



'Worship at home' March 24th 2024



This is the last Sunday in Lent,
and we celebrate Palm Sunday as Jesus
is cheered into Jerusalem, hailed as Messiah.

We proclaim Jesus as the One whose life expresses the love
and mercy of God, and who brings the promise of hope for
justice, peace and reconciliation for all of creation.

Opening (from Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29)

Give thanks to the LORD, who alone is good;

God's steadfast love endures forever!

Let the gates of righteousness be opened

**that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.**

This is the day that the LORD has made;

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Gracious and eternal God,

Let the silent mystery of your Spirit
surround, sustain and inspire us.

**Transform our lives to your glory,
and perfect our worship for your praise.**

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Adapted from Billabong Worship Resources © Jeff Shrowder 2018

*This is the day the
LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.*
Psalm 118:24

For what do you give thanks to God today?

What makes you rejoice and be glad?

Name these things out loud in gratitude before God.



It is thought that Psalm 118 may have been used in processions, such as an entrance liturgy into the temple in Jerusalem. The following Scripture tells of Jesus riding into Jerusalem, where crowds of Jewish people had assembled ready for the start of the Passover feast. The crowds greeted him as King, with cheers of praise, and lay down their coats in honour.

Mark 11:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying 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. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'" They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus had told

them to, and the people let them go.

When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Jesus 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.

New International Version



We associate the word **Hosanna** as an exclamation of praise and honour, however it comes from a Hebrew word meaning **help us**, or **save us now**.

What difficulties or struggles might you ask Jesus to help you in or save you from?

How does your faith help you persevere in these struggles?

The Jewish people were tired of living under oppressive Roman rule and were looking for a king to come and save them, overthrowing those in power and bringing about the reign of God, right then and there.

Instead, Jesus came not as a military hero on a horse of war, but as a dissident peace-making rulebreaker who was angering the religious officials, upsetting the Romans, and riding on a donkey.

**When has God answered your prayers for help,
in ways that might be surprising or unexpected?**

The King is coming.

Our God arrives,
clothed in frail human flesh,
riding a meek donkey's foal.



This is not the first time You have come to us, O God
The history of human affairs
is the history of Your arrival among us,

As Creator,
Purpose-Giver,
Liberator,
Prophet's voice and
Priest's desire.

The story of each of our lives
is the story of Your coming to us,

As Comforter,
Friend,
Example,
Challenger
Abundant-Life-Provider,

And so we praise You;

Open our eyes to Your Presence, Lord;

Come to us again, Lord;

Hosanna – Save us again, Lord.

And be glorified among us.

For You are our God.

Amen.

John van de Leer

<https://sacredise.com>

On Palm Sunday we celebrate the long-awaited reign of God, here already yet still to come in all its fullness. We long for peace, justice and hope, as we experience conflict, aggression and turmoil in many areas of our lives, and in the world around us. 3

Pray

- That the peace and justice embodied in Jesus' entry into Jerusalem will prevail
- For people and places in conflict, in our country and our world
- As we come to the end of Harmony Week, that we may celebrate diversity, inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone
- For Indigenous communities as we strive to work together for reconciliation, justice and equity in closing the gap in so many areas of our lives



Closing

As we enter this Holy Week, we remember how quickly we change; how fickle we are; how we pledge our devotion one moment and turn our backs the next. We go from shouting **Hosanna! Save Us!** to **Crucify Him**.



We declare that we love our neighbours and then we turn our backs on the homeless and hungry in our communities. We speak up for change and justice in one breath, and then continue unjust practices in daily lives by what we consume and the needs we ignore.

Forgive us, O God,
for we are half-hearted believers.
Forgive us, O God,
for we are partial justice warriors.
Forgive us, O God,
for we tire easily and we forget,
and we grow weary.



Forgive us, restore us, and renew us for the journey of faith, so that we might become whole people who live wholly into Your vision of new life. As we travel this journey of faith, we pray that we might live into the reign of God, making Christ's love visible, bringing peace and working for justice for all. **Amen!**

~ adapted from Rev. Mindi <http://rev-o-lution.org>