

## **Palm Sunday 10/4/22**

### **Welcome**

- notices (Holy Week, Easter services, COVID guidance)
- thanks to those sharing in today's service: Iona, Jane, Lita, Moira & Jamie
- good news on Fiona

### **Call to Worship**

“Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem!  
Look your King is coming to you! He comes triumphant & victorious,  
but humble & riding on a donkey.” - Zechariah 9 v 9

Zechariah looked ahead to the coming of triumphant, victorious King, riding humbly on a donkey. We can look back and see Jesus fulfilling that prophecy.

And, as the people did on that first Palm Sunday, we sing Hosanna – God come and save us!

### **Mission Praise 242**

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

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is the King of kings!  
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus is the King of kings!  
Lord, we lift up your name, with our hearts full of praise,  
Be exalted, O Lord our God,  
Hosanna in the highest

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### **Prayer and Lord's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, we come to praise You as the crowds in Jerusalem praised You on that first Palm Sunday. We shout out: 'Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!'

We lift up Your Holy Name, The Name that is above all names  
That at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow  
And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord To the glory of God the Father.

Lord our God, we praise You. We praise You with all our hearts.  
We will never forget the wonderful things You do for us.  
You have sent us Your only Son.  
By His death on the cross and His glorious resurrection, He has paid the price for all our failures, wrongdoings and rebellion. He has made forgiveness possible; He offers us eternal life! What a wonderful Saviour! What amazing love?

Lord God, thank you for the forgiveness made possible by Your Son.  
As we accept Your forgiveness, help us to forgive others as You have forgiven us.

Help us to live out our lives as faithful disciples of Your Son.  
Following His example, led by Your Holy Spirit within us.

**And we further pray as Jesus taught us:**

Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed 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 and deliver us from evil  
For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours  
Now and forever.  
Amen.

The words and actions of the crowd on that first Palm Sunday reflected words written 1000 years earlier, which we find in Psalm 118, read to us by Iona from Ashkirk Church.

**Old Testament Reading - Psalm 118 v 19-29 (GNB). (Iona MacNeill)**

Open to me the gates of the Temple; I will go in and give thanks to the Lord!  
This is the gate of the Lord; only the righteous can come in.  
I praise you, Lord, because you heard me, because you have given me victory.  
The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all.  
This was done by the Lord; what a wonderful sight it is!  
This is the day of the Lord's victory; let us be happy, let us celebrate!  
Save us, Lord, save us! Give us success, O Lord!

May God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
From the Temple of the Lord we bless you.  
The Lord is God; he has been good to us.  
With branches in your hands, start the festival and march around the altar.  
You are my God, and I give you thanks; I will proclaim your greatness.  
Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good, and his love is eternal.

A traditional Palm Sunday hymn: All glory, laud and honour.

### **Hymn 364**

*Chorus: All glory, laud, and honour to you, Redeemer, King,  
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.*

You are the King of Israel and David's royal Son,  
now in the Lord's name coming, the King and Blessèd One.

*Chorus:*

The company of angels is praising you on high;  
and we with all creation in chorus make reply.

*Chorus:*

The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went;  
our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present.

*Chorus:*

To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise;  
to you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.

*Chorus:*

As you received their praises, accept the prayers we bring,  
for you delight in goodness, O good and gracious King!

*All glory, laud, and honour to you, Redeemer, King,  
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.*

### **Reflection (part 1): Matthew 21 v 1-17 (NIV) The People on Palm Sunday**

It was an incredibly wonderful day, that very first Palm Sunday in Jerusalem. The city was chock-a-block, you couldn't move for thousands of people. Think of a Common Riding Day in Selkirk, multiplied a hundred times and more!

People from far and wide had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate The Passover, the commemoration of God delivering His people out of slavery in Egypt, back in the time of Moses.

And each year the Jewish people looked forward to a 'new freedom' which The Messiah, The Promised One, would usher in.

Each year they had high hopes that THIS was the year He would come at Passover to set them free.

And hopes did indeed run high this particular year, because they had heard about one man, Jesus from Nazareth. Amazing stories of miracles He had performed, of words He had spoken, of people He had healed, even of people He had raised from the dead!

Could this man Jesus, be the long-awaited Messiah?

Let's hear again what happened on that 1st Palm Sunday, as Lita reads to us from Matthew chapter 21.

**Reading: MATTHEW 21 v 1-17 (New International Bible)**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.'

This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet:

'Say to Daughter Zion, "See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

'Hosanna to the Son of David!'

'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'

'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?'

The crowds answered, 'This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.'

Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves. 'It is written,' he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer," but you are making it "a den of robbers."

The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' they were indignant.

'Do you hear what these children are saying?' they asked him.

'Yes,' replied Jesus, 'have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise"'?'

And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

### **Reflection (part 2)**

Wherever Jesus goes and whatever he does, he evokes a reaction from those around. Scott encourages us to think about the reactions of 4 different groups:

- the disciples
- the crowds
- the chief priests
- the children

What can we learn from them?

First, let's think about the two disciples, who Jesus sent on ahead:

"Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them, and bring them to Me."

Can you imagine the thoughts of those two un-named disciples:

"What on earth does He want with a donkey", and "What if the owner sees us untying them?"

But, anticipating their concerns, Jesus adds: "And if anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

And so the disciples went and did as Jesus has asked them, and it worked out as he had predicted.

The disciples did as Jesus asked. They didn't understand the reason for his strange order, but they followed his instructions none the less.

Similarly, just a few days later, on the Thursday of Holy Week, Jesus instructs two of the disciples to go into Jerusalem where they will find a man carrying a jar of water. Strange request!

Or, what about when Jesus asked the wine stewards at the wedding in Cana, to fill seven large jars with water and take them to the Master of Ceremonies?

Mary, His mother, adds: "Whatever He says to you - do it!"

Strange requests, but those who received them listened carefully to what Jesus was asking and did exactly as he asked!

The disciples & others didn't challenge Jesus about His requests, they probably thought they were strange, but they didn't question Him:

"But why do you need a donkey Lord?"

They didn't exclaim: "Men don't carry jars of water, women do!"

They didn't say to Him: "Why are you asking for water when we need wine?"

They all simply obeyed!

Just as Peter obeyed when Jesus asked Him to throw his net over on the other side of the boat in order to catch some fish: "Lord we fished all night and we caught nothing - but if You say so I will do it!"

These are surely good examples for us to follow.

"Lord, we don't know WHY you are asking us to do X - it doesn't make sense to us - but if YOU say so - we will do it!"

We need to heed those words of Mary at the wedding: "Whatever He says to you - do it!" That doesn't mean we stop thinking, though - God has given us minds for us to use.

So, the question to ask ourselves is "What is Jesus saying to us today, this Palm Sunday? What is He asking us to do for Him?"

We should always be ready to hear His voice. We should say to Him, just as young Samuel did in the Temple: "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."

As the old chorus goes,

'Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey!'

Jesus tells us: "Whoever hears what I am saying and does as I ask - is like a wise person who builds their house upon the rock."

But whoever hears what I am saying and ignores it - is like a foolish person who builds their house on the sand!"

That is challenging, but we should be encouraged by Paul, who tells us in Philippians: "God is at work in you, helping you to WANT to obey Him, and then helping you to DO what He wants!"

Let's ponder what Jesus might be asking of us, as we first listen to the music onve through, then join in singing quietly, remaining seating: Jesus, name above all names:

***Hymn 774***

*Jesus, name above all names  
beautiful Saviour, glorious Lord;  
Emmanuel, God is with us,  
Blessed Redeemer, living Word.*

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**Reflection (part 3)**

What else can we learn from the reactions of those who watched Jesus ride into Jerusalem that first Palm Sunday?

Scott suggests we think about the crowds of people, who took off their cloaks and spread them on the ground, forming a royal pathway for the King, a red carpet for Jesus to ride on, and used the branches from the palm trees which grew there, as flags to wave in welcome.

Some had come with Jesus from Bethany, having witnessed the amazing miracle of Lazarus being brought back from the dead.

Others were pilgrims who, already in Jerusalem, who had heard about this great miracle and had come out the Eastern Gate to see Jesus for themselves.

We hear their excited cries: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" "Save us now, save us, we pray." What excitement there must have been!

Is there a challenge there for us? Are we excited about what God has done for us? Do we show that excitement in our lives and in our worship? Or do we hide it under our Scottish diffidence?

If we cannot get excited about the Lord our God, who loves us with an everlasting love and about His only Son, who gave His life for us, then rose from the dead! what can we get excited about?

Jesus calls us to: “Love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul and all our strength!”

Scott says, “As Christians we need to let our LIVES, as well as our voices, shout out for Jesus!

So, whatever we do,

- when we help someone with the shopping,
- when we give a word of encouragement,
- when we take time to listen to someone,
- when we go out of our way to help people.

we demonstrate God’s love in action.

Jesus said: “By this shall everyone know that you are my disciples - when you show love for one another!”

The reactions of the crowd towards Jesus that day in Jerusalem caused those who heard them to ask: ‘Who is this? What’s all the fuss about? Who is this man Jesus, who causes you to behave in this way?’

Let’s pray that OUR shouts, OUR lives might cause those around US to ask the life-changing question, “Who is this Jesus?”.

Let’s reflect on that, perhaps thinking of particular people that we know and care about, who will see us in action this Easter week and ask, “What is Easter really all about?”

So, again, a few moments of quiet reflection as Moira and Jamie play for us, and we will join in singing on the 2<sup>nd</sup> time through.

*Jesus, name above all names  
beautiful Saviour, glorious Lord;  
Emmanuel, God is with us,  
Blessed Redeemer, living Word.*

**Final word:**

If you watch the online recorded service, you will hear Scott also reflecting on the Chief Priests and the children in the story. I'll leave you to think about them yourselves, and to reflect on what we might learn from them.

But for now, we bring our prayers for others to God, led by Jane Telfer from Ettrick and Yarrow.

**Prayer - (Jane Telfer)**

Lord, we are eternally grateful that You sent Your Son into our world. That He made Himself nothing, took on the nature of a servant and was made in our likeness. That He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross.

Lord Jesus, we thank You for all that You have done for us. We are eternally grateful to You. Listen to us now as we bring to You those we are concerned about.

We pray for those in our communities of Ashkirk, Ettrick & Yarrow and Selkirk. We pray Lord, that at this time of year, they will come to realise just what Easter is all about.

We pray that they will be able to think about the Cross and about the empty tomb. We pray that each one of them may sense something of the great victory which Jesus accomplished for each one of us on the Cross and the triumph of His resurrection.

We pray for those who are ill at home or in hospital. Bring them Your comfort Lord, let them know that you are right there with them. That You know what they are going through and are able to help them.

We pray for those who are worried about operations they are to face or about hospital appointments, Let them know that You are there, ready to take on ALL their worries and cares. Let them know that You are always thinking about them and watching over everything that concerns them.

Lord, we continue to pray for the people of Ukraine. For those who have lost family and friends. For those who have lost their homes and their income. For those who live in fear of shelling and bombs. Thank You Lord for the amazing resolve of the people of Ukraine. Strengthen that resolve and enable them to continue to stand up to those who oppress them.

And we pray for Your guidance for the governments in the West and for NATO and the United Nations as they seek to bring an end to this terrible conflict.

We pray Lord for those who are worried about the future,  
for themselves and for their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Lord we know that You have great plans for our future,  
Plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and encouragement.

Lord God, we know that the future is in Your hands and we place all our trust in You.  
We place all our confidence in You, for You are faithful and true.

Lord, we bring all our prayers to You this day  
In the Strong and wonderful Name of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord.  
Amen

Our final hymn: **Jesus is the name we honour.**

#### **Hymn 481**

Jesus is the name we honour;  
Jesus is the name we praise.  
Majestic Name above all other names,  
the highest heaven and earth proclaim  
that Jesus is our God.

*We will glorify, we will lift Him high*

*We will give Him honour and praise*

*We will glorify, we will lift Him high*

*We will give Him honour and praise*

Jesus is the name we worship;  
Jesus is the name we trust.  
He is the King above all other kings,  
let all creation stand and sing  
that Jesus is our God.

Jesus is the Father's splendour;  
Jesus is the Father's joy.  
He will return to reign in majesty,  
and every eye at last shall see  
that Jesus is our God.

**Benediction:** We bless each other with the familiar words:

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Love of God  
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all, now and evermore.'

(3-fold Amen)