

Morning Worship for 5th April 2020 at 10.30am
Palm Sunday

Good morning everyone and welcome to worship in these extraordinary times when we are the church but are not in church.

Find a comfy place in your home, maybe find last year's palm cross to help you in your reflections, and remember that God is present with us as we gather in his name, and that wherever we are, we are the body of Christ.

Opening Prayer:-

Loving and faithful God, you hold us in your love. Still our anxious thoughts and calm our fears that we may know your healing, saving love as we worship you today. Amen

Hymn STF 262 "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 the Blessed One.

To thee before thy Passion they sang their hymns of praise;
To thee now high exalted our melody we raise.
Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring,
Who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King.

All glory, laud and honour to thee, Redeemer, King,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
St Theodulph of Orleans (d.821)

Prayer: Lord, as we worship you together help us to greet you as King and Saviour with our loud hosannas. Help us to know the power of friendship and care across the distance between us.

Forgive us for what is past and protect us from all that is to come. Amen

We say the Lord's Prayer together.....

Bible Readings for today:

Psalm 118 v.1-2 &19-29 (If you don't have a Bible to hand this is the Psalm that gives us the greetings the crowds later shout to Jesus as he enters Jerusalem)

Matthew 21 v.1-11 (Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as in the whole Gospel, draws on Old Testament scripture to prove Jesus is indeed the longed-for Messiah)

Reflection: At this time of social distancing from others, suddenly the thought of being part of a large crowd again can feel daunting. Any crowd, whether at a large sporting event or concert, somehow has its own energy and it can be easy to be carried along with the changing mood of a large gathering of people almost despite ourselves. So it is with the pilgrims streaming into Jerusalem for the great feast of the Passover. In Matthew's account of events, uniquely, Jesus enters the city riding on a donkey with its colt, directly

fulfilling the prophecy in Zechariah 9.9. As the crowds joyfully greet him, there is a heightened sense of tension as both the Roman authorities and the Jewish religious leaders seek to keep the peace and silence, once and for all, Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth. By choosing to enter the city on a humble donkey, instead of a mighty horse and chariot, Jesus illustrates very plainly that the Kingdom of God he will establish is all about peace and mercy. As we follow the events of Holy Week, we praise God once more for sending his only Son to die for us all upon the cross. "What kind of love is this?"

Prayers of Intercession (adapted from "Roots")

Lord Jesus, we pray for all who give of themselves sacrificially, for those whose lives are dedicated to serving others.....

We pray for those serving in war-torn countries around the world who bring food, shelter and healing to those in need.....

We pray for those in our own communities who are most in need and most vulnerable, who need our prayers and our unconditional love.....

And we pray for ourselves, our families; our church family as we journey through this Holy Week that we will feel your saving, healing presence. Amen

Hymn: STF 265 Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark, all the tribes "Hosanna!", cry;
Your humble beast pursues its road with palms and scattered garments
stowed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Your last and fiercest strife is nigh;
The Father on his sapphire throne, expects his own anointed Son.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;
Bow your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, your power, and
reign. *Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868)*

Blessing: The Blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit,
Be with us now and always. Amen

**Consider this my "virtual" handshake!! Stay safe and well and please contact
me if you are in any need. God bless, Helen. 01765 698288**

Next Week's Service 10.30am Worship for Easter Day at a place near you!

**Please also see Readings and reflections for Holy Week compiled and written
by Revd. Dr. Pat Malham**