaiser Health Insurance and the health care system here.

And I happened to hear some challenges or complaints from the doctors, too. Because of the power of social media and google research, many patients have a lot of medical information. Unfortunately, some patients tend to trust social media and google research rather than doctors. Of course, we need to double check with other doctors for second opinions or third opinions. But do we trust our doctors rather than overflowing medical information online? What if your doctors say or suggest different opinions from yours? Do you trust and follow them? Doctors are not perfect. But aren't they trained and qualified to be professional doctors? And most of all, those providing information online cannot know us personally. We are all human beings. But our height, weight, and blood pressure can be different. And sometimes we can have our own unique health questions pertaining to our own bodies. If you google them online, you may not be able to find them, but our doctors are educated in them. Then, can you trust your doctors, even when what they say is different from you?

## **2. Hosanna (Save Now)**

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, many people came out, welcomed Jesus, and shouted out "Hosanna, Hosanna!" Hosanna literally means, "Save now!" Save from what? At that time, the Jews were under the control of the Roman empire. Before Jesus Christ, there had been several revolts of the Jews against many empires. The most famous one would be the Maccabean revolt from 167 to 160 BCE. Even though many of the revolts were not successful, it seemed like the Jews were able to have some kind of freedom or independence of their faith and their religious practices, even under the Roman empire. Furthermore, many

people might have been expecting the Messiah, the one who could save them from the Roman empire with political power and military might.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, many people welcomed Jesus, just like he was king of the earth, who might save them and conquer the current empire. They shouted out “Hosanna, Save Now, Hosanna, Save Now.” But Jesus did not ride on a horse, instead he rode a donkey, coming as a humble king of peace. Jesus was neither a political leader nor a mighty general. But a political leader and a mighty general was what the people were expecting Jesus to be. There was a big gap between who Jesus was and what the people expected him to be. Today is also called Passion Sunday. Passion in Latin means suffering. With palm leaves, many people welcomed Jesus, but when they knew who Jesus really was, many people denied, betrayed, and refused Jesus. Nevertheless, our Lord Jesus Christ walked on his way to the cross.

### **3. Holy Week: Maundy Thursday & Good Friday**

Jesus performed many miracles. Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, fed five thousands and many more, and calmed the storm. But during this holy week, Jesus showed us who Jesus was and why Jesus came to the earth. If we only focus on miracles, we might misunderstand who Jesus was. If we miss what Jesus did during this holy week, we might misunderstand who Jesus was.

On Maundy Thursday, Jesus came not as a ruler, but as a servant. Before the last supper, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. To wash others' feet was what servants did. The

disciples might wash the feet of their teacher, because Jesus was their teacher. But Jesus, even though he was not a servant, washed the disciples' feet. Did Jesus wash the feet of all twelve disciples, including the one who would betray him? We might want to judge others, and rule over others, but Jesus showed us an example of a humble servant leadership. Jesus gave us the new covenant to love one another. If you expect Jesus to rule over others, if we expect to rule over others, that is not the teaching of Jesus Christ on Maundy Thursday.

On Good Friday, Jesus kept silent rather than using his power. At the headquarters of Pilate, Jesus kept silent. What I mean is that Jesus decided to be silent. He could have spoken up for himself had he wanted to. Even though he had the power to perform miracles and to save himself from suffering and the cross, he did not use his power, and he kept silent instead. To me, Jesus' silence means he listens to us, he listens to our pain and our suffering in our daily lives. Jesus' vulnerability means he is with us in our suffering. Jesus, who is God, became a human being, to suffer with us, within us, and sometimes instead of us. Jesus suffered together with us in his own body. If you expect Jesus to heal all the diseases and to take away all of our sufferings, and if we expect to live without any suffering, it is not the teaching of Jesus Christ on Good Friday.

### **5. Can We Still Shout Out “Hosanna!”?**

When I see doctors, I try to trust doctors even though I cannot understand all of what doctors say, and even though I cannot accept all of what they say. Sometimes, I double check with second or third opinions. But generally speaking, I trust doctors, follow them, and

entrust the care of my body to them.

On Palm Sunday, people welcomed Jesus with a shout “Hosanna, Save Now!” But when Jesus revealed Jesusself as the servant, and as the most vulnerable one, people stopped welcoming Jesus as a savior. There was no more “Hosanna!” Even many of his disciples ran away from him, denied him, and betrayed him. When Jesus turned out to be not the one who you expected, what do you want to do? Can we still shout out “Hosanna!”? Can we still welcome Jesus in our hearts and in our lives? O Lord, Hosanna! Hosanna! Save now! Save now! We need you here and now!

### **Closing Prayer**

Loving and living God, thank you so much for the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please be our savior even when we cannot understand all, even when we cannot accept all. That’s because you are the one who saves us, the one who lives with us, the one who loves us. Please guide us to shout out “Hosanna!” again! In Jesus’ name. Amen.