



**Northwest Christchurch, Hororata and Ellesmere
Parishes
Church@Home Service
2 April 2023
Palm Sunday Service**

If you have a palm that you have made or from another year we invite you to have this palm with you through this service to remind you of Jesus' journey. If you don't have a cross, a video will be included as part of this service showing you how to make one if you would like to (and you have access to some flax OR you use a cut strip of paper).

Take a moment or two to be still and ask God to be present with you as you worship.

Opening call to worship

Rejoice, rejoice you sons of Zion.

Shout for joy, you daughters of Jerusalem!

Look and see, your King is coming to you,

**HE COMES TRIUMPHANT AND VICTORIOUS
YET HUMBLE AND RIDING ON A DONKEY.**

Hosanna to the Son of David!

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!

Opening Song Hosanna in the highest

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2v9XCsfOEE>

OR video including background from the 2018 Palm Sunday procession from Bethphage to Jerusalem:

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

Opening Prayer

Loving Father, as we journey with your Son in this week of remembrance and hope, help us to understand you and your love for the world more clearly. Help us to call to mind these past events in Jesus' life so that we can sense their significance for our present lives and for the future you are preparing for all creation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Song: Jesus shall take the highest honour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wa4TJyJ3XI>

Psalm 118

We give thanks to you O Lord for you are gracious: and your love endures forever.

Let the house of Israel say: God's love endures forever.

The Lord is my strength and my defence: and has become my deliverer.

**There are shouts of joy and deliverance in the tents of the righteous:
the right hand of the Lord does mighty things.**

The right hand of the Lord raises up: the right hand of the Lord does mighty things.

I shall not die but live: and proclaim what the Lord has done

The Lord indeed has punished me: but did not give me over to death.

**Open to me the gates of the temple: That I may enter and give thanks
to the Lord.**

This is the gate of the Lord: through which the righteous shall enter.

**I will thank you because you have answered me: and you have
become my deliverer.**

The stone which the builders rejected: has become the head of the corner.

This is the Lord's doing: and it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Time of confession and confession

Everlasting God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son to take our nature and to suffer death upon the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Let's be still as we come to a time of confession

Time of silence:

Confession

O Lord, we confess our hands are not clean, our hearts are not pure.
Forgive our fickle discipleship and keep our faith constant, O Lord.
Lead us always to a deeper experience of your love.
Enliven us by the familiar but always new story of
shame and triumph, suffering and hope, that this week reveals.
Mould us to the ways of the Servant whose life we honour this morning.
In the name of Christ, our Lord, Amen.

We hear the Word of the Lord from Psalm 118:

Let those who fear the Lord say, "His steadfast love endures for ever." Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.
In Christ, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God

Sentence and prayer:

Sentence

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

Matthew 21:9

Prayer

Jesus, when you rode into Jerusalem the people waved palms with shouts of acclamation. Grant that when the shouting dies we may still walk beside you to the cross. **Amen.**

Reading Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let the same mind be in you that was^[a] in Christ Jesus,
6 who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
7 but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
9 Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading:

The Holy Gospel according to **Matthew 21:1-11**

Praise and glory to God.

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, **2** 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. **3** If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.^[a]' **4** This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

5 '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.'

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; **7** they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. **8** A very large crowd^[b] spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9** 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!'

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

This is the Gospel of Christ.

Praise to Christ, the Word.

This year many churches are doing something different for their Palm Sunday sermons – the Northwest ChCh Parish is making Palm Crosses and Ellesmere are having a Passion Drama. This week we share with you a sermon preached in the Northwest ChCh Parish at a previous Palm Sunday service.

For those that would like to make a Palm Cross follow the instructions on the following link

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znDyR8_POCU

There will be an opportunity to bless your Palm Crosses later in the service

**Sermon – Palm Sunday
Triumphal entry**

(An audio recording of this sermon is NOT available at the following link:

<https://www.northwestchchparish.org.nz/sound>)

Jo (adapted slightly from original)

Who doesn't like a good parade?

The Santa parade at the end of November- taking the kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews? On a hot summers day. Magic!

Or a ticker tape parade when they bring home the America's Cup?

Celebrating with the team? Splendid!

Or an ANZAC parade with veterans marching past to the sound of the band?

Honouring- moving!

How about a royal parade with the Queen greeting the crowds.

Have you ever lined the streets and waited for a royal parade? Exciting!

Have you cheered and shouted hooray?

Waved a flag or a hand as those on parade pass by?

Did you get caught up in the excitement?

Could you feel the swell of the crowd pressing in on you?

Were you swayed by the crowd mentality?

In the time of Jesus as people made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover festival along long winding dusty roads from all over Israel they were looking for a king. The time was ripe for change. They had watched Jesus heal and set people free, they had seen the miracles he performed, heard his teachings and they were ready. Ready for a parade, ready with their palms to wave, throwing their coats on the ground- not for Santa, not for sporting hero's, not for returned service men and women, but for royalty- they were looking for a king and Jesus came into town – riding on a donkey. A colt who hadn't been ridden before. And yet it welcomed him on its back with no objection.

The adulation that the crowds gave to Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem was exuberant and heart-felt – when the Pharisees tried to quash it Jesus said even the rocks would cry out if he tried to silence the people. The whole of creation understood who Jesus was and what was about to be achieved on the cross.

The people were caught up in the excitement of this triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Throwing cloaks on the ground was what you did for royalty. You didn't throw your cloaks on the dusty middle-eastern ground for a friend or a family member – you did it for royalty. You don't cut branches from trees and wave them because you feel elated, you do it to welcome a king. 200 years before Judas Maccabaeus defeated the Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes, entered Jerusalem and cleansed and rebuilt the temple and the people waved ivy and palm branches as they sang hymns of praise. This dynasty lasted 100 years. Now with the Romans occupying Israel the people were looking for someone to deliver them again and they truly believed Jesus was the King of the Jews- the one who would set them free from this tyrannical rule and bring them peace. Hosanna – a Hebrew word that mixes exuberant praise to God with a prayer that God would save his people and to do so right away.

Jesus the King of Kings – a humble king with a kingdom not of this world but Lord over creation. All the expectations of his earthly kingship were about to be challenged in the week ahead. The people wanted a king to set them free from Rome. They wanted their country back. Here was someone coming with such potential to meet their needs. To bring political overthrow. And so they cheered-full of expectation and hope. Full of fervour.

And yet Jesus as he looked out over Jerusalem at the top of the hill he knew the fickle nature of the people of God. This nation that longed for peace and yet refused to believe in the one who had come to bring them peace. Jesus

knew what lay ahead. And he steeled himself to complete the journey. It wasn't long before the shouts of hosanna turned to cries of Crucify.

Are we those who get excited about our Lord and shout Hosanna with the crowd when all goes well, all goes our way, when God fulfils our expectations? Do we offer exuberant praise to God who comes to save us? And are we those who stay the distance when our expectations are challenged – do we journey with Jesus and share in his suffering on the cross as he laid down his life for us.

Do we want a shallow peace that comes from feeling good when everything is going right or do we welcome the peace that comes even in troubled times because we believe in the Prince of Peace, when we know the power of the cross that bought us peace. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The world longs for peace. That has been made so evident in this past year with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. ... If you are praying for this situation, and I hope you are, pray that those who claim to be Christians in the midst of this conflict are on their knees crying out to God to bring a peace that will last, a peace that the world can't give, a peace that recognises our human sin and aggression towards others and brings repentant hearts, and decisive action to bring this war to an end.

Jesus longed for his people to let him gather them under his wings like a mother hen gathers her chicks and protects them. He longed for them to believe he had come to save them. Their great enthusiasm for his kingship did not last, when they followed him through the Passover festival and watched him be arrested by the Romans – their hopes and dreams were dashed, they wanted a triumphant king, and their shouts of Hosanna turned to crucify, crucify in the short space of a week. And only a few remained loyal to the king of kings and prince of peace.

Are we with Jesus this Holy week? Are we willing to go the distance with him in his suffering? Will we remain loyal to him when things don't go our way? Will we be those who give him our praise and thanks, our worship when the going gets tough and we don't understand what he is doing in our lives? Will our worship extend from Sundays to the way we live? Jesus said true worship is about how we treat others- the lost, the lonely, the poor, and the dispossessed. ... As we worship Jesus let us reach out beyond our walls as we give to others, as we extend kindness to those who have little. We are reminded of how we can be hospitable to others in small ways and big. Through the gift of our time, our finances, our encouragement. We may do

this through supporting other agencies who assist many in need, we may do this by phoning a friend, or someone we don't know so well, we may do this through an invitation to share a meal, or a cuppa, or a walk in the sunshine.

As we journey through this week to the cross and through to the glorious resurrection of our Lord, may we be those who worship him with our whole heart, with our lives and offer the hope we have in our King of kings and Lord of Lords to those we share life with. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. That was and is Jesus and it is us through the power of his Spirit at work in us. Go in the name of Jesus bringing hope to a broken world. Amen.

Response song: **Humble King**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV_3l6Ng5IA

Prayers of the People

During these prayers we invite you to pause during each area of prayer to add your own prayers.

Crowds cheered when you came to Jerusalem; you came to bring peace, but the civil authorities did not welcome you.

Jesus, we pray for your world:

For peace that brings an end to violence, oppression and war;
For peace that enables all people to live with dignity and justice;
For world leaders and for all who commit their lives to the work of peace

Jesus, Son of David, let us follow in Your way;

Let us walk with you to Jerusalem

Crowds cheered when you came to Jerusalem; You came to bring the freedom of the Spirit, but the chief priests plotted Your death.

Jesus, we pray for your church:

For a church freed from false dogma and legalism, discord and division;
For a pilgrim church, ready to travel where You lead;
For all leaders of Your church and for those who minister in Your name.

Jesus, Son of David, let us follow in Your way;

Let us walk with you to Jerusalem

Crowds cheered when You came to Jerusalem; You came to bring love, but You were betrayed and deserted by Your friends.

Jesus, we pray for this community:

For our families, our friends, for those with whom we work and learn;

For the hungry, the homeless and those without hope for the future;

For all who live in fear or despair and all who know the pain of betrayal.

Jesus, Son of David, let us follow in Your way;

Let us walk with you to Jerusalem

Crowds cheered when you came to Jerusalem; you came to bring healing to the sick and release to the captive, but you were beaten, imprisoned and killed.

Jesus, we pray for all in need:

For prisoners of conscience and those held without trial.

For all whose beliefs lead them to frightening and lonely places;

For the friendless, the unwanted and all from whom we turn away.

For the sick and all who mourn.

Jesus, Son of David, let us follow in Your way;

Let us walk with you to Jerusalem

Crowds cheered when you came to Jerusalem; You travelled towards the Cross, but Jerusalem was also the place of the empty tomb.

We give you thanks for faithful people throughout the ages who have followed you on this journey.

Jesus, let us suffer and die with You, that we may rise to fullness of life with You.

Jesus, Son of David, let us follow in Your way;

Let us walk with you to Jerusalem

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven. Holy 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

Save us from the time of trial

But deliver us from evil

For the kingdom the pow'r and the glory

Are Yours now and forever. Amen

May Christ the Prince of peace be always with you.

Song **Make Way Make Way**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tK6XuYhL7JI>

Blessing of the Palms (*If you have a palm for blessing*)

Lord God, whose Son Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem as the Messiah, to suffer and die, we ask that You will bless these palms that they may be to us a sign of his victory. May we who hold them always accept him as our King until we rejoice in the Kingdom where he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit now and forever. **Amen.**

Final Prayer and Blessing

Your Son, Jesus Christ, fulfilled the prophets' words and entered the city of Jerusalem, where he was lifted high upon the cross, that the whole world might be drawn to him. By his suffering and death he defeated the power of death, becoming the source of eternal life. The tree of defeat became the tree of victory; where life was lost, life has been restored.

May our Lord, whose arms were spread on the cross to embrace the whole world, help us this week to take up the cross and follow him. And may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!

Blessing Song: **Benediction**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwyyN86Z3fc>

Closing Song **King of the Ages**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuG2njFT5Io>

OR Ride on Ride on in Majesty
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUYCxw0quuQ>

Dismissal

Go now to love and serve the Lord.

Amen we go in the name of Christ.