



Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

Sunday 28th March 2021, Palm Sunday.

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon.

This written worship has been prepared and distributed to bless you. We continue to gather from our homes, physically separate but fully united in love for our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing that your brothers and sisters are sharing in this time of worship with you is I pray both a blessing and an encouragement and will bring us all closer together as a church, the family of faith in Jesus. Palm Sunday is a time to celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, let us join today with the jubilant crowds and wave our palm crosses as we enter Holy Week.

Opening Words for Palm Sunday

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!

Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,

righteous and victorious,

lowly and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will take away the chariots from Ephraim

and the warhorses from Jerusalem,

and the battle bow will be broken.

He will proclaim peace to the nations.

His rule will extend from sea to sea

and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Zechariah 9: 9-10 NIV

Opening Prayers

Holy and Loving God I come to worship You and as I do so I remember that I am a part of Your worldwide Church and am joining with millions of Your followers in celebrating this special day.

Come by Your Holy Spirit to my home this morning and help me to worship You in Spirit and in Truth. Strengthen me and uphold me for the days ahead, may I be a holy presence in an



unholy world. May the palms that are waved this morning be a sign to us of Your victory.

With all the faithful in Christ may we enter the new Jerusalem in triumph and not in despair.

Lord, use this time of worship through songs, readings and prayers to bring us closer to You, together at the foot of the eternal throne of

Grace. **Amen** Based on the opening prayer for Palm Sunday MWB pg. 237

Loving heavenly Father, on this Palm Sunday, at Bransgore and Highcliffe and beyond, in years past we would have gathered together to process into the building shouting our Hosannas! On that day, two thousand years ago, the people waved palm branches and laid their cloaks on the path as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. The religious leaders looked on in disdain muttering and complaining about this challenge to their authority. Help us Lord to worship You in our individual homes and to bring our heartfelt praises and our Hosannas to You. We are sad that we cannot meet in person but we are bound up in your Spirit together and held tightly in Your loving arms. We pray for those who mourn the

loss of loved ones this past year and for those who are suffering depression or loneliness at the moment. We pray that it will not be too long before we can rejoice together, worshipping You with our voices raised high, shoulder to shoulder in our buildings again. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus our Lord, Saviour and King. **Amen.**

Adapted from a prayer submitted by Pam Sturtridge, Worship Leader at Bransgore.

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 for ever. **Amen**

Church of England Common Worship

Hymn: StF 264 Make way, make way

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alCQ7fb0hE&ab_channel=WeAreWorshipLyrics%26Chords

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

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

Refrain

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

Refrain

We call you now to worship Him

As Lord of all

To have no gods before Him

Their thrones must fall!

Refrain x2

Prayer of Thanksgiving

I praise You as the maker and sovereign Lord over all things – none can question Your ways. I give thanks that Jesus came and lived among us, as one of us, experienced rejection, pain and humiliation at the hands of His created ones, His own did not accept Him but that by His death on the cross I can be forgiven and reconciled to You.

I praise You for Your loving protection, for Your strength in the storm, You are with me always. I give You thanks that nothing on earth can separate me from Your perfect love. I give thanks for every good and perfect gift from You. I have so much to thank You for, even during times of trial and suffering.

Amen

An invitation to engage with Holy Week.

We used the early chapters of John's gospel during our journey during Lent. The gospel contains 7 signs (miraculous events) which are provided so that "you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in His name" (John 21:31). To emphasise the centrality of this period to the life of Jesus almost half (nine of the twenty-one chapters) of John's gospel is of dialogue and events following this triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

Palm Sunday to Resurrection Day (Easter Sunday), contains teaching essential and foundational for our Christian faith. Matthew's gospel is helpful

when considering a chronology of events for the week.

Holy Monday is traditionally associated with the driving out of the money changers from the temple (Matthew 21:12-22).

Holy Tuesday contains a long and important block of teaching in the temple with many well-known parables, prophecies and in particular, judgment. (Matthew 21:23-26:5).

Holy Wednesday is believed to include the meal with Simon the leper and the anointing with costly fragrant oil by “a woman”(Matthew 26:6-16).

Maundy Thursday, we move into a dramatically increased tempo; many of you will know this as the “Last Supper” and includes the origin of our communion sacrament (bread and wine), foot washing, the betrayal by Judas, the walk and prayer in the garden of Gethsemane and the arrest of Jesus.

Good Friday is the crucifixion of our Lord. The fulfilment of why He was born, to reconcile man to God.

Saturday, a day for quiet reflection, prayer and perhaps fasting.

And then, surely the highlight of our Christian faith – the glorious and beautiful Resurrection Day (Easter Sunday). It is essential for us, now more than ever before that we engage with each day of Holy week. To go from today - Palm Sunday, straight to Resurrection Day deprives us of so much of what makes our faith relevant. Without immersing ourselves into these earth shattering and life changing events of Holy Week we risk losing the enormity of what is occurring.

My sincere hope is that even if you have lived through many Easter periods, by prayer and by engaging with scripture each day you will receive a fresh revelation from God during this coming week.

Hymn: StF 263 Hosanna in the highest!

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmijDmoCLTI&ab_channel=ScienceMumzie

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest, (2X)
Lord, we lift up your name, with our hearts full of praise,
Be exalted, O Lord, my God,
Hosanna in the highest!

Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings! (2X)
Lord, we lift up your name, with our hearts full of praise,
Be exalted, O Lord my God,
Hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest, (2X)
Lord, we lift up your name, with our hearts full of praise,
Be exalted, O Lord, my God,
Hosanna in the highest!

Carl Tuttle 1953

Our Lord’s Prayer (the Christian family prayer):

Our Father in Heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the Kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. **Amen.**

Prayer: Loving Lord God, as we read Your Holy Word and the accompanying notes, we pray today on his Palm Sunday that our hearts and minds will be fully open to hear what You are saying to us. That we will encounter Jesus during this time. May Your Word always be revelation to us, filled with truth and fresh insight. **Amen**

Scripture Reading: John 12: 12-36

¹²The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Blessed is the king of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

¹⁵“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

¹⁶At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

¹⁷Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. ¹⁸Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

²⁰Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.

²⁷“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” ²⁹The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

³⁴The crowd spoke up, “We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?”

³⁵Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. ³⁶Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light.” When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them. NIV

A time to pause, read again, pray, and reflect.

Preaching Notes: *these notes are a supplement to the weekly video which can be viewed on our YouTube channel.*

Jesus begins his final week by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey to a crowd waving and shouting. This is a time when all of Israel and beyond would be in Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. There were two crowds on that day, one coming with Jesus from Bethany (where Jesus had previously raised Lazarus from the dead) and the other surging out of the city to the city gate that Jesus was entering through (thought to be the Eastern gate). This would have been a vast crowd, excitedly waving palm leaves shouting “Hosanna” -meaning Save now! Shouting

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of Lord” – words from Psalm 118, which every Jew would have memorised as a child. “Blessed is the King of Israel!” which is the title that Nathanael used to describe Jesus in the early days of John (John 1:49) and which also reminds us of the birth narrative of Jesus “where is the one born king of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:1). As verse 17 emphasises, “the crowd...continued to spread the word.” This is “the time” the centrepiece of proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah. Many had come to see Jesus because they have heard about the miraculous signs (verse 18), recall what Jesus said in response to the royal official, “unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders you will never believe.”

Notice that it is at this point (verse 19) that the Pharisee’s again admit that it is Jesus who is the source of all of their problems and must die. Some would say that their words are a prophecy of the future “Look how the whole world has gone after him” and will continue to do so long after they themselves are forgotten about. Notice the irony in what they say, it was because God so loved the world that Jesus came into the world; and here, all unwittingly, his enemies are saying that the world has gone after him. The hearts of the Pharisees and their dark motives are highlighted earlier in a similar way, “What are we accomplishing? Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him and then the Romans will come and take away our place and our nation.” Pride and love of power are the complete opposites of God’s love and intention for us, remember that “God opposes the proud”. To be proud is to be on the opposing side from God -not advisable.

Jesus contrasts those who wish to “see” Him to those who will “serve” and “follow” Him (verse 26). The crowd came to “see,” the Greeks want to “see.” They shout the slogans but they do not believe in their hearts.

As we conclude this great passage for Palm Sunday Jesus talks of the coming season of

judgement on the world (verse 31) which essentially will separate (then and now) those who believe and those who only want to “see.” Remember the words of Jesus in chapter 3 as he speaks to Nicodemus, “this is the verdict: Light has come into the world but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.” Verse 35 makes clear that they would have the light (Jesus in the flesh) for just a little longer, His days on earth in human flesh are growing short. Believe in the Light (Jesus) so that you may be children of light, this was his cry then and still is today. **Amen**

Palm Sunday: The Seething Holy City of the Heart. A poem.

*Now to the gate of my Jerusalem,
The seething holy city of my heart,
The Saviour comes. But will I welcome him?
Oh crowds of easy feelings make a start;
They raise their hands, get caught up in the singing,
And think the battle won. Too soon they’ll find
The challenge, the reversal he is bringing
Changes their tune. I know what lies behind
The surface flourish that so quickly fades;
Self-interest, and fearful guardedness,
The hardness of the heart, its barricades,
And at the core, the dreadful emptiness
Of a perverted temple. Jesus, come
Break my resistance and make me your
home.* Malcolm Guite.

Closing Prayer

All seeing, all knowing, all loving God, may Your Holy Spirit give Your world a sense of calm and peace in these difficult times.

On this Palm Sunday we pray for the healing of divisions and for those who feel forsaken, cast aside, to know that they are loved, valued and very much part of God’s perfect plan.

In hope the world cries Hosanna! Yet in fear, ignorance and hurt, it condemns Him to death.

We pray for husbands whose hearts have turned cold towards their wives. For children whose parents do not spend quality time with them. For parents whose children have turned away from them and rejected their values. For families broken apart by adultery or addictions. For the victims of abuse, either physical or mental, from a wife or husband or family member. For each of us who feel forsaken or forgotten today, may they feel Your loving arms surrounding them.

We pray for our brothers and sisters who live in places in the world where to be a follower of Jesus means undergoing persecution and violence. Visible days of great celebration like Palm Sunday have in the past been the focus of terrible attacks. For those families who have lost a loved one or those who have been maimed in such attacks we pray consolation and comfort for them. We also pray protection against ongoing harm or imprisonment to our family in the faith.

We pray for our local church, for the leaders and all who serve in it. May it be a faithful Christian witness to the communities in which we live. May the local church thrive and be a group of people who, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, will deepen their relationship with You Lord. Bless our fellowship groups who meet together each week.

In these days of planning ahead and looking forward to less restrictions we pray for our Government and its advisers, strengthen them Lord and give them Your wisdom to make decisions with integrity and honesty. We pray for the ongoing work of the pharmaceutical companies as they seek new ways to produce greater quantities of the covid-19 vaccine and for those transporting and administering them. We pray for cooperation between nations and a sense of unity as we seek to protect the vulnerable.

Holy and loving Father, guide me in all I do and say, may I be a blessing and an encouragement to those around me so that I may reflect Your perfect love for the world. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

At the name of Jesus StF317

Sing/pray /proclaim the words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w-tDilpgk&ab_channel=ChetValleyChurches

At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season, to receive a name
from the lips of sinners, unto whom he came;
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious when from death he
passed.

Bore it up triumphant, with its human light,
through all ranks of creatures, to the central
height,
to the throne of Godhead, to the Father's breast,
filled it with the glory of that perfect rest.

In your hearts enthrone him; there let him
subdue
all that is not holy, all that is not true.
Look to him, your Saviour, in temptations' hour;
let his will enfold you in its light and power.

Christians, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory o'er the earth to reign;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

Caroline Maria Noel (1817-1877).

The Blessing.

Lord, I commit myself to You afresh today. As I
prepare to enter Holy week, may I see You more
clearly, love You more dearly, and follow You
more nearly on Your journey to the cross, one
step nearer to Your return. The LORD bless you
and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on
you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his
face toward you and give you peace. **Amen.**

You are always welcome to contact me: 01425
673350 or phillip.dixon@methodist.org.uk.

YouTube links are external resources and are provided to help you engage with the songs. Singing the Faith and Hymns and Psalms resources are provided under license: CCLI 178182.