

**Cheshire South Methodist Circuit**   
**Service at home sheet Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2025**  
**PALM SUNDAY**

**Opening Prayer**

Loving God, we thank you for the special season of Lent and the reminders of events that happened in Jesus' life when he entered Jerusalem. May our time of worship reflect our gratitude and love for you.  
**Amen**

**StF no. 152** *This is the day that the Lord has made*

1 This is the day,  
this is the day that the Lord has made,  
that the Lord has made.  
We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.  
This is the day that the Lord has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.  
This is the day,  
this is the day that the Lord has made.

2 This is the day,  
this is the day when He rose again,  
when He rose again.  
We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.  
This is the day when He rose again;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.  
This is the day,  
this is the day when He rose again.

3 This is the day,  
this is the day when the Spirit came,  
when the Spirit came.  
We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.  
This is the day when the Spirit came;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.  
This is the day,  
this is the day when the Spirit came.

*Anonymous*

**Let us pray together**

Lord Jesus, you journeyed to Jerusalem many times, as a child and as a man, touching many lives along the way as you taught and healed and challenged.

Thank you for inviting us to journey with you today, for showing us the depth of your courage and the power of your love. Thank you, Lord, for being our King and Saviour – and our friend. You are worthy of all our praise. **Amen.**

We are sorry, Lord Jesus, for the moments when our hosannas are loud but lacking in love, when we chase the lure of worldly power, but miss the signs of heavenly glory, when we choose popularity over integrity, when we would silence those who speak the truth and are silent when we could speak out. Forgive us, and inspire our steps as we follow you to the Cross...and beyond. **Amen.**

**Old Testament reading:** *Psalm 118:1 – 2, 19 - 29*

<sup>1</sup>O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! <sup>2</sup>Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

<sup>19</sup>Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

<sup>20</sup>This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it. <sup>21</sup>I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. <sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. <sup>23</sup>This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

<sup>24</sup>This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. <sup>25</sup>Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success! <sup>26</sup>Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. <sup>27</sup>The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

<sup>28</sup>You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.

<sup>29</sup>O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

### **Gospel Reading:** *Luke 19:28 – 40*

<sup>28</sup>After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup>When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup>saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup>If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'"

<sup>32</sup>So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. <sup>33</sup>As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup>They said, "The Lord needs it." <sup>35</sup>Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. <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."

### **StF no. 263** *Hosanna in the highest*

**1** Hosanna, hosanna , hosanna in the highest!  
Hosanna, hosanna , hosanna in the highest!  
Lord, we lift up your name,  
With hearts full of praise;  
Be exalted, O Lord, my God!  
Hosanna in the highest!

**2** Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings!  
Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings!  
Lord, we lift up your name,  
With hearts full of praise;  
Be exalted, O Lord, my God!  
Glory to the King of kings!

*CCL821965 Carl Tuttle*

### **Message**

Though Jesus visited Jerusalem several times, this was the only day when Jesus did something unexpected during his earthly life, entering into the city riding on the donkey. I am aware that many generations of theologians, Biblical scholars and readers of these texts would have asked questions, such as:

*Why did Jesus need a donkey, especially a colt (which probably could not carry a grown man!) and not a horse?*

*How did the owner of the donkey let go of his colt, and obviously without any payment for it?*

*Jesus was used to walking everywhere, and therefore why did he not walk up to Jerusalem? The city was not too far, about two miles from the Mount of Olives!*

As this is a familiar Bible reading, we of course know the answer to all the above questions - that is, all this happened in order to fulfil the Old Testament prophecy, which was spoken by the prophet Zechariah in chapters 9:9 and 14:4. This day was meant also to display a different kind of Kingship and Kingdom to all those who had gathered that day in Jerusalem for Passover, including the Roman soldiers/officials. We read that Jesus, the King of the Jews, entered the city in peace (one would not go into battle riding a donkey!) contrary to the victorious king who would enter the conquered city, riding on his 'warhorse', symbolising a judgment on the people of that city.

Adding to this, we are reminded "this is the day the crowd shouts openly and claims allegiance with God rather than Caesar" which was quite a daring thing to do, given that not only was the ruling party watching everything closely, but also the religious leaders who were so concerned that they had said, "...look how the world is gone after him..." (John 12:19). They had their own agenda, but Jesus' journey on a donkey was extraordinary, unexpected and un-imaginable and therefore they were frustrated to see the large crowd cheering for Jesus.

Perhaps, it was that day when Jesus and his teachings meant something for the followers. The whole city would have been in a joyous uproar on that day! If you have an experience of being in a parade or carnival, you would sense the feeling of joy and something bigger to come, but things did not turn out as people expected! For we know that soon after this event, Jesus was arrested, interrogated and crucified.

The texts for Palm Sunday teach us that Jesus did not comply with the values and expectation around Him, and nor should we. This is easier said than done in the Western world, where there is no 'pressure' to live the Christian life, where there is not a great need to rely on Jesus for the daily bread or basic necessity. However, we must live the 'servant leadership' in all circumstances and even when it is hard and challenging.

### **Prayers of intercession**

As Jesus wept over Jerusalem and cleansed its Temple, let us pray for our cities and our churches today.

**Help us know what will bring peace, O Lord.**

We pray to you for cities in conflict, where dictators hold on to power and oppress their own citizens, and the voice of the people is not heard. We think especially of Ukraine, Gaza and the West Bank and Sudan. We pray for the thousands of people in Myanmar who have lost their lives in the earthquake, and the many more who are bereaved, homeless and feeling hopeless.

**Help us know what will bring peace, O Lord.**

We pray to you for all those suffering poor health, personal disaster, or the death of a loved one. Make us faithful in praying, visiting and caring for those in difficulties.

**Help us know what will bring us peace, O Lord.**

We pray to you for churches of all denominations, as what unites us this week is so much bigger than what divides us. May we love one another, so the world may know you are among us.

**Help us know what will bring us peace, O Lord. Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer** *Our Father .....*

**StF no. 264** *Make way, make way, for Christ the King*

**1** Make way, make way, for Christ the King  
in splendour arrives;  
fling wide the gates and welcome Him  
into your lives.

Refrain

*Make way (Make way), make way  
(make way),  
for the King of kings (for the King of kings);  
make way (make way), make way (make way),  
and let His Kingdom in.*

**2** He comes the broken hearts to heal,  
the prisoners to free;  
the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance, the  
blind shall see ...

*Make way (Make way),*

**3** And those who mourn with heavy hearts,  
who weep and sigh,  
with laughter, joy and royal crown  
He'll beautify.

*Make way (Make way), ...*

**4** We call you now to worship Him as Lord of all,  
to have no gods before Him,  
their thrones must fall!

*Make way (Make way), ...*

*CCL 821965 Graham Kendrick*

**A prayer of blessing**

May God grant us the exuberance of the Palm Sunday crowd, and the humility of Jesus riding a donkey; the energy and excitement of the crowd, and the calm holiness of Jesus; the expectation of the crowd, and the understanding heart of Jesus who journeyed to Jerusalem for love of us all. **Amen.**

***Original Materials by Rev. Nutan Sandhya and Joseph Suray***