

From morning 'til night

As Palm Sunday arrives, God has blessed us during the past few weeks by the dedicated work of our pastors and congregations as they have gathered us together through services and prayers made available on the internet. We can be together in a virtual world from morning 'til night! Many are now using their talents in ways they could not have imagined just a few short (or is it long?) weeks ago. We are so very thankful for inspiring work as it spiritually strengthens us during this very uncertain and frightening time. It is so good to 'come together' as we are each **doing** our part by **staying** apart.



We are also meeting people who serve God in our Latvian (and other!) congregations around the world! Thanks to each of you in every congregation for sharing your time and talents. Some serve videotaping church services, others deliver medicine or food to those who cannot get to a store. Some congregations have left gifts of palm branches or pussy willow branches, or Latvian bread, on member's doorsteps! Christ's love is made real through these acts of grace! So we serve Him and others as the world becomes His sanctuary. When our resurrected Lord was about to leave the world, He did not leave us without a promise, but declared: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Mt.28:20) God is eternal, in Him time never ends. This crisis will end, but "God's mercy endures forever!" As Psalm 136 repeats in every one of its 26 verses!

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday, the crowds cheered: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, **the stones will cry out.**" (Lk.19:38-40). Covid-19 cannot silence our voices! And, if we cannot sing Hosannas in our churches, our voices can still resound through the internet and our telephones! Neither stones nor the internet carry life within them, but they can be transformed by God's hand to become instruments of praise, compassion, hope and peace!

Let our voices not be silenced by our fears and sorrows, but lifted to Him and others in faith as we ask God to protect us all from Covid-19. Let us pray from morning 'til night for those who are risking their lives to care for others. May God protect and bless them and their loved ones. May medicine soon be found to help those who are suffering.

This Holy week will lead our Lord through a time of great suffering and death. Tragically, for far too many in our world, it will be the same. I pray God grants us voices full of mercy and compassion, so we might walk alongside them toward Easter morning. From morning till night let us abide with one another as Christ abides with us - from a distance, and yet so near! God bless you and keep you safe as you reach out to one another.

+ Lauma

Photo: Baiba Rēdmane