

**Traditional Home service  
Sunday 10th April**

READINGS - Luke 19.28-40  
Psalm 118.1-2,19-29

TALK

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who in your tender love towards the  
human race sent your Son our Saviour  
Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
grant that we may follow the example of  
his patience and humility, and also be  
made partakers of his resurrection;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess we have  
failed you as did your first disciples.  
We ask for your mercy and your help.

*Our selfishness betrays you:  
Lord, forgive us. Christ have mercy.*

*We fail to share the pain of your suffering:  
Lord, forgive us. Christ have mercy.*

*We run away from those who abuse you:  
Lord, forgive us. Christ have mercy.*

*We are afraid of being known to belong  
to you:  
Lord, forgive us. Christ have mercy.*

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the  
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to  
God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms,  
hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.  
Open our lips, Lord:  
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*Hosanna! Hosanna!*)

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth. I believe in  
Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who  
was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of  
the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius  
Pilate, was crucified, died, and was  
buried; he descended to the dead. On  
the third day he rose again; he ascended  
into heaven, he is seated at the right  
hand of the Father, and he will come to  
judge the living and the dead. I believe in  
the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness  
of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation,  
our community and our families.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver  
us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours, now and for  
ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*All Glory, Laud, and Honor*)

CONCLUSION

The God of all grace, who called you to  
his eternal glory in Christ Jesus,  
establish, strengthen and settle you in  
the faith; and the blessing of God  
Almighty, the Father, Son and the Holy  
Spirit, be among you and remain with  
you always.  
Amen.

## HYMNS TO USE

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest, (2X)

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! (2X)

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, to the King of kings! (2X)

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

All glory, laud, and honor  
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 and Blessed One

The company of angels  
Are praising Thee on high  
And mortal men and all things  
Created make reply

The people of the Hebrews  
With palms before Thee went  
Our praise and love and anthems  
Before Thee we present

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 love we bring  
Who in all good delightest  
Thou good and gracious King

Sermon - Adrian Morton  
Palm Sunday  
Luke 19:28-40 & Psalm 118.1-2,19-29

This reading in Luke's Gospel can be found in all 4 Gospels.  
With slight changes...

It means therefore, it is a particularly significant event.

<During the lockdown, I showed a video of modern day pilgrims walking into Jerusalem waving Palm branches, Singing Hosanna etc...>

Its a special Sunday to be celebrated.  
Some churches even hire a donkey and re-enact the event!  
>

The reading is full of Biblical allusion and quotations.

Which just means it was written in such a way to help the reader recall past events and meaning to understand better what was going on.

The significance of what was happening.

The action begins about 2 miles from Jerusalem.

The disciples are told to go and find a tethered donkey.

The strongest allusion to that is to Zechariah 9:9:

*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

The fact that it was a donkey that no-one has ever ridden should be understood in the light of the OT requirement that what was given to God shouldn't be second hand or partly used up.

<I sometimes wonder whether that should still be a church rule ....>

There is another allusion here to Genesis 49:11-12, where Jacob is blessing his sons.

He blesses Judah, Judah being the ancestor of Israel's line of Kings.

And of Judah he says, "He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch."

The passage in Genesis speaks of royal excess and self-indulgence.

So what Luke is doing is emphasising and affirming, yes, this Jesus has royal dignity.. he is a King.

But also, he's not a normal King, in the sense of the characteristics you'd normally associate with a King.

He's not about excess and self-indulgence, he's about humility and service.

This king is coming to Jerusalem with an awareness of his own rejection and execution.

And Jesus' royal credentials continue to be emphasised.

Jesus riding in on a donkey, garments being strewn... all points to OT figures preparing for a royal role.

Solomon on David's donkey in 1 Kings 1:33.  
The newly anointed Jehu in 2 Kings 9:13.  
Jesus is being treated to an extravagant expression of supreme and royal honouring.

Its a response, a celebration fit for a King...

The whole crowd of disciples begin to joyfully praise God in loud voices.  
"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord."

Its a mis-quote from Psalm 118 which says "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

So Luke has inserted the words, 'the King', again, to emphasise Jesus' royalty.

This Psalm formed part of a ritualised welcome for pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem to worship at the temple.

But Luke is emphasising again and again, this is no ordinary pilgrim.

This is royalty coming.  
Even more than that.. this is a divine visitation.

This is so significant that even if the crowd were silenced.

the stones, creation itself, will cry out in worship.

Because what is going to be achieved by Jesus in Jerusalem.

Though it may first look like defeat and humiliation.

Will in fact be a great victory for God himself.

The second half of what the crowd were shouting is often overlooked I think.

We remember, ““Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.”

but not so much “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Or as the Message translation puts it:

“All’s well in heaven! Glory in the high places!”

Its an echo of Luke chapter 2 when a host of angels appeared to the shepherds following Jesus’ birth... praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.”

This “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

is an exclamation that recognises that what Jesus is going to achieve in Jerusalem is being celebrated in heaven.

God’s plan to reconcile, to bring peace between himself and humankind... is being worked out.

And that excites and causes heaven to celebrate.

The events that we will remember over the coming week..

The Last supper..

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane...  
praying not my will but yours...

Jesus on trial and then being flogged and crucified.

And finally the celebration of His resurrection...

All that was done because God desires a deep relationship with you and I.

God is always near us...

We may discern that or we may not...

I heard it explained recently as something similar to marriage.

On occasions Louise and I will go out for a date night.

Actually, more often than not nowadays its more like a date lunch..

But it will be times when we are intentional about our relationship.

Focussed on one another, sitting face to face...

We actively listen to each other and share what’s going on for us.

What are our joys, what are our struggles etc...

Other times in our marriage, we’re just doing life together...

Passing each other in the hallway as one goes out and the other comes in.

And we just acknowledge each other.

Other times we’re together but don’t feel the need to say much to each other.

Its ok just to sit together and do our own thing...

And it’s a bit like that with our relationship with God.

There will be times when we are intentional with Him.

Sharing our joys and struggles...

And other times, we'll just be doing life, acknowledging Him in the midst of it all.

But that possibility of relationship with us excited all of heaven.

One of the biggest areas of doubt that will come our way in our Christian life.

Is to doubt the nearness of God.  
And to doubt that we can approach Him with confidence.

And that can be our own self generated doubt and lack of faith.

That can come from the enemy who will try and feed us lies about the relationship we have.

Or it can come from our own feelings that tell us we are unworthy...

Whenever any of those happens we have to look at the cross.  
Its the cross alone that made it possible.

It is because of what happened over 2000 years ago on a hillside outside Jerusalem.

It is the blood of Jesus that gives us the right to draw near to God.

I need to back up... I'm starting to get to Good Friday...!

### **Application**

What can we do with Palm Sunday...  
What is our response to it?

Well simply, it can be about celebration...

Often Churches are unsure whether to celebrate too much because they know what's around the corner.

And often Palm Sunday services try and amalgamate the two themes:

Celebration and Cross...

<Refer to Palm crosses...>

But in our reading, Jesus encouraged celebration.

Despite the Pharisees grumbling, he said the celebrations were entirely appropriate.

So much so that even the stones would cry out if the crowd were silenced.

So today, if nothing else, it is a day to celebrate.

That what Jesus is riding into Jerusalem to achieve will change the course of human kind.

That the presence of God will be available to all.

I don't know whether heaven follows the lectionary or the church calendar...

Probably not...

But we can join with heaven's celebration...

Palm Sunday can also challenge us...

Are our lives being lived in such a way that is fit for a King?

Do our lives honour Him in that way.  
Is our allegiance to Him that clear?

I'm very excited to be baptising 4 people next Sunday morning...

All of whom are putting their heads above the parapet, if you like..

And publicly saying, I'm going to live my life following Jesus....

My allegiance will be clear... Jesus is my King and Lord.

<P>

Tom Wright, a prominent theologian, and who writes many commentaries.

At the end of his commentary on this passage in Luke he says this:

"Are we ready not only to spread our cloaks in the road in front of him, to do the showy and flamboyant thing, but also now to follow him into trouble, controversy, trial and death?"

The point is made that many in the crowd who were joyfully singing God's praise,

would probably been in the crowd who  
jeered at the foot of the cross.

Amen!

Why?

Because they misunderstood what Jesus  
was about.

They had an expectation of what a King  
riding into Jerusalem would have gone on to  
do.

Bring God's kingdom in by force, kick out the  
Romans, establish the supremacy of the  
nation of Israel etc...

Yet what Jesus was actually doing was  
something bigger and more profound.

Something that would effect all of mankind.  
Something that would defeat a bigger and  
more dangerous enemy.

And the apparent defeat and humiliation of  
the cross caused many to fall away.

Are we still going to praise Him in trouble  
and disappointment.

When the plans we made, even committed to  
God, don't come to fruition as we'd hoped.

Are we still going to praise Him when life is a  
mystery.

When we don't understand.

When we can't seem to trace Him in our  
lives.

When, after the vicar has talked about God  
always being near, we don't seem to be in a  
place to experience that.

When we aren't seeing enough fruitfulness in  
our lives.

And all we seem to be able to do is just  
persevere and carry on.

He's still King!

He's still Lord of all.

As Bill Johnson has said, If he's not Lord of  
all, He's not Lord at all.

The One who rode into Jerusalem on a  
donkey.

The One whom the crowd celebrated..

Is King and worthy of our celebration.