



Palm Sunday, 28th March 2021.

Commemoration of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem.

Preparation

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you

All and also with you.

cf 1 Timothy 1:2

Hymn

- 1 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hark, all the tribes hosanna cry.
Thy humble beast pursues his road
with palms and scattered garments strowed.

- 2 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die:
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.

- 3 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
the wingèd squadrons of the sky
look down with sad and wondering eyes
to see the approaching sacrifice.



- 4 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
The last and fiercest strife is nigh:
the Father on his sapphire throne
awaits his own anointed Son.
- 5 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
in lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, thy power, and reign.

Opening Words

- All Hosanna to the Son of David.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Behold your king comes to you, O Zion,
meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass.
Ride on in the cause of truth
and for the sake of justice.
Your throne is the throne of God, it endures for ever;
and the sceptre of your kingdom is a righteous sceptre.
You have loved righteousness and hated evil:
therefore God, your God has anointed you
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.
- All Hosanna to the Son of David.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

We hold up our palms/greenery while the following prayer is said.

God our Saviour,
whose Son entered Jerusalem as Messiah



to suffer and to die,
let these palms be for us signs of victory;
and grant that we who bear them in his name
may ever hail him as our King,
and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All Amen.

Confession

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

cf Psalm 51.17

**All Almighty God,
long-suffering and of great goodness:
I confess to you,
I confess with my whole heart
my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,
my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking;
the hurts I have done to others,
and the good I have left undone.
O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;
and raise me to newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**



Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *us*,
pardon and deliver *us* from all *our* sins,
confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness,
and keep *us* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Word of God

The first reading is taken from Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-end. Read by Kate Green.

Psalm 118

- ¹ O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!
- ² Let Israel say,
'His steadfast love endures for ever.'
- ¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
- ²⁰ This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
- ²¹ I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
- ²² The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
- ²³ This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.
- ²⁴ This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.



- ²⁵ Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!
O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!
- ²⁶ Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
- ²⁷ The Lord is God,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.
- ²⁸ You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.
- ²⁹ O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Hear the Gospel according to St Mark 11:1-11.

All Glory to Christ our Saviour.

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, “Why are you doing this?” just say this, “The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.”’ ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, ‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’ ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread



their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,
'Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!

¹¹ Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

This is the Gospel of Christ.

All Praise to Christ our Lord.

Sermon

Written by the Rev'd David Newton

"I came up to Jerusalem to mark the Passover Feast along with thousands of others. The streets thronged with people. I greeted old friends and strangers alike with the festal words, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'. It was our way of saying well done for making it to Jerusalem, of making it to the Temple.

I had heard that Jesus was on his way as well. There was a buzz around the place, an energy and excitement. I, along with most other people, had heard of this man Jesus and what he had been doing. We wanted to see him. We'd all been wondering if this could be the one we'd be waiting for...

As word spread that he was on his way from Bethphage, I – along with most others in the city – flocked out of the gate and on to the road that leads up to the Mount of Olives.



I was one of the first to catch sight of him. And I said to the guy next to me, ‘hey look – he’s on a donkey; what is he doing?’ Some guy behind who thought he was smart piped up something about a prophet telling of a king coming ‘gentle and riding a donkey’.

The next thing I knew people started shouting. They began with the festal shout they knew well: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Then a few started laying their cloaks on the street. I had heard that the ancient kings had been welcomed into Jerusalem in the same way. And now, centuries on, people all around me were taking their cloaks off and lining the street. The Roman Soldiers must have understood what it meant... they just shifted around nervously hoping things would stay under control.

I ran to the nearest tree and ripped a branch off and threw it down in front of the colt. Then the guy behind me got really excited and started shouting ‘Hosanna’. Did he really think this was the one who was going to save us? God was going to liberate us through this gentle character?

Then someone else chimed in ‘blessed is the coming kingdom’. That really got the crowd going. ‘Here comes the king’, shouted others.

It was all over in about ten minutes. I followed with the rest of the crowd wondering what Jesus might do next. He went up to the Temple, took a look around and left again.

We were all a bit bemused. We thought ‘something’ might happen. But nothing.

Not that day anyway. That week things did start happening though... Jesus started to really cause a storm. He turned the tables in the Temple. He told people to pay Roman taxes. He got up the noses of



the Temple Officials. I even heard he let a woman pour perfume over his feet.

Things started to turn ugly. I'm not sure I want to tell you what happened after that. Or my part in it all...

It certainly wasn't what we expected to happen when we shouted hosanna.

It was not what we expected to happen at all."

One of the important things to do as we enter the most Holy Week of the Christian calendar is to make sure we pause at each step and pretend, for a moment, that we don't know how the story ends. We place ourselves in it – walk through it – with the people and with Jesus.

If we do that today one of the things that might strike us is the uncertainty of what is to come. We simply do not and cannot know what might happen next.

Might Jesus use the momentum he has got to start a rebellion against Roman tyranny? Might he heal every person in sight? Might he teach and draw crowds at the Temple? All these things might have been thinkable.

What actually happened probably lay outside of the purvey of most people's imaginations.

From this juncture, we simply do not know what will happen next. The uncertainty that surrounds us at this moment of the story is acute.

Yet, it is only a more intense version of the uncertainty that pervades our lives and that is a fact of living.

We cannot control the future. We do not know what lies around the corner. We do not know what might happen around us or even within



us. We do not know how we might respond to events as they unfold on the morrow.

Most of the time – for most of us – that sense of ‘uncertainty’ lies dormant. We think of life as fairly predictable and mundane – and most of the time it usually is. But occasionally of course, something happens which reminds us that we can never really know what tomorrow might bring. Illness, job loss, a lucky break, a chance encounter that leads to unexpected places.

And, in these days, if we’re thinking about unpredictability, we cannot but think of Covid. I write this on the anniversary of the first lockdown. As the PM addressed the nation a year ago, we were rocked by uncertainty. Things were happening which most of us could not have imagined a few months earlier.

Whilst some of life has become more predictable and mundane than ever (!), we all continue to be rocked by a pervading sense of uncertainty. We do not and cannot know what lies around the corner. Through all of this we might well have learnt to live with less control, we might have learnt to ‘let go’ and somehow grown through the experience. In one way or another we have all learnt to live with such uncertainty.

Palm Sunday is a day of maximum uncertainty. We could scarcely imagine the week that was to unfold.

Yet knowing the story as we do, we can speak of something other than simple ‘uncertainty’ and unpredictability. Even though the story takes us into hell we know that this is not the final word. There is a resource of life and love that can sustain Christ – and so also sustain us – through anything and everything that might lie around the corner. This is the wonder of Easter viewed from Palm Sunday.



As we stand here today we do not know what is coming. We do not know what trial or tribulations lie ahead. We do not know whether we will stay faithful, or whether our hosannas will turn to hate-you's.

But something certain lies under all that. The chief cornerstone! The power and love of God in Christ which remains solid and stable whatever tomorrow brings. How we need that in this day. Amen.

Prayers

The intercessions are led by Rick Nelms

Heavenly Father, This Palm Sunday, we give thanks to You, for You are good, Your steadfast love endures forever. With those who stood outside the gates of Jerusalem, we shout Hosanna, we shout Blessed is the name of the one who comes in Your name. We, and the whole Church of Christ, across the world, in this Nation and in the Lordsbridge Team, give you all the respect, the reverence, the fear, that You deserve, creator of all, willing to sacrifice Your only Son Jesus, for our sins, We thank you that Jesus came into the city of Jerusalem, seated on a donkey, to save the world and not to condemn it.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his steadfast love endures for ever!

Heavenly Father, this Palm Sunday, we pray for your Kingdom come on Earth. We pray for your Church, the Church of Christ in the world. We pray for all of the two billion people across the world who make up the Church of Christ. We pray for our Archbishops Justin and Stephen, for our Bishops Stephen and Dagmar, for all of the clergy and lay ministers in the Lordsbridge Team. We pray for everyone who

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works to be the Church of Christ in the villages west of Cambridge, for their worship, their service and the light that they bring into this part of Your world.

○ give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

Heavenly Father, this Palm Sunday, we are reminded that we are stewards of this little blue planet on which we live, by the cut rushes, the palm branches, by the young donkey that had never been ridden and by the stones who would shout out if the people did not, by the water in Jesus tears as he wept for Jerusalem. Lord, you judged that your creation was very good, and so it is. Climate change, the biodiversity crisis, the pandemic and the human inequalities that these have revealed, teach us that humanity must not go back to its old wasteful ways which endanger the very home in which we live. Help us, as the pandemic eases, to be active in being advocates for planet Earth, for its beautiful biodiversity, for its magnificent landscapes, for the glorious diversity of humanity.

○ give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

Heavenly Father, this Palm Sunday, the servant Kingship of Jesus, reminds us to pray for our leaders and our communities. We pray for the queen and the royal family, for Your love and Your light at this difficult time, to help bind up wounds and give support in their service to all. We pray for all the leaders of the world, and we pray for a miracle; for Your Holy Spirit to fall upon them all, bringing gifts of faith and wise leadership. We pray for all those billions of people who have heard the Gospel and rejected it, Lord may they hear your call. We pray for all those billions of people who have never heard the Gospel

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good news, Lord, may we all, through our words and service and actions, be the bringers of Good News to our friends and neighbours and families.

○ give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

Heavenly Father, this Palm Sunday, let the suffering of the fully human Jesus, knowing, even as he entered in triumph, that he was to suffer and die for us all, inspire us in prayer for your healing Spirit to touch people who suffer. Lord, we pray for those who suffer from injustice, bigotry, poverty, inequality, homelessness, slavery and captivity. We pray for all people who are suffer from illness in body, in mind or in spirit. In the time of silence we pray for those on our hearts today.

silence

○ give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

Heavenly Father, this Palm Sunday, as we prepare ourselves for Holy Week, and for thinking about all that Jesus did for us on the cross, we pray for everyone who is dying. We pray for everyone who is bereaved and grieving. We thank you for the lives of those who have died in faith, both those known to us and those whose faith is known only to you. In a time of silence we pray for those on our hearts today.

silence

○ give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever, on Earth and in heaven!

Hosanna!

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!**



Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer is said

Standing at the foot of the cross,
As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,**



**and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Conclusion

Christ crucified draw us to himself,
to find him a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sins forgiven;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us, and remain with us always.

All Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen