

**Orpington and Chislehurst
Methodist Circuit
Service for use at home knowing
that other will be joining with you
for worship.**

5th April 2020 Palm Sunday

***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***

Hymn:

**1 All glory, laud, and honour
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 Blessèd One.**

**2 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 prayer and anthems
before thee we present.**

**3 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 prayers we bring,
who in all good delightest,
thou good and gracious King.**

**4 All glory, laud, and honour
to thee, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring!**

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it
here <https://youtu.be/h3a8fTTrAdE>

Prayer:

Loving and living God,
We come to you this Palm Sunday morning
Called to celebrate Jesus entry into Jerusalem
He was hailed by the crowds,
feared by the Jewish leaders
and watched closely by the Roman authorities
We thank you that in your love for us,
you were willing to risk everything
to save us from ourselves,
and to lead us into right paths.

You remind us of your presence
with us in difficult times.
We praise you for always giving us reason to
celebrate:
For the opportunity to live
in such a wonderful world.
And for the ability to share this world
with the people of love, courage,
compassion, faith and hope.

Loving God forgive us
When we fail to celebrate your love,
when we are blind to the good in others,
when we take kindness for granted,
when we forget to express our appreciation,
when we are mean with our praise.
We thank you for your forgiveness
and ask that you fill us with gratitude
every day of our lives
In Jesus Name Amen

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 1-11

21 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the amount of Olivet, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately. [152]" 4 This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, 5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7 they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8 A very large crowd [153] spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the

road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" 10 When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" 11 The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Time to Reflect

How do we celebrate in dark times?

Sometimes I think we minimise the setting of our Palm Sunday reading

In the time of Jesus, and as evident in the whole of the Easter story, the nation of Israel was living under occupation, the people were aware of how much of their national life was controlled by outside forces beyond their control, they had some liberties not given to other occupied lands ruled by Rome - the freedom to worship in the traditional way (with some exceptions). Nevertheless, there would have been an ever-present feeling of oppression and national resentment.

Yet the tradition to visit Jerusalem for the Passover, if at all possible, could be observed. Jerusalem a tourist city at the height of the festivities would still have had an air of tension about it. It would have had extra troops assigned in case of trouble whose presence would have been very visible.

And still, people flocked to Jerusalem despite the restrictions and their fear, their faith and their hope renewed by in the remembrance of God's promises enacted at the Passover. They were ready to celebrate all that was good including the recognition of Jesus welcomed with the chant 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'

Jesus entry into Jerusalem could have so easily triggered a riot, it is certainly what the religious leaders feared, because, if it happened their precarious religious freedom could have been lost.

Jesus deliberately chose a way that did not run that risk. Jesus, by riding a donkey, entered Jerusalem in a way which proclaimed the fulfilment of the promise of God that tied in with Old Testament prophesy, but which did not feed the frustrations or resentment of the crowd. He encouraged praise of God and the celebration of all that is good.

To choose to celebrate in difficult times is an act of resistance, an act of faith. When we choose to worship and celebrate, we are saying 'God is good, and life is meant for living in love, that the future is in the hands of God'. We are declaring our determination to go on working in cooperation with him creatively even in this current situation and celebrating all that is good in the world.

So this Palm Sunday, let us take the opportunity to continue to worship in spirit and truth, to look out for and find ways to mark and celebrate the festival of Palm Sunday and Easter in these restricted circumstances, remembering the choices Jesus made and his call to follow in his footsteps.

Today's Reading from the Epistle: Philippians 2: 5-11

5 Let the same mind be in you that was [10] in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Prayer for others:

Loving God

We pray for all those who find it hard to be grateful at the moment:

We pray for those whose planned celebrations have been postponed or upset.....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

We pray for those whose lifelines have been cut That others might open up to take their place.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those who handle change with difficulty That you would ease the transitions.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those struggling to organise meet the needs of others....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those whose faith is shaken by their
experience.....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those who are unappreciated and taken for
granted.....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

We pray for those whose distress is so deep there
seems no relief.....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

For those who are angry and frustrated by
circumstances beyond their control.....

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

**Lord in your mercy hear our prayer and touch with
love and comfort all those for whom we have
prayed In Jesus name. Amen**

Hymn

Let us with a gladsome mind

Praise the Lord for he is kind:

For his mercies aye endure

Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad

For of gods he is the God

He with all commanding might

filled the new made world with light:

All things living he doth feed

His full hand supplies their need:

He his chosen race did bless

In the wasteful wilderness

Let us then with gladsome mind

Praise the lord for he is kind:

John Milton 1608-74

Benediction

**May the blessing of God the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit be upon us and remain
with us always. In Jesus Name.**