

## **Palm Sunday: April 5, 2020<sup>1</sup>**

### **Call to Worship: (Suzannah and Christine Benken)**

Officiant: Shout Hosanna Jesus is coming.

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: He's riding on a donkey

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Open the gates

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Open the ancient doors

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Don't be afraid

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Wave the branches

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Spread out your coats

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Peace in heaven

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

Officiant: Glory in highest heaven

**All: SHOUT HOSANNA**

### **Matthew 21:1-11 (Martha Dodge)**

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them,

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<sup>1</sup> This service is an adaptation of resources from Iona Books (Wild Goose Publications): "To Walk the Way of the Cross" by David Osborne; "Palm/Passion Sunday" from Eggs and Ashes (Ruth Burgess & Chris Polhill); "The Very Best Kind of King" by Nancy Cocks

"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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"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."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

**Hymn 154** - [All Glory Laud and Honor: National Cathedral 2013](#)  
(see next page)

*Refrain*

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re - deem - er, King!

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1 Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,  
 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels is prais - ing thee on high;  
 3 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;  
 4 To thee be - fore thy pas - sion they sang their hymns of praise;  
 5 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

*Repeat Refrain*

1 who in the Lord's Name com - est, the King and Bless - ed One.  
 2 and we with all cre - a - tion in cho - rus make re - ply.  
 3 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.  
 4 to thee, now high ex - al - ted, our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 5 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King.

*The stanzas may be sung by choir alone or alternately by contrasted groups; all sing the refrain.*

Words: Theodulph of Orleans (d. 821); tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866), alt.

Music: *Valet will ich dir geben*, melody Melchior Teschner (1584-1635), alt.; harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889)

## **Opening prayer: (Suzannah)**

Jesus, we greet you today with happy hearts. We cheer with the crowds who welcomed you to their city. They hoped you were their king, come to set them free. We share their hopes as we cry, 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus.'

Jesus, you surprised that crowd. You rode a humble donkey, not a proud war horse. You were not the kind of king they expected. And so we remember how this week will end for you. Those people who cheered for you soon turned against you. They wanted a different kind of king.

Forgive us, Lord Jesus, if we go along with the crowd because it seems easier than following your way. Help us stand up for you and your kingdom, even when others will not.

### **Remembering God's forgiveness: (Suzannah)**

This is an important day to remember the good news! Many years ago St Paul asked, 'Who is in a position to condemn us? Only Christ – and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns as our king, Christ prays for us.' Friends, as we enter the awesome days of Holy Week, let us believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven by God's most generous love.

### **Luke 19:36-40 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) (Rob Flory)**

<sup>36</sup> As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying,

“Blessed is the king  
who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Peace in heaven,  
and glory in the highest heaven!”

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” <sup>40</sup> He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

### **The Stones Cry Out:**

**Narrator: Violet Holbrook**

**Micah: Hermione Fleming**

**Sandy: Theresa Cooke**

**Pebbles: Suzannah Rohman, Ben Cooke, Justine Cooke, Sherrie Holbrook**

**Everyone: Whole cast**

Narrator: Imagine what it's like to be a rock, a small hard round stone, lying in the middle of a dirt road. When people travel, they kick dust in the face of a rock. When carts carry grain to market, they roll on top of the rocks and stones without blinking.

Micah ben Feldspar was such a rock, who lived on the road just outside Jerusalem. One day Sandy Stone landed in the dirt beside him.

Micah: People walk all over us. This place would be dust – or mud – without us! But folk just kick us out of the way, as if we didn't matter.

Sandy: I know. Maybe these people can't hear us when we talk to them.

Micah: Or else they don't pay attention to rocks and stones.

Narrator: As the sun rose and the day got hotter, the rocks could feel a distant rumbling in the ground. The pebbles began to ask each other:

Pebbles: What's going on?

Sandy: It feels like a parade is coming.

Micah: (shudders) Or a caravan of camels!

Narrator: The pebbles began to jiggle with excitement.

Pebbles: Here they come!

Narrator: The rocks could see dust rising.

Sandy: It is a parade. Look! The people are waving palm branches.

Micah: Listen to them sing and cheer.

Narrator: Not far off they could hear people singing and shouting, 'Hosanna! Hosanna!'

Sandy: I can see someone on a donkey. People are cheering for him!

Micah: Watch out! (Cough.)

Narrator: Then Micah coughed as a palm branch landed right on top of him.

Sandy: Join in! It must be the king. Hosanna!

Narrator: And all the pebbles replied,

Pebbles: Hosanna! Hosanna!

Narrator: Micah was still underneath a palm branch.

Micah: (grumbling) Hosanna.

Narrator: The parade walked right over top of him. The little donkey carrying the king stepped carefully over the singing rocks. Along the road, Micah peeked out from under his branch.

Micah: Look at his face!

Sandy: I think he looks very kind. I bet that he can hear the voices of the stones.

Narrator: So the pebbles cried even louder,

Pebbles: Hosanna! Hosanna! Narrator: As the stones and pebbles watched the parade go by, they heard some angry men try to stop the singing. 'Teacher! Silence your disciples!' The king declared, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.'

Micah: (loudly) He did hear us. He heard our song!

Narrator: The pebbles sang again,

Pebbles: Hosanna! Hosanna!

Narrator: When the parade was over, and the next day arrived, life returned to normal for the rocks on the road. People coming to Jerusalem walked on top of them. Children picked up stones and tossed them at walls, or at soldiers who weren't watching. It was a busy road and those rocks and pebbles had a busy life, keeping the dust down.

But on Friday, things changed. The earth began to rumble again.

A troop of Roman soldiers marched out early that morning, their boots crunching hard on the rocks in the road.

Narrator: The pebbles cried out:

Pebbles: Ouch! Ouch! Your boots are hurting us!

Narrator: Along came another crowd.

Pebbles: Is this a parade too?

Micah: (whispers) No! Listen. Their voices are angry.

Narrator: Then the rocks felt tired footsteps dragging something heavy through their dust.

Sandy: (softly) Look! It's the king.

Micah: (louder) But he's bleeding ... Stop! Listen to us! You are hurting the king!

Narrator: All the pebbles called,

Pebbles: Hosanna! Hosanna!

Sandy: (sighing) No one is listening to us.

Micah: (frowning) I think they are going to kill the king.

Narrator: The pebbles wept sadly,

Pebbles: (softly) Hosanna! Hosanna!

Narrator: All at once the sky turned black and the ground trembled. The rocks were afraid and the pebbles were silent.

Then Sandy cried out,

Sandy: No! Keep singing. Keep singing for the king!

Narrator: So one by one, the rocks and the stones and all the pebbles joined in,

Pebbles: Hosanna! Hosanna! (Others join in) Hosanna! Hosanna!

Micah: Louder!

Everyone: Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!

Narrator: All the stones and rocks and pebbles shouted together.

Everyone: (as loud as possible) HOSANNA! HOSANNA! HOSANNA!  
HOSANNA!

Narrator: Nothing would keep the rocks from singing their song for the king. So let nothing keep us from singing our song in praise of the King, Jesus.

Everyone: Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!



## Hymn: *Hosanna, loud hosanna*

### Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

PALM SUNDAY

Words: Jeanette Threlfall, 1873, alt.

Music: 'Ellacombe' from *Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Hofkapelle, Wurttemberg, 1784.*

Setting: *Presbyterian Hymnal, 1911.*

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$\text{♩} = 130$



1. Ho - san - na, loud ho - san - - na, the lit - tle child - ren sang;  
2. From O - li - vet they fol - - lowed mid an ex - ul - tant crowd,  
3. "Ho - san - na in the high - - est!" that an - cient song we sing,

Through pil - lared court and tem - - ple the love - ly an - them rang.  
The vic - tor palm branch wa - - ving, and chant - ing clear and loud.  
For Christ is our Re - dee - - mer, the Lord of heav'n our King.

To Je - sus, Who had blessed them close fold - ed to His breast,  
The Lord of men and an - - gels rode on in low - ly state,  
O may we ev - er praise Him with heart and life and voice,

The child - ren sang their prais - - es, the simp - lest and the best.  
Nor scorned that lit - tle child - - ren should on His bid - ding wait.  
And in His bliss - ful pre - - sence e - - ter - nal - ly re - joice!

## Prayers: (Sherrie Holbrook)

God, we think today of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey like a poor labourer ...

And so we pray for those who struggle to get by because they are badly paid, or unemployed, because of illness or disability, because of prejudice or abuse, or because they have had to leave their homes to seek safety elsewhere.

We pray that those who suffer may know your justice, that those of us who have the resources to help may have the courage to do so, and that those who make decisions concerning the welfare of their countries or communities may recognise their responsibilities towards all people.

God in your mercy ... Hear our prayer.

We think of Jesus fulfilling a prophecy of one who brings peace ...

And so we pray for those caught up in war or civil violence in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Ukraine, Yemen, Palestine, Israel ...

We pray for peace in your world, that those who have it in their power to call a halt to violence may do so and that those in positions of influence may have the wisdom to see your way forward.

God in your mercy ... Hear our prayer.

We think of the crowds shouting and cheering, acclaiming their Messiah with palm branches ...

And so we pray for all who are carried along by crowds, pushed by those who shout and shove around them, or by social media, newspapers or television.

We pray for freedom and for integrity, that in our debates about welfare, taxation or world affairs there may be honesty and a willingness to listen, and that in our social life we may look for what really matters for our wellbeing, for the good of our neighbours, wherever they are, and the healing of your world.

God in your mercy ... Hear our prayer.

We think of the rulers in Jerusalem, afraid they might lose their power ...

And so we pray for all those who today have great power as members of governments, or because of their wealth, or their ability to sway others by what they do or say.

We pray that they may use their influence for the good of all, and that those who have little power may discover the resources that are within and among them, and that we may all have the courage to use the gifts and opportunities you give us in the ways that you intend.

God in your mercy ... Hear our prayer.

We think of the disciples walking with Jesus amidst the shouts of praise, then leaving him when he was arrested ...

And so we pray for ourselves – with our struggles, our pain, our griefs, our gifts and our joys – that we may know the comfort of your continual presence with us and that, despite our fears, whether things are hard or comfortable, we may continue to walk the way of the Cross.

God in your mercy ... Hear our prayer, and let us know and live your love.

### **Reading of the Passion**

Play video of Parish Passion Reading

**Hymn 172** - *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you  
 2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you  
 3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side? Were you  
 4 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you

there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh!  
 there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh!  
 there when they pierced him in the side? Oh!  
 there when they laid him in the tomb? Oh!

Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,  
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,  
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,  
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,

trem-ble. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?  
 trem-ble. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?  
 trem-ble. Were you there when they pierced him in the side?  
 trem-ble. Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?