

Bulletin for Sunday 10 April 2022

Good morning, friends, on Palm Sunday. The story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is one most of us probably know well. Jesus' actions were a powerful sign which, although joyful and triumphant, also pointed out the tensions which would lead to his arrest and execution later in the same week...

Let's pause as we prepare to worship... and then praise God as we sing (several times through, if you like)

Hymn: I will enter his gates with thanksgiving (R&S 386)

Prayer: Living God, we bring you hosannas!
As we journey through Holy Week,
sharing in the praises of Palm Sunday,
in the fellowship and fear of Maundy Thursday,
and in Friday's pain and grief at the cross,
we bring with us our joys and fears,
our faith, our discipleship... and our doubts...
and we entrust them to you.
We bring you our hearts, for you are faithful,
and we bring you our hosannas this week.
We ask your blessing on everything we do,
and on everything we give in your service,
today and every day. In Jesus 'name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29 and Luke 19: 28-40

Reflection: This Psalm seems to have been written especially for pilgrims walking into Jerusalem on some of the big, noisy, celebratory Jewish festivals. Jesus was part of just such a pilgrim crowd, going up to Passover in Jerusalem and walking the final part of the journey, as all good pilgrims were expected to do. Except that Jesus, for the only time that we know of in his adult life, wasn't walking, but riding. Which echoed the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, so that the crowd reacted with hope and excitement: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord"!

Simultaneously, at the other side of town, Pontius Pilate was entering Jerusalem in military pomp, with warhorses, soldiers, armour, flags and all the symbols of Roman authority. He was there to 'keep the peace'. To ensure there would be no uprisings, by a Messiah or anyone else. Jesus riding down the Mount of Olives on a farmer's donkey was both a symbol of real peace, and a mocking challenge to Pilate's authority. He graphically and memorably demonstrated that power belongs to God alone, and that God's kingdom is one of peace. Two processions... which would we have followed?

Hymn: Make way, make way for Christ the King (R&S 141)

Prayers: Compassionate God,
help us to see the world through your eyes...
We pray for the victims of war,
suffering pain, grief, fear and despair.
We pray too for the refugees fleeing violence,
and for those opening homes and hearts to them.
Remembering Jesus riding humbly on a donkey,
we pray for the world's leaders, that they might have
wisdom, humility and a sense of service.
Closer to home we pray for our neighbours,
and for all anxious about making ends meet.
We hold before you our families and friends,
those we love, and all we are called to love....
In Jesus 'name we ask all our prayers,
including the unspoken prayers of our hearts. Amen

Hymn: My song is love unknown (R&S 207)

Blessing: May we remember this week
that Jesus rode into Jerusalem for love of us all...
and may the blessing of God
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love,
this week, and always. Amen

There will be NO 'Sunday at Six 'Zoom this Sunday - back as usual next week.

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