

# Palm Sunday

## - worship around a table



### **Preparation:**

*This worship is created to be done while sitting around a table.*

*Create your own Palm Sunday parade. Gather some figurines and/or toys and set them up to be the crowd, use blocks to create the city gates, collect some leaves and twigs from the garden and bits of cloth to lay down a path along the table, you might even give each figure a 'palm' to wave.*



### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Who is this we see coming our way?  
It is Jesus, God's own son, coming our way.  
Come trotting into our world, Jesus,  
Come teach us how to be your people.  
Come trotting into our home,  
Teach us how to welcome others.  
Come trotting into our hearts,  
Teach us how to trust in you.

**Song:** 'We are marching in the light of God' (Siyahumba)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqNdoExJido>

### **ADORATION**

*A poem from Rev Bruce Prewer*

#### **ONLY ONE**

Only one king comes to our town  
not in a Rolls Royce or BMW  
with police bikes all around,  
but bareback on a runt of a donkey,  
like a comedian, feet brushing the ground.

Only one high priest comes to our church

not led by bishops and cardinals  
rich-robed with religious sentiment,  
but led by a grubby gang of street kids  
screaming their heads off with merriment.

Only one God comes down our street  
not surrounded by holy angels  
or shining like the sun at noon,  
but with tears running down his cheeks  
for those who play the devil's tune.

Only one true-man comes along this way  
never looking to be served  
or honoured with public praise,  
but to serve and give his life  
as a ransom for rebels and strays.

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## CONFESSION

Loving Jesus, it is hard to keep faith and not be anxious when the future is uncertain, please continue to forgive us when we do the wrong thing, say the wrong words, get upset and angry. As we find our way in the world, keep us in step with you, keep our eyes on you and the example you set for us, let empathy and kindness be our point of view and the talk that we walk.

## ASSURANCE

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord and blessed are we when we walk the way of God. Your wrongdoings are set aside, don't let them be the map that you use to charter your life, let God's steadfast love be the light that lights your way.

## THANKSGIVING

*Before you say this psalm of thanksgiving, take a moment to name the good things that you have been given this week.*

### ***Based on Psalm 118:1-4, 19-29***

Give thanks to God,  
For God is good  
God's love is steadfast and strong,  
God is with us through thick and thin;  
We, the people of God, want to tell the world -  
God's love endures forever.

I needed saving, I was in a bad place,  
But I was not left alone to suffer.  
God opened the gates of righteousness to me  
and I walked in -

thank you for answering my cries.  
What was once rejected  
has now become the cornerstone of a whole new house,  
a house of praise and thanksgiving –  
it is a marvellous sight.

Today is the day to give God praise,  
Today is the day God sets us free,  
So, we will rejoice and be glad,  
We will wave branches,  
We will decorate our home with garlands and banners,  
And celebrate the One who comes in God's name,  
our God who has brought us into the light.

You are our loving God, and we will give you thanks and praise.  
Give thanks and praise for God is good,  
God is with us through thick and thin,  
God's love endures forever.

## THE WORD

Here is a fun video of Palm Sunday from the donkey's point of view but stop at around 2:25 – it goes on into Maundy Thursday from there.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipAcuR-NiYc>

### Reading: Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately.[a]" <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

<sup>5</sup> "Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; <sup>7</sup> they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd[b] spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

<sup>10</sup> When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" <sup>11</sup> The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

**Song:** 'Hosanna',

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca\\_RQlOHBfE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca_RQlOHBfE)

Play and/or sing along to the song (there's cheering included in this version), act out the parade as you sing.

You might like to video your parade so you can share it with others.

**Consider:**

- What was each one of the people in the crowd feeling as they saw Jesus coming along riding on a donkey?
- Would everyone know who he is?
- Would they have been expecting him?
- Would they cheer, would they be puzzled?
- Would they join in the parade?
- What would you be thinking if you were in the crowd?

The triumphal entry in Jerusalem is probably the story of two parades, the one that we read and know about and the one it may be parodying. New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan, believe that at the beginning of the Passover it was the practice of the prefect of Judea to enter the city of Jerusalem in a militaristic parade of force, that was reminiscent of Alexander the Great's entry in the city when he conquered it in 332 BC.

We can imagine what this might have looked like. It's just days before the Passover, one of Judaism's most holy days, the celebration of the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt, people have come from all over the land to be at the temple in Jerusalem. The markets are full for there are essential things to gather for the Passover meal.

Suddenly, armed soldiers run into the marketplace and start pushing people and stalls aside to clear a path, and then Pilate, dressed in military splendour, mounted on a war horse, surrounded by chariots and armed soldiers, marches through the holy city. It's a clear display of force, hammering home to all that Rome rules here.

In the next little while, perhaps the next couple of days, as the people have settled into their routine again, there is another parade. Imagine this one. A rag tag collection of people, dressed in their everyday attire, create a commotion as they sweep into the streets throwing their cloaks on the ground and waving palm leaves and shouting 'Hosanna – save me! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord'. The object of their cries, the one they say will save them, is an ordinary bloke, who's riding on a donkey, a nursing mother donkey to boot, with a colt at its side.

Looking on, you might speculate about what was really happening here: some would see it as the fulfillment of a prophecy and be led to the expectation that the rule of Rome was coming to an end, and if you didn't see this you would probably see the politics of this event as Jesus makes a mockery of Pilate's parade.

The chief priest and Pharisees understood the insubordination that was happening – Rome is the new Egypt, the Emperor is the new Pharaoh, and this Passover will once again be the time of liberation from slavery for the people of Israel.

And this brings us to all that happens in the days ahead.

Song: 'Keeping my eyes on you' by Robin Mann

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RO7pRm3UO4c>

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Remember that 'hosanna' means 'save'. As you pack up the parade, pick up the cloth, leaves and twigs and place them in a pile, pray for people, situations and places that you are concerned about. If you have prayed for a particular person, you may like to send a photo of the leaf or twig you allocated to them, or a letter or card containing it, and tell them you have prayed for them.

As you pray you might like to also remember

- people working in hospitals
- people who have lost their jobs
- people who are worried about all that's happening at the moment
- people who are missing the company of their family and friends

Song: 'One more step along the world I go' by Sydney Carter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PXV3dwaeNU>

## BLESSING

During Lent we have been preparing for these next days, Jesus has entered his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, our Hosannas have been sung and he will go on to his arrest, death and resurrection. We will travel with him through the words of scripture. Let us travel this road in faith and love.

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