

Jesus Comes to the City

A liturgy for Palm Sunday for use at home



You are the Church – We are the Church!

Palm Sunday is the day when Jesus enters Jerusalem – a day of processions and crowds, shouting and singing. This Palm Sunday will be very different: each of us will need to find ways of journeying with Jesus in our scattered places – ‘together, apart’, in and around our homes. If you’re able to get out for a walk today, you might want to use the ‘Palm Sunday prayer walk’ sheet. The liturgy here is one that other members of Hodge Hill Church will be using some time today.

If there is more than one of you in your home, you might want to share around the parts of a leader/reader, and all join together in the words in **bold type**. If you are on your own, hopefully you’ll feel able to say all the words yourself – either out loud (it’s worth trying this!), or quietly in your head and heart.

What you’ll need

As well as this booklet, you might want to gather together:

- A candle, and something to light it with
- A bible
- A cross, or a picture that helps remind you of God’s presence with you
- A branch of a tree or bush (small or large – you choose!)

GATHERING

Introduction

You might want to light a candle as you begin your time of prayer and worship.

Inviting Jesus to be with us

Holding your tree branch, say this prayer:

Jesus... Christ... Messiah....
our true and humble King:
let us welcome you as you come to our city;
let us run with you
 as you press on to your passion;
let us scatter not just branches in your path,
 but spread our hearts before you,
so that you,
God who cannot be contained,
may make your home in us.
Amen.

A Litany of Triumph and Sorrow

If there is more than one person in your household, you might want to split these words between two or more voices:

1 Jesus comes in triumph,
 to a city where people are gathered in festival.

2 *He comes to challenge power and vested interests,
to overturn status and wealth.*

Come, Lord Jesus. Hosanna in the highest!

1 He comes in celebration
with a royal welcome, declaring God's reign of love.

2 *He comes to rejection,
to the fearful and proud
who sacrifice him to preserve their power.*

Come, Lord Jesus. Hosanna in the highest!

1 He comes to acclamation,
to people waving and shouting praises,
a procession of joy.

2 *He comes to abuse,
to shouts of crucifixion, false trial
and the way of the cross.*

Come, Lord Jesus. Hosanna in the highest!

God, our hope of victory
whom we constantly betray;
help us so to recognize your coming
that in our clamour there may be commitment,
and in our silence the very stones may shout aloud,
in your name. **Amen.**

WORD

Readings

In your Bible, find and follow these two readings:

- Psalm 118, verses 1-2 and verses 19-end
- Matthew 21, verses 1-11

You might also want to spend some time with the picture on the next page, and reflecting on the words of this hymn (if you want to sing it, the tune is 'Ode to Joy'):

***Hail the King of humble service,
love and truth his only power,
carried by a borrowed donkey,
riding to his finest hour.
Christ the long expected Saviour
comes in judgement and in grace,
God, immortal and eternal,
claims our world of time and space.***

***Joyful songs of praise re-echo
and the very stones rejoice!
God in Christ exalts the humble,
gives the silent poor a voice.
See, he comes to end oppression,
and the captive to release,
heal the sick, restore the outcast,
and declare the age of peace.***

**Though his glory comes through torment,
and with thorns he will be crowned,
by his sacrificial dying
life abundant will be found.
Though to human eyes defeated,
he will triumph over pain:
love and joy will conquer hatred,
truth shall dance and peace shall reign.**

**Let the branches strewn before him
be the lives we offer here,
all our hopes with his united
in the love that casts out fear.
Sing hosanna to the Saviour,
coming in the Father's name;
God of mercy, save your people,
truth and liberty proclaim.**

Michael Forster (b 1946)© Kevin Mayhew Ltd

At the end of your time of reflection, take some time to offer your prayers to God:

- *For the world*
- *For our neighbourhood(s)*
- *For the Church (worldwide and local)*
- *For those struggling in body, mind or spirit*
- *For those who have died
and those who have been bereaved*



'Palm Sunday', from 'Images of Easter', London Diocese & CMS (2008)
<https://www.london.anglican.org/mission/childrens-ministry/easter-2008/>

Affirming our faith

In his words and his life, Jesus shows us God's way.
Let us affirm again our commitment to that way:

Blessed are the poor in spirit,

All: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,

for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,

for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after
righteousness,

for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,

for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,

for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,

for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who suffer persecution
for righteousness' sake,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(from Matthew ch.5)

In Jesus, the love of God comes close.

We will walk his way.

GIVING THANKS

*This is the moment in our normal Sunday service where we would gather around God's table and share communion together. Although we long for the time when we are able to do that again, **Jesus promises to be with us wherever we are** – whether we are with other people, or on our own.*

The prayer that follows is an adaptation of our Eucharistic Prayer for Lent – a prayer of thanksgiving (that's what 'eucharist' means) to God, that any of us can pray.

Loving God,
the world you made is beautiful and fragile.
You made us, with all your creatures,
and called us to tend the earth with love.
But what you made fertile, we have made desert;
and when you call us to follow, we have turned away.

You gave us your prophets
to challenge us to change our ways,
and in the end you gave us Jesus, your Son,
to heal and teach
and proclaim your kingdom come
for all who had lost hope
and were thirsty for life.

He made friends with anyone who would listen
and loved even his enemies.
For these things, he was crucified
by the powers-that-be,

but you raised him to life
by your love, stronger even than death.

Your Holy Spirit
strengthens us on the wilderness paths,
refreshes us with living water,
and inspires us to sing your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
holy is the Lord God almighty.
Who was, and is, and is to come,
holy, holy, holy is the Lord.**

So with Jesus we praise you,
with Jesus we pray
for the brokenness of our world,
with Jesus we thirst for your kingdom
to spring to life among us.

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Send your Holy Spirit
upon us your children,
and upon your whole creation,
that we may walk in your ways
and rejoice in your life,
through Jesus Christ,
life-giver, pain-bearer, love-maker.

Amen.

*We join together in saying **The Lord's Prayer** (in whatever version is most familiar)*

**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 forever.
Amen.**

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day
our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into
temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For thine
is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

If you have a cross you can hold, you might want to pick it up now (or pass it between you if you are with others), as you join in this prayer:

**Jesus our Friend,
your body broken, your life poured out for us:
help us, who walk with you the way of the cross,
to learn from you the way of love,
to stay close to you
through your suffering and death
and to greet you in the Easter dawn.
Amen.**

And may the blessing of God,
life-giver, pain-bearer, love-maker,
be with us, and with all for whom we pray,
through this Lent, and always.
Amen.

We pray for peace,
we look for peace,
we speak of peace,
we act in peace,
we know God's peace.
Amen.

Pray. Love. Give...

If you are able to give financially at this time, we invite you to continue to do so. Although we are unable to meet together on Sundays, the work of Hodge Hill Church continues, and we continue contributing to the common funds of the wider Church too. There are also ways in which you can support vital lifelines for our neighbours in these challenging times.

Please consider giving online, or via telephone banking, to one or more of the following:

- **Hodge Hill Church** (joint account – to enable our ongoing mission and ministry)

Sort code: 30-93-09

A/c no: 01912563

- **Bethany Foodbank** (supporting people in the Hodge Hill area with emergency food supplies)

Sort code: 40-11-07

A/c no: 81642995

- **Hodge Hill community mutual aid fund** (supporting people in the Hodge Hill area who are facing serious financial challenges at this time)

Sort code: 30-93-09

A/c no: 06465158

Payee: Hodge Hill PCC

Reference: LoveYourNeighbour