

Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit

Worship@Home for 28th March 2021

Palm Sunday in lockdown – again!

A warm welcome to worship wherever you are.

Call to worship

Lord, we greet you with enthusiasm today,
Just like that crowd did as you rode into
Jerusalem.

We pour out our love and our praise
and bring the best we can offer to our generous
God. **Amen**

The appointed Psalm for today, Psalm 118, is a song of unbridled praise bringing out the joy and gratitude of God's people, a psalm that resonates with the happenings of that Palm Sunday when Jesus rode into Jerusalem at the start of the week that was the culmination of his life and ministry.

Psalm 118: 1 – 2; 19 - 29.

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

² Let Israel say: "His love endures forever.

¹⁹ Open for me the gates of the righteous;
I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD
through which the righteous may enter.

²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me;
you have become my salvation.

²² The stone the builders rejected has become the
cornerstone;

²³ the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in
our eyes.

²⁴ The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice
today and be glad.

²⁵ LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success!

²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless
you.

²⁷ The LORD is God, and he has made his light
shine on us.

With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession
up to the horns of the altar.

²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise you; you are
my God, and I will exalt you.

²⁹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love
endures forever.

A Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good.

God's love endures for ever.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

God's love endures for ever.

God has opened the way for the people.

God's love endures for ever.

Let all the people say:

God's love endures for ever.

Amen.

Hymn 264 StF

Make way, make way, for

Christ the King

[Make Way - Graham Kendrick \(With lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

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

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

We call you now to worship Him
As Lord of all
To have no gods before Him
Their thrones must fall!

Written by Graham Kendrick (b1950)

A Prayer of Adoration

Father, enshrined in mystery, we adore you.
Closing our eyes, we seek you within,
and praise you for meeting us there.
Son, riding on a colt, we adore you.
We praise you for your generous love, one with
us.
Holy Spirit, guiding and inspiring us, we adore
you.
Through you we praise the mystery and the
majesty that manifested in frail flesh, yet
overcame it.
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in adoration we
celebrate your victory.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Bible Reading: Mark 11: 1 – 11

11 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ²saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

⁴They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!^[a]" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

¹⁰"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Reflection

For the second year in a row we find ourselves in lock down as we approach one of the major Christian festivals, Holy Week and Easter when we remember and celebrate Jesus' final week before his death, followed three days later by his glorious resurrection. Traditionally churches are full of worshippers on Easter Day, but for the second year in succession many will be empty and silent.

Today our focus is on Palm Sunday, the day when the crowds turned out to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. In Mark 11 we read, ". ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields." There was a scurry of excitement as people turned out in their hundreds to see this renowned teacher and worker of miracles make his way into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. The city and surrounding area was already full off pilgrims who had come together to celebrate the Feast of the Passover, which remembered the time when the people of Israel spectacularly escaped from captivity in Egypt to return the their promised land. For many in the crowd there was no doubt a sense of excitement and anticipation that they were witnessing another momentous event in their nation's history as the word spread that this Jesus was the one promised by their prophets for centuries, the Messiah. This event came unannounced, they were totally unprepared so took to spontaneous gestures to mark the significance of the occasion. Some took to cutting down leaves of the palm trees and spread them along the road Jesus was travelling, the equivalent of rolling out the red carpet. For others, this was not enough to show their emotions so they took off their coats and spread them in the way. The coat was amongst their most precious possessions so this act signified a generosity of spirit in that it came at a personal cost. Some days later it is possible that members of this same crowd gathered outside the house of

the Roman Governor, Pontious Pilate, baying for the death of the one they acclaimed. Their thoughts of giving had been changed to those of taking, wanting to take the life of an innocent man.

In spite of requests during the pandemic for people to keep their distance and stay home, stories of crowds have been making the headlines. A couple of weeks ago we had the crowds gathering to mark the sad death of Sarah Everard and through that to draw attention to the need for women to live in safety in our communities. Sadly this gathering will be remembered by the intervention of the police as one set of rules clashed with another. More recently we have had the violent clashes in Bristol as a peaceful protest to object to proposed legislation was hijacked by those whose intentions were less laudable.

Further afield we have the crowds gathering in Myanmar to challenge the decision of military leaders to take away their democratic freedoms, something that they feel so strongly about that they are prepared to give not their coats but their very lives. A similar example has been seen in Hong Kong over recent years. Being part of a crowd can be costly, but what an example it gives us.

Crowd funding is a relatively new expression brought about by the growth of social media, and there are some tremendous stories of those who have joined together, often spontaneously, to support a pressing and needy cause. The story this week of those who came to the help of the teacher and former soldier whose house was set on fire after he had confronted some people for their anti-social behaviour is just the latest of those heart-warming stories of the generosity of a crowd can turn adversity into real joy.

So Palm Sunday reminds us of the choices we have to make in life. Do we join the in-crowd for self-interest and gain, or do we join the Jesus crowd for a sense of fulfilment and peace? I know which is the crowd for me – do you? **Amen**

Something to get you thinking:

What does it mean to be part of the Jesus crowd and how do I show it?

Prayer of confession

Eager to emulate that first Palm Sunday crowd, we picture ourselves casting our cloaks before Jesus and joining the celebration. Would we, though, if it were to happen again today? An impoverished preacher on the humblest of beasts – would we cast our finest before him? Tear off our wool and cashmere coats, our leather jackets, and throw them down for his donkey to trample? We confess, Lord, that we would probably be loath to leave our homes.

We confess that we are carried away by stories and the seeming romance of them.

Those people threw their prized possessions before Jesus, giving the best they had. Forgive us for holding back so much from him, and help us to celebrate with all that we have.

Amen.

Hymn 277 StF My song is love unknown

[My Song is Love Unknown \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me;
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake
My Lord should take, frail flesh and die?

He came from His blest throne
Salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none
The longed for Christ would know:
But O! my Friend, my Friend indeed,
Who at my need His life did spend.

Sometimes they strew His way,
And His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify!" is all their breath,
And for His death they thirst and cry.

Why, what hath my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run,
He gave the blind their sight,

Sweet injuries! Yet they at these
Themselves displease, and 'gainst Him rise.

They rise and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they saved,
The Prince of life they slay,
Yet cheerful He to suffering goes,
That He His foes from thence might free.

In life, no house, no home
My Lord on earth might have;
In death no friendly tomb
But what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was His home;
But mine the tomb wherein He lay.

Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine;
Never was love, dear King!
Never was grief like Thine.
This is my Friend, in Whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend.

Written by Samuel Crossman (c. 1624 – 1683)

Prayers of intercession

Praise the Lord: **Hosanna.**

We praise and thank you for the progress that has been made in the Covid vaccination programme, and we pray for those in our health services who have been put under additional pressure as a result of the pandemic; for those preparing for a third wave; and those working in care homes.

Praise the Lord: **Hosanna.**

We praise and thank you for the churches that have been able to reopen for worship, and for creative ways which have been found to unite people in prayer and worship. We pray for those who feel isolated; who long to gather with others; who cannot access online worship.

Praise the Lord: **Hosanna.**

We praise and thank you for signs of spring; for crocuses and daffodils, and all the green shoots of growth.

We pray for gardeners; for those who look after parks and public verges; for those who keep our streets clean and make our communities more pleasant.

Praise the Lord: **Hosanna.**

We praise and thank you for the message of hope, encouragement and peace that Jesus brings. We pray for those who are fearful for the future, those who have lost direction in life and those whose lives are troubled.

Praise the Lord: **Hosanna.**

Lord Jesus, blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord –
blessed for all you are; blessed for all you do.
Receive our prayers and speak to the needs of all your children, we pray.

Amen.

Hymn 611 StF Brother, sister, let me serve you

[Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You \(The Servant Song\) \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Written by Richard A. M. Gillard (b. 1953)

Closing Prayer

Let the same mind be in us,
the same love, the same compassion,
that was found in Christ Jesus.

Let us empty ourselves,
humble ourselves, and in obedience,
follow Jesus to the foot of the cross.

Hosanna. Lord, save us.

Amen.

Prayers from Roots Resources for worship and
learning

Lister Baynes 21/03/21