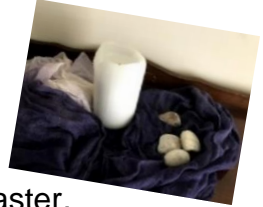




'Worship at home' Sunday April 2nd 2023

This is the final week of Lent, and we consider Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as he faces what was to be his final week. We see his courage, and his faithfulness, and are encouraged to consider our own courage and faithfulness as we prepare for Easter.



Light a candle in your Lenten prayer space to remind you again of Christ's courage and faithfulness.

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*

What do you give God thanks for 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, or 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.

Matthew 21:1-11

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.

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

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."

New International Version



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 Messiah 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 subversive peace-maker 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

Since the 1980s, many places in Australia hold peace marches on Palm Sunday, drawing people from many faith and non-faith backgrounds to stand together to call for justice, dignity and peace for all.



Pray

- That the peace and justice longed for in Jesus' entry into Jerusalem would prevail
- For refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia to find safety and welcome
- For those who are persecuted for their beliefs
- For those impacted on by climate effects and natural disasters around our world
- For people who live in places of conflict, especially Ukraine



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 our daily lives by what we consume and the needs we ignore.

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>

