

'Staying Connected'  
Worship and Pastoral Resources  
For Week Beginning  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020



## **Palm Sunday**

### **In our social isolation we come together;**

We continue to gather as the people of God, as church; although our buildings are closed, church is very much alive and active. Many of us, in fact, are in touch with family and friends more than we were before. We may not be able to physically be with each other but we are talking to each other and, importantly, listening to each other and praying for and with each other. Consequently, God is very much alive and active, working and walking with us, laughing and crying with us, seeking and saving those who feel lost. When we entered this time of Lent, we never expected anything like we are experiencing. It certainly is a Lent like no other! If you're like me, you'll feel like you're on a roller coaster – sometimes you feel really bad, sometimes it's a joy, sometimes it's downright scary. The good news is that God is with us and, as we begin to enter into worship on this Palm Sunday, I invite you to get on the rollercoaster ride that Jesus and the disciples were on in that final week. It can be very easy for us to celebrate Palm Sunday and move straight to Easter Sunday, not encountering the fullness of what happened in that final week of Jesus' earthly life. Just like the rollercoaster we're on right now, the journey may well feel pretty similar. Know this though, Easter and resurrection is the truth at the end of the ride.

So as we enter into worship today, we offer you hymns, a bible reading, reflection, prayers. Separately you will be receiving daily reflections to engage with during Holy Week. God bless you as you offer yourselves in worship today – not for what you can get from it but because your desire is to worship our great and mighty and gentle God.

If you have a Palm Cross you might like to hold it or have it in front of you as you still yourself before God now, letting go of all the busyness, the worries, the aches and pains, whatever is occupying your mind, and laying it all at the foot of the cross where all is safe. Trust the Lord to remind you what you need to pick up again at the end of your time of worship.

Rev Julie Letts

### **We come together in prayer**

To You who holds us in this time of no holding, no touching, not being together.  
WE BRING OURSELVES IN PRAYER

To You who sees the aching of our hearts, the churning of our minds, the bruising of our souls.  
WE BRING OURSELVES IN PRAYER

To You who speaks peace to the storms, who makes a way in the desert, who brings new life to the dead, and takes our lack and producing more than enough over and over.  
WE BRING OURSELVES IN PRAYER.

**We come together through reading the Bible Reading: Matthew 21:1-11**

Jesus comes to Jerusalem as King

21 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> "Say to Daughter Zion,        'See, your king comes to you,  
   gentle and riding on a donkey,  
   and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" <sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna <sup>[b]</sup> to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" <sup>[c]</sup>

"Hosanna <sup>[d]</sup> in the highest heaven!"

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

<sup>11</sup> The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

**We come together as we lift our voices to God in song:**

1. Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendour arrives;  
Fling wide the gates and welcome him into your lives.

*Make way (make way), make way (make way),  
For the King of kings (for the king of kings);  
Make way (make way), make way (make way)  
and let his Kingdom in.*

2. He comes the broken hearts to heal  
The prisoners to free;  
The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,  
The blind shall see.

3. And those who mourn with heavy hearts,  
   who weep and sigh,  
   with laughter, joy and royal crown  
He'll beautify.

4. We call you now to worship him as Lord of all,  
To have no gods before him, their thrones must fall!

© Graham Kendrick 1986 Thankyou Music  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tK6XuYhL7JI>

**We come together as we reflect**

As Jesus arrives, expectant people shout 'Hosanna' which in Hebrew means 'save'. The one who was going to save them had arrived. He is welcomed in with great joy and palm branch waving (did you wave your palm cross whilst singing the hymn?) but did Jesus really arrive in splendour as we have sung? Was he welcomed into peoples lives? All that we sang just now, is it true? Jesus proclaimed that he is 'the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.' Today, as we are besieged not by Roman rulers but by an unseen enemy, it could be said that the whole world is seeking to understand what truth is, seeking to find a way to journey on that will bring fullness of life. But has the Way not always been with us and the promise that we can know life in all its fullness? If that's the truth, perhaps too many of us have been blind to all of that – did the people really not see that Jesus had entered Jerusalem on a donkey not on a magnificent horse? Did they really not see that he didn't

have the grand appearance of a king? As the week to come unfolded many did see that Jesus was not fitting into their expectations and many who proclaimed 'Hosanna' were a few days later demanding 'crucify'.

We would have been expecting to gather in our buildings and receive a Palm cross and probably carry on life as normal. Does Truth being a follower of Jesus though, mean that life should be ever changing as we grow in our discipleship? Sometimes the Way of Jesus is not the way we want to choose. As we reflect, where might you have been in the crowd that day as Jesus entered Jerusalem? At the front laying down palm branches? Among the throng shouting 'hosanna'? At the back looking on wondering could this be he who comes to save? Or are you at the back with those who feel threatened by his very presence?

Wherever you find yourself, we take great comfort because of the week that is ahead, for Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. As you move through this week, I pray that you will indeed find Jesus in his fullness as we have sung – healing, restoring, beautifying, releasing. Let us pray that this may be so for us and for the world:

**We come together in prayer:**

prayers written by Sally Coleman

When we are bearers of bad news LORD HAVE MERCY  
When our hearts are broken or breaking CHRIST HAVE MERCY  
When we have reached the end of ourselves LORD HAVE MERCY

For those who have no resources,

nowhere to go, no one to turn to IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

For those who are working for justice

in an even more trying situation than usual IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

For those whose names we can only whisper with our aching hearts:

† David Whitworth's family. His nephew Paul is in a coma, and understandably the family are very worried about him.

† Those known to us and the struggle they are currently facing

† Those who have succumbed in the struggle, may they know you in glory.

† World politicians as they lead people in this fight against an unseen enemy

† For ..... IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER

For those whose courage, dedication, humility,

means that they are selflessly giving of themselves in order to help and save others

LORD HAVE MERCY AND HEAR OUR PRAYER.

And so in silence, some of us at home alone, some of us in busy homes, we trust ourselves to your love, to your leading, to your holding, even when we cannot hold each other.

From where we are to where you need us JESUS LEAD US ON

We trust ourselves to you AMEN.

## Resources/Suggestions for Worship at Home

- ***Candles of Hope***

At 7pm on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March many responded to the National Call to Prayer and lit a candle as a sign of hope, placing it in a window for others to see. This was an opportunity to come together as we lit our candles for others and saw other candles which gave each of us hope. Continuing to come together, if you're able, light a candle of hope every Sunday evening at 8pm (now that the clocks have changed), and pray.

- ***Idea for Palm Sunday***

The Missionaries of the Holy Spirit have suggested we put a green branch – any green branch - on our doors or windows to celebrate Palm Sunday. This would help, despite the social distancing, to be connected as we enter into the Holiest of Weeks. If you do this, could you send us a picture and maybe a word or two about how you felt doing this, did you get any response from neighbours ....



- **Pray using Cliff College daily morning prayer**

An opportunity to engage in “live” morning prayers; can still be viewed later on the FB page.  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/CliffCollege/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/CliffCollege/videos/?ref=page_internal)

- ***Telephone contacts and prayer***

Everyone is doing amazingly well, keeping connected with each by telephone calls. As well as chatting and making sure we're ok, we can pray together too. If you're not sure what to pray, pray The Lord's Prayer. It's a powerful prayer! As you get used to that, you might like to think about saying a part of the prayer then stopping to reflect and praying more, ie “*give us this day our daily bread*” *Thank you Lord, for those who deliver food to people who cannot get out.*

- ***Ideas for the week*** – to share with each other for next week!!!

- ❖ If you like cooking, perhaps make hot cross buns and take a photo to share with us. Here's a video about the history of and making of hot cross buns:

<https://www.facebook.com/eyamchurch/videos/872810759833592/>

- ❖ Can you make a cross – woodwork, knitting, papercraft..... for Good Friday, take a photo. Can you then transform it for Easter Sunday, take a photo!
- ❖ Make an Easter Garden – using a foil tin or baking tin – fill with soil, make a path with pebbles, create a tomb and a stone, put some flowers/moss around ..... Take a photo!

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