



Worship for Palm Sunday

Welcome

Good morning and welcome to our service on this Palm Sunday. Welcome if you are joining us on Zoom or following the service at home, it is lovely to have you with us as we gather to worship our generous God. Let us take a moment to still ourselves in the presence of God so that we are ready for worship this morning.

Call to worship

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation. You have created us out of your love and for your love. Help us to welcome you with songs of 'Hosanna', knowing that you are our strength and our shield. Help us to welcome Christ our Lord into our lives as our Lord and Saviour. **Amen**

**Hosanna to the Son of David, the King of Israel. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you **and also with you.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

The Blessing of the Palms

Hold up your Palm cross

God our Saviour, whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die; let these palms be for us signs of his victory and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Palm Gospel

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Mark 11 1-11

Praise to you, O Christ.

At this point in the service we would normally process into church singing and waving our Palm crosses. We can't do that this year so instead take a moment to think of ways in which you can bear witness to your faith in the world around you.

Hymn: All Glory Laud and honour

The Collect

Let us pray for a closer union with Christ in his suffering and in his glory. *Silence is kept.*

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. **Amen.**

Reading: Philippians 2: 5-11

Hymn: Ride on Ride on in majesty

The Passion Reading

On Palm Sunday it has become our tradition with many other Churches across the world to read together the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. We read it in a way that enables us all to take part, for as Christian this is our story also. It is a very moving and powerful story full not only of sadness and grief but also of forgiveness, compassion, love and just the glimmer of hope that all might not be lost after all.

As we leave Jesus dead and buried in the tomb and the disciples scattered, scared, and broken hearted it is easy to find ourselves in a place of despair and hopelessness. But... But.... The story does not end here. For we know that we need to tune in on Easter Day for the next instalment of the story that changed the world.

There are two ways this morning for you to engage in the Passion reading. I have made a video for you to listen to and invite you to follow the reading joining in the parts that are in bold type.

Alternatively, you can read the Passion reading out loud. If you are worshipping with other members of your household, one of you could read it while everyone joins in the parts marked all.

Pause

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name. **Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So, they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate. "Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate. "You have said so," Jesus replied. The chief priests accused him of many things. So again, Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of." But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead. "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews" Pilate asked them.

All: Crucify him!

They shouted. "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder

All: Crucify him!

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole

company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. And they began to call out to him,

All: Hail, king of the Jews!

Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him.

Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the Jews. They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying,

All: So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!”

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves.

All: He saved others, but he can’t save himself! Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.

Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him. At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” Which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of those standing near heard this, they said,

All: Listen, he’s calling Elijah.

Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink.

All: Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,”

he said. With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said,

All: Surely this man was the Son of God!

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.

So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

This is the Passion of the Lord.

Silence

Hymn: When I survey the wonderful cross

Prayers

I have made a video of the prayers.

Let us pray

We stand in the presence of Jesus our King and ask his blessing on the world, saying,

King Jesus, we welcome you,

Come and reign among us.

Loving God, we ask you to bless this world, which you created, and invade with your peace the places where hatred and violence rule, where lives are scarred with fear and misery. We pray for the leaders of the nations and those shaping national policies that they will make wise decisions to the welfare of all people, especially the vulnerable. King Jesus, we welcome you, **Come and reign among us.**

Loving God, we ask you to bless our community, each home and family and bring the joy of your light and love to those whose lives are filled with darkness and despair, anxiety and fear. We thank you for all the wonderful acts of kindness, compassion and generosity that are being shown to others during these challenging times. May kindness and compassion be the hallmark of our common life together. We give thanks for the hard work and dedication of NHS staff, medical researchers, care workers, teachers, food industry workers and all others who are supporting the nation at this difficult time. Bless them with the resources they need to stay safe and to help and care for others. King Jesus, we welcome you, **Come and reign among us.**

Loving God, we ask you to bless your worldwide Church, guide your church, give your grace and courage to follow where you lead, fill with your power all who worship and serve you, who show compassion and bring peace and relief in your name. On this Palm Sunday strengthen our faith and help us to truly welcome you into our lives. Open our hearts and minds to your transforming love as we seek to grow more like you, reflecting your light and love in all that we do and in all that we are. King Jesus, we welcome you, **Come and reign among us.**

Loving God, we ask you to bless anyone who is suffering whether in body, mind, or spirit and in a moment of silence we name any known to us before you. *Silence.* Bring to them your healing, comfort and peace and may they always know your loving presence. Be with all those who feel lonely and isolated, that they may know comfort, friendship, and peace. Inspire us with compassion to we reach out with kindness and light to those in need. King Jesus, we welcome you, **Come and reign among us.**

Loving God, we give thanks for the lives of all those who have recently died and for all those we love but see no longer. We ask you to bless all those who are grieving at time especially those who are struggling with their loss, surround them with your love, comfort, and hope. King Jesus, we welcome you, **Come and reign among us.**

Loving God, in these moments of stillness and silence we offer our own prayers to God. *Silence.*

King Jesus we welcome you, **come and reign among us, fill our lives with your joy and our hearts with your love as we cry 'Hosanna in the highest!' to our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

The Lord's prayer

The Peace

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for he is our peace. The peace of the Lord be always with you **and also with you.** Let us offer one another a sign of God's peace.

I know that we are not together physically today and not able to share the peace in our normal way. However, this does not mean that we are not able to share the peace. Bring to mind members of our church family and as you do wish them God's peace. "..... (the name of a member of our church family) God's peace be with you.

Hymn: Make way Make way for Christ the king

We go out

May the peace of Christ the King rule in your hearts. May the humility of Christ the King rule in your lives. May the glory of Christ the King surround your way. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

As our services finishes today place your Palm Cross in your window as a witness to the world.

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