

# Palm Sunday 2020

## Opening hymn

Ride on, ride on in majesty!  
Hark, all the tribes hosanna cry;  
O Saviour meek, pursue thy road  
with palms and scattered garments strowed.

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.

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.

## Welcome & Introduction

Welcome everyone to our worship on this Palm Sunday which comes from a variety of locations, but a special welcome to Christ Church Rectory. Welcome too to those who are joining us for the first time. We hope you will find this morning's liturgy helpful and encouraging at the start of this Holy Week, the most important week in the church's year as we walk with Jesus to the cross, and beyond. This year we will be making that journey as individuals in our own homes, but I hope you continue to feel part of our church community and draw strength from the fact that many will be walking with you.

There will be acts of worship on our website on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Day.

## Opening responses

Hosanna!

**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;

You have loved righteousness and hated evil.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed 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!**

I'm sure many of you have palm crosses at home, which you might want to find later, or you may have already found. If you have you may want to hold them with during this morning's service.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings we may share his risen life.

Let us pray:

God our Saviour,  
whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die,  
let these palms be for us signs of his 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, one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

### **The Collect for Palm Sunday**

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 forever.  
**Amen.**

### **The Palm Sunday Gospel from Matthew (The Revd. Tom Studman)**

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

"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."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!"

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

## Reflection for Passion Sunday (Tom Phipps)

Our reading today is one that many of you probably know well. We see Jesus riding into Jerusalem just days before His death and resurrection. He is greeted by cheering crowds waving palm branches, a spectacle we perhaps look forward to recreating in Church at this time of year. It's a time of celebration, joy and excitement.

I don't know about you, but to me the reading feels a little jarring this year. The beautiful picture Matthew paints of a "very large crowd" seems strange, as we are mostly confined to our homes; we are not allowed to come together as a crowd to celebrate the beginning of Holy Week in the same way that we normally would. We are, of course, blessed with the ability to communicate in different ways. We can post our services online, we can contact each other over the phone, we can coordinate our times of prayer during the week. Undeniably though, this is not quite the same as coming together jovially as a Church community as we welcome Jesus into our midst.

Being Church at the moment is a challenge, and it's something we're still figuring out together. Perhaps it's just me, but the image of the crowd on Palm Sunday really seemed to drive that home.

With that being said, there is, perhaps, another focus we can place on the story. Jesus' triumphal entry, whilst in many ways a celebration, is seldom remembered without a certain sense of foreboding. As we read this passage, we know what is next, what is just days around the corner. We know that as Jesus rides into Jerusalem, He is journeying ever closer to the cross. We know that His Disciples, those who loved and followed Him, are soon to become isolated and fearful. We know they are about to enter into what we might call a liminal space after it seems that Jesus has left them. We also know, however, that it is the most important part of the story that comes next. We know that in what must have felt like the darkest time, the faithfulness and love of Jesus were ever present, and were expressed in their fullest as Jesus died on the cross and was raised to life.

We know that the true celebration comes at the end of the week, after the Disciples had journeyed through the darkness and uncertainty, and we know that that same faithfulness and love is offered freely to us.

As we look at the story of Palm Sunday, my prayer for us as a community is that whilst we recognise the challenges of the road ahead, whilst we are in this place of uncertainty and anxiety, that we would know also the fullness of that unfathomable faithfulness and love displayed by Jesus, and that there is nothing so great that He will not triumph over it. "Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning" (Psalm 30.5b).

## Intercessions (Alison Peacock)

Hosanna to the Son of David!

### **Hosanna in the highest heaven**

Lord Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself and became as nothing for our sake. Give to your Church the servant mind to display your grace and your mercy. We pray for all Christians gathered in their own homes at the start of this Holy Week, and for our church community here at Christ Church and St. Christopher's.

Hosanna to the Son of David!

### **Hosanna in the highest heaven**

Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the crowd shouted praises,  
but in just a few days they turned on you.  
We pray for all at the mercy of fickle popularity.  
Give governments strength and courage to hold to what is true and right.  
Hosanna to the Son of David!

**Hosanna in the highest heaven**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
as the crowd spread their cloaks and waved palm branches in your honour,  
we give thanks for the occasions that fill us with joy,  
and we pray that at this difficult time  
you would draw us closer to one another and closer to you.  
Hosanna to the Son of David!

**Hosanna in the highest heaven**

Lord Jesus Christ, in your passion we see our human frailty.  
Be with all whose endurance is strained and spirit is weakened,  
remembering those affected by COVID 19 and others stranded far from home  
apart from their loved ones.

We remember too those we know in need of our prayers at this time.  
Sustain the weary with your compassion and love,  
and strengthen all who care for the sick and the dying  
Hosanna to the Son of David!

**Hosanna in the highest heaven**

Lord Jesus Christ, you shared our life even to the point of death.  
Gather to yourself in gentleness and peace all who have died.  
We pray for the souls of Paul Booth, John Rainford, Paula Barry and Wally Marshall,  
remembering also all who grieve their loss, especially Anne Marshall.  
Hosanna to the Son of David!

**Hosanna in the highest heaven**

We join all our prayers together in the prayer that Jesus gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever  
Amen.**

## **Blessing**

May the Father, who so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
bring us by faith to his eternal life.

May Christ, who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will,  
keep us steadfast as we walk with him the way of his cross.

May the Spirit, who strengthens us to suffer with Christ that we may share his glory,  
set our minds on life and peace.

And the blessing of God almighty,  
our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be among us and remain with us,  
this Palm Sunday and always.

Amen.

Let us go in peace, to love and serve the Lord

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## **Hymn**

*Refrain:*

*All glory, laud, and honour  
to thee, Redeemer, King,  
to whom the lips of children  
made sweet hosannas ring.*

**Thou art the King of Israel,  
thou David's royal Son,  
who in the Lord's name comest,  
the King and blessed one:**

*Refrain*

**To thee before thy passion  
they sang their hymns of praise:  
to thee now high exalted  
our melody we raise:**

*Refrain*