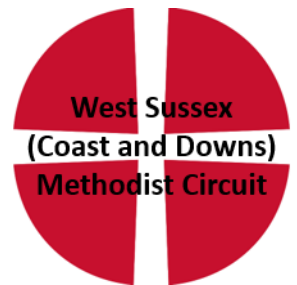


# Worshipping Together

West Sussex Coast and Downs Circuit

March 2021



**Worshipping Together** is an offering from the circuit to you, and has been collated by local preachers, ministers and worship leaders from across the circuit.

If you are well enough, we invite you use this resource each week, at a time to suit you, and spend a few moments with God, knowing that you are **Worshipping Together** with other people who are also sharing in this act of worship with you.

Share these resources with others to use in their own way as we worship and grow together despite the pandemic.

Also available at: [www.westsussexcoastanddownscircuit.co.uk](http://www.westsussexcoastanddownscircuit.co.uk)

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...*

*Luke 4:1*



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*As we come to worship, you may like to prepare with a period of quiet, or light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.*

**'The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.'**

*Psalm 19:1*

### Prayers of Praise & thanksgiving

Majestic creator, when we look to the heavens and the Earth we cannot help but be awed and praise your name as Creator. We thank you for the beautiful clouds, birds that fill the sky and our ears with their song, and for the various animals that we encounter.

We also thank you for the moon and the stars that pierce the gloom of the night. And when we look to ourselves and see how we have been wonderfully and fearfully made, we are grateful for the fact that you sustain our every breath and action.

Prince of Peace, when we look at our society, we praise you that you are an empowering God, and that you raise up and empower those who speak out for and act for those in need.

In and through the name of your son, Jesus Christ we praise you and thank you. Amen.

### Sing, Pray or Reflect: Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise<sup>2</sup>

<https://youtu.be/g1GbBINimoQ>

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise,  
the city of our God, the holy place, the joy of the whole earth.  
Great is the Lord in whom we have the victory,  
he aids us against the enemy, we bow down on our knees.

*And Lord, we want to lift your name on high,  
and Lord, we want to thank you,  
for the works you've done in our lives;  
and Lord, we trust in your unfailing love,  
for you alone are God eternal,  
throughout earth and heaven above.*

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<sup>1</sup> Worship for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March by Daniel Dawkins

<sup>2</sup> Great is the Lord by Steve McEwan, © 1985 Body Songs, StF50

## Prayers confession and assurance of forgiveness

Father, we come to you now, please hear our humble and honest confessions.

***Confess aloud or in silent prayer those things that are on your heart that you want to ask God's forgiveness for.***

Our Lord is a merciful God, ever eager and ready to forgive those who repent and ask for mercy. Know that having confessed and repented you are forgiven. Amen.

**RECEIVING**

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### Reading: John 2:13 – 22

One day as a family we went to London on day trip and made the classic mistake of not taking any food or drinks with us. My wife and I found ourselves paying a small fortune on drinks and snacks throughout the day to keep our 3 boys fed and watered. So when we got back to London Victoria we looked for a cheap option for meals. We sorted the boys with a Burger King meal each, but my wife and I fancied something different. We both went to different vendors for the different foods we wanted (I fancied a burrito and my wife sushi). I made the same mistake as my wife and we ordered from the menu without fully noticing the price. ***Why did we do this?***

Well, the food wording was huge and the price wording was microscopic and you were herded through a queue system, that seemed to put you on the spot to make a quick choice. After paying a small fortune for our purchases we met up and compared experiences. We both were shocked at the similarity of our experience. Me being me, I then proceeded to look at how the food vendors advertised their wares. It seemed that both the ones we chose and a couple of the others did the same thing; large food wording, small prices and a herding queue system. They seemed to be deliberately preying on hungry, tired people to my mind.

Why do I tell this story? Well, I don't know about you, but today's passage always shocks me. Jesus, the Prince of Peace seems to suddenly forget himself. He becomes Jesus, the table overturner, Jesus the whip maker. As they say, context is everything, and when you read some commentaries on this passage, they make for interesting reading. The money that had to be used in the temple was special coins, and so money did need to be changed from the standard currencies in circulation. Also, the animal vendors were needed for the sacrifices. This was to ensure that coins used in the Temple didn't have the image of a Roman Emperor stamped on them, as Roman Emperors tended to see themselves as divine, and that the animals or birds sacrificed met the liturgical standards. ***So why does Jesus lose the plot?***

Well, the main issue as it appears, is that the money lenders may not have been charging a fair exchange rate but charging over the odds. And interestingly a slice of the profits went to the temple coffers. The animals that were being sold were not up to the standard required by the law. But again, a slice of the profits also went to the temple coffers. So, the whole system was suspect, the pilgrim was being exploited and the priests were in on it. Also, as there was only one temple, and some people travelled quite a distance, especially at festival times, it was fair to say they could, like my wife and I, be tired.

So Jesus is encountering exploitation in which God's servants, the priests are permitting to occur. Suddenly his response seems more understandable. A system that was set up to help people come to God is being used to exploit them, and to make matters worse the priests are letting it happen. How often have we when encountering things like this, kept quiet like the priests? For example, in the workplace/church did/do we keep quiet whilst someone was the subject of gossip or bullying? In the community, there are people marginalised by systems originally designed to help them, have we added our voices to challenge the injustice?

Now, I have a confession, I didn't on that day challenge the exploitation I encountered. I would like to say that I acted like Jesus, but I didn't. I didn't want to make a fuss. I am not saying we need to be making a whip or turning over tables, but we do need to think about what our response should be when we encounter exploitative practices. ***Shall we quietly ignore, or be like Jesus?*** Amen.

## RESPONDING



**Reflect: How do you respond when you encounter exploitation, do you pause and then deliberately act to challenge it?**

**Sing, Pray or Reflect: Show me how to stand for Justice<sup>3</sup>** <https://youtu.be/jrMuTxZDGLI>

1. Show me how to stand for justice:  
how to work for what is right,  
how to challenge false assumptions,  
how to walk within the light.  
May I learn to share more freely  
in a world so full of greed,  
showing your immense compassion  
by the life I choose to lead.

2. Teach my heart to treasure mercy,  
whether given or received —  
for my need has not diminished  
since the day I first believed:  
let me seek no satisfaction  
boasting of what I have done,  
but rejoice that I am pardoned  
and accepted in your Son.

<sup>3</sup> Show me how to stand for justice by Martin Leckebusch, © 1999 Kevin Mayhew, StF713



3. Gladly I embrace a lifestyle modelled on your living word, in humility submitting to the truth which I have heard. Make me conscious of your presence every day in all I do: by your Spirit's gracious prompting may I learn to walk with you.



### Prayers for others

God of the poor, God of Justice, we pray for those who whilst working are suffering from modern slavery, zero-hour contracts, or other forms of exploitation.

We pray for those in countries that are having their resources taken, their environments plundered for the richer countries of the world.

We also pray for those that do not have access to the basic medical needs we in the UK take for granted.

Lord, we pray for the Church in these times of uncertainty, when anxiety threatens to take hold of us, help us to rest in your promise that all will be well.

And Lord, with our buildings shut it easy to see the Church is not bricks and mortar, but the flesh and blood of our brothers and Sisters in Christ.

But when the buildings start to open help us to remember this fact, and to continue to be aware of your guiding Spirit.

*In silence we pray for those know to us who are in need of special prayers today...*

We bring all our prayers together with the Lord's Prayer: ***Our Father...***



### The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all forever more. Amen

*As we come to worship, you may like to prepare with a period of quiet, or light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.*

O give thanks to the Lord for he is gracious  
For his steadfast love endures for ever.  
Let the redeemed of the Lord say this  
Those he redeemed from the hand of the enemy.  
And gathered out of the lands from the east and from the west.  
From the north and from the south.

He brought them out of darkness and out of the shadow of death  
And broke their bonds asunder.  
Let them give thanks to the Lord for his goodness  
And the wonders he does for his children.

*Psalm 107:1-3, 14-15*

**Sing/Read/Proclaim – Love divine all loves excelling<sup>5</sup>** <https://youtu.be/o-dl3Dx-apA>

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heav'n, to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art.  
Visit us with thy salvation;  
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2. Come, Almighty, to deliver,  
let us all thy life receive.  
Suddenly return, and never,  
nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.

3. Finish, then, thy new creation;  
true and spotless let us be.  
Let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee.  
Changed from glory into glory,  
till in heav'n we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love and praise.



<sup>4</sup> Worship material for 14th March prepared by Joyce Stroud

<sup>5</sup> Love Divine by Charles Wesley, StF503

## Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Loving God, we worship you as the life force of the universe,  
Flowing through all things, sustaining and reviving.

We worship you in the light that falls on us unseen

Blessing us and guiding us towards you.

We worship you for the love that nurtures us. Life, light and love, we adore you.

Lord your light has flooded the world

**But we have turned away, preferring darkness.**

Lord you have lifted up your Son that we might be forgiven

**But we have turned away, preferring to remain in our sins.**

Lord you have offered us eternal life

**But we have turned away, preferring the pleasures of earthly life.**

**Forgive us, O Lord as we bow our heads before you**

**Thank you for guiding our feet back into your way.**

**We do not turn away any longer, we lift our faces to seek your light**

**We lift our eyes to see your Son.**

**We lift our hearts to live in you and for you for ever. Amen**

**RECEIVING**

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### Reading: John 3:14-21

Today's reading includes one of the most memorable Bible verses '*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*'

This verse has been described as the essence of the Gospel. It reminds us that salvation starts with God and his love for the world. Not just for the good people or for those that love God but for everyone. Those who love God and those who never think of him. St Augustine described it as 'God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us to love.' As John says in verse 17, Jesus didn't come to discipline the world but to show the love of God that the world might be saved by him.

However, the next section talks about how people can make choices to put the truth into action and follow the light or to prefer the darkness. Nicodemus came to visit Jesus in the dark so that he might not be seen, despite recognising that Jesus could be the light that was promised. However, after Jesus died, Nicodemus comes out into the light helping Joseph of Arimathea to bury Jesus.

At the beginning of the reading, John refers back to Moses lifting up the image of the serpent in the wilderness. The Israelites had been complaining about being in the desert with no water and they didn't like the food. Then there is a plague of snakes and they all get bitten. The snake bites bring them to their senses and they ask for forgiveness for their complaining. When they looked up at the serpent they were healed. They weren't healed by the serpent but by lifting their eyes to God. John relates this story to Jesus being lifted up on the cross. Those who lift their eyes to Jesus as Saviour find peace with God and peace with one another. If we have been forgiven we become people who are forgiving. We are enabled to see other people as God sees them. As we progress through Lent may we keep our eyes lifted to the light and focussed on Jesus and his saving power.

## RESPONDING

### Pointers for self-reflection:

*Do we choose to step out into the light or stay in the comfort of the darkness?*

*How can we point others to the light?*

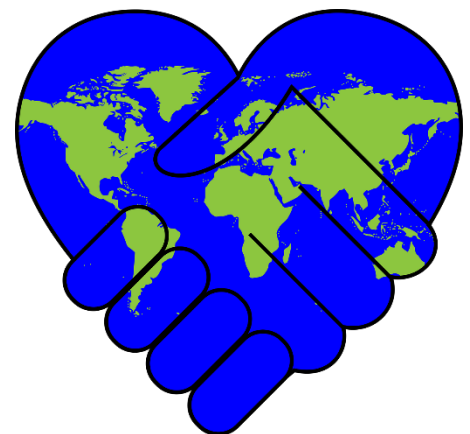
*Who is the 'everyone' that we are called to share the message of forgiveness and healing with?*



### Poem – So Loved the world<sup>6</sup>

The whole round world, in Greek the total cosmos  
Is all encompassed in this loving word;  
Not just the righteous, right on and religious  
But every one of whom you have ever heard,  
And all the throng you don't know or ignore,  
For everyone is precious in his sight  
Chosen and cherished, loved, redeemed, before  
The circling cosmos ever saw the light.

He set us in the world that we might flourish  
That his beloved world might live through us  
We chose instead that all of this should perish  
And turned his every blessing to a curse.  
And now he gives himself, as life and light  
That we might choose in him to set things right.



<sup>6</sup> So Loved the World by Malcolm Guite



## Pray

Merciful God, we pray for those who walk through life with a sense of guilt,  
Burdened by past mistakes, Overwhelmed by a sense of failure  
Troubled by feelings of shame,  
Depressed by the knowledge of their own weakness.  
Help them to understand that in you they can find true forgiveness  
and a new beginning. *In your mercy, **hear us.***

We pray for those who commit evil with no sense of wrong-doing,  
No concept of sin, no hint of resource, no sign of scruples.  
Help them to glimpse what is right and good,  
and to be touched by the renewing transforming grace of Christ.  
In your mercy, **hear us.**

We pray for those who have been wronged by others,  
hurt, deceived, betrayed, let down.  
Help them to be ready to forgive others as you have forgiven them.  
In your mercy, **hear us.**

We pray for those whose relationships are being tested -  
with family and friends,  
with those at work or places of leisure,  
with other Christians, even in their own fellowship.  
Help them to understand the cause of division between them  
and to work towards healing such rifts  
forgiving and seeking forgiveness.  
In your mercy, **hear us.**

Merciful God, help all those who are burdened by past mistakes  
to discover the forgiveness you so freely offer  
and to show mercy themselves. *In your mercy, **hear us.***

We name those places and situations dear to us that we wish to bring to God, in  
silence or aloud. May they know God's healing and wholeness.

We bring all these prayers in the name of Jesus our Saviour and Lord. **Amen**  
We share in the prayer that Jesus taught us. ***Our Father...***

**Sing: This, this is the God we adore**<sup>7</sup> <https://youtu.be/1Oyi9bw9hQw>

This, this is the God we adore  
Our faithful, unchangeable friend.  
Whose love is as great as his power  
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the first and the last  
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;  
We'll praise him for all that is past.  
And trust him for all that's to come.

### **The Grace**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all forever more. **Amen**



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<sup>7</sup> This, This is the God we adore, by Joseph Hart, StF67

*As we come to worship, you may like to prepare with a period of quiet, or light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.*

**As we come today into the presence of Jesus,  
let us worship him and make this a time when we feel his love,  
hear his voice both comforting us, and teaching us how to love one another.**

**Sing, Pray or Reflect: Take this moment, sign, and space<sup>9</sup>**

1. Take this moment, sign, and space.  
Take my friends around.  
Here among us make the place.  
Where your love is found.

2. Take the time to call my name,  
Take the time to mend.  
Who I am and what I've been,  
All I've failed to tend.

3. Take the tiredness of my days,  
Take my past regret,  
Letting your forgiveness touch  
All I can't forget.

4. Take the little child in me.  
Scared of growing old.  
Help me here to find my worth  
Made in God's own mould.

5. Take my talents, take my skills,  
Take what's yet to be.  
Let my life be yours, and yet.  
Let it still be me.



### Prayer

Loving, faithful God, we come this morning to praise your name because we know that your love is absolute and that wherever we are, whether it be beside the sea or high on a mountain top, whether it be in our houses or in a church, you will be with us.

We give thanks that, through your constant love, you have equipped us, taught us, guided us, and given us the strength to face the strains and stresses of today's world. But, forgiving Lord, just as we give thanks to you, so we also ask for your forgiveness. We know that so often we have failed to focus on you, and we have

<sup>8</sup> Worship for 21<sup>st</sup> March prepared by Malcolm Lindo

<sup>9</sup> Take this moment, sign, and space by John Bell & Graham Maule, © WGRG, StF513

allowed the weight of life's demands to take over our lives. In a moment of silence, we remember those times when we have turned away .....

We know that, through the redeeming actions of Jesus, we are forgiven, so this morning, we ask for forgiveness and pray that, through the Holy Spirit, you will help us to draw closer to you so that we can cope with whatever our daily lives hold. **Amen**

## RECEIVING

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### Reflection

It is a year ago this weekend since the Government first imposed a COVID national lockdown and what a year it has been! For most of us, it has been a year of restriction, turmoil, doubt and of course for some, sorrow. But, as I reflect on the past 12 months, I cannot help but recall that this has not been the first time, nor am I sure will it be the last time that someone has endured such a period of despair. I vividly remember my mother describing her despair in 1940 when she realised that not only did she not know when she would next see my father, she did not know whether she would ever see him again.

The prophet Jeremiah lived in such a time. After the southern kingdom of Judah had been conquered, Jerusalem was totally destroyed, and its leading citizens sent into exile in Babylon. The people were in despair because they felt that God had deserted them, and they had no one to turn to. As the Psalmist records in Psalm 137 the people sang *"How can we sing the songs of the Lord, while in a foreign land?"*

And yet, despite what they felt or maybe because of what they felt, God reached out to them and gave a promise that he would be with them for ever. He declared through Jeremiah that he would make a new Covenant with them. A Covenant that would be different, it would be special. Let us hear what God said as it is recorded in the book of Jeremiah.

### Read: Jeremiah. Ch. 33 v31-34

We of course know what that new Way was, it was Jesus.

Several years ago, we were staying in a small village on the edge of the North Yorkshire moors. As we emerged from the local pub after our evening meal, we saw the sheep which were quietly grazing on the village green. As we walked along back to our B&B, there suddenly they came an urgent, loud insistent baaing from one



particular animal. It was a noise which continued as we walked through the village. Then suddenly, out of the gloom, came the apparently lost young lamb bounding, leaping, baaing in joy in relief and happiness as it found its mother. As soon as they came together, the loud noise stopped, and peace returned to the village green.



It was a simple act of love, enduring, forgiving, and caring. And it is that love that God was proposing in the new Covenant. A deep abiding love that God showed by sending his Son to live among us, and that by his death and resurrection, ensuring that we would become His people. And it is that love, which God has written on our hearts, that enables us to love and care for one another. The new Covenant is not one of rules and regulations, but one of love.

As we approach Easter, if we only think of ourselves, focus only on us and our own wellbeing, we will fail, we will fail in our own lives, we will fail God and all around us. We will break that Covenant. But if we do not think of ourselves, if we make someone else the object of our love, if we follow his commandments to love our neighbours then our lives will be fulfilled. We will play our part in the new Covenant. When we think of the next 12 months, we know that there will be good times and there will be bad times. We know that there will be times when we will despair and worry about the future. But, **if we stand back and think of the new Covenant which Jeremiah foretold that God wanted with his people, we can prepare ourselves for those emotional highs and lows and know that God is with us.**

## RESPONDING

### Hymn: There's a spirit in the air<sup>10</sup>

1. There's a spirit in the air,  
telling Christians everywhere:  
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world!'

2. Lose your shyness, find your tongue,  
tell the world what God has done:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

3. When believers break the bread,  
when a hungry child is fed,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

4. Still the Spirit gives us light,  
seeing wrong and setting right:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

<sup>10</sup> There's a spirit in the air by Brian Wren, StF398



5. When a stranger's not alone,  
where the homeless find a home,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

6. May the Spirit fill our praise?  
guide our thoughts and change our  
ways. / God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

### Prayers of Intercession

Lord, like so many, we live in difficult times. We are constantly bombarded with images of despair and deprivation; we are overcome by the sounds of so many people crying out for help. Help us in our feelings of frustration and powerlessness to change the world and help those in need.

Lord, we know that you created everything around us, so we pray this morning that you will open our eyes and hearts to see the suffering and the need in our world. We pray that, for those in despair, you will bring hope.

We pray for our communities, for all the places where people are learning, for nurseries and schools, colleges, and universities, and for all who are trying to teach or learn at home. May they all be enriched with wisdom and skills and that their searching minds might find their own way to know you.

We thank you, healing God, for the care that we receive from all who work healthcare in our communities. We pray that all who seek to heal and give comfort may find the strength and desire to continue in their work.

***In a moment of silence, we pray for people or places who we know personally and who this morning needs the love and care of the Holy Spirit.***

We pray for those who are far away and with whom we only have occasional contact. And we especially pray for our families, our friends and those in our churches. Lord, help us also to see and understand the burdens they are all carrying. Give us the strength and wisdom to share with them your love and care.

May we find strength and comfort in Jesus, who has lived as a human, feeling impatience, frustration, misery, and despair of abandonment and isolation, yet knowing that you were with Him. Help us to take time so that we can feel your presence, hear your voice and, learn your will and purpose for each of us. **Amen**

We bring all our prayers together with the Lord's Prayer: ***Our Father...***

### Closing Prayer

Go into the world and be blessed as you meet and share the love of God with all you meet. **May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you and those you love, today and in the week ahead. Amen.**

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*As we come to worship, you may like to prepare with a period of quiet, or light a candle. Let us remember that wherever we are, God is with us.*

*'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'* Psalm 118:26a

**On Palm Sunday we remember Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem, which opened the gates to all the events of Holy Week.**

**Sing, Pray & Praise: Ride on, ride on in majesty<sup>12</sup>**

1. Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark, all the tribes 'Hosanna!' cry;  
your humble beast pursues its road with palms and scattered garments strowed.
2. Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die:  
O Christ, your triumphs now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.
3. Ride on, ride on in majesty! The wingèd squadrons of the sky  
look down with sad and wondering eyes to see the approaching sacrifice.
4. Ride on, ride on in majesty! Your last and fiercest strife is nigh;  
the Father on his sapphire throne, expects his own anointed Son.
5. Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;  
bow your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, your power, and reign.

**Prayer of Adoration**

King of glory, King of peace, with awe and wonder we worship you. We join our praises with those of the crowds on the first Palm Sunday as we proclaim your majesty and might, your grace and compassion. We praise you for your unfailing love, a love so immense that it took you to the cross, a love so powerful that it triumphed over sin and death.

King of glory, King of peace, we worship and adore you. Amen.

**Prayer of Confession<sup>13</sup>**

Forgive us, Lord, when we have been silent and not praised you,

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<sup>11</sup> Worship for 28<sup>th</sup> March prepared by Katherine Suttie

<sup>12</sup> Ride on, ride on in majesty! By Henry Hart Milman, StF265

<sup>13</sup> ROOTS for Churches (adapted)

When we have been distracted and not welcomed you,  
When we have been complacent and not acknowledged your presence in our lives  
and in our world,  
When we have felt defeated and not trusted you.  
Forgive us, Lord, and help us to be more faithful to you.  
We ask this in your name. Amen.

## RECEIVING

### <sup>14</sup>Reading: Mark 11:1-11

It is difficult in these days of social distancing and isolation to think about being in a crowd. However, in your mind's eye, try to imagine that you were there, on the road, on that day when Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Were you caught up in the excitement, waving your palm branch enthusiastically and propelling your way to the front to be nearer to Jesus? Were you hanging back, on the edge of the crowd, watching with curiosity but not wanting to get too involved? Were you one of those ahead of Jesus, throwing your precious cloak on the road? Why were you there?



At a former church we always had a procession to church on Palm Sunday morning, complete with donkey. The donkey was an attraction, particularly for the children who fed it carrots, and one fortunate child was chosen to ride the donkey at the front of the procession. Mark, in his gospel, refers to the animal as a colt, but it is thought to have been a young donkey that no one had ridden before. On that first Palm Sunday it was Jesus who was the attraction, of course, rather than the donkey.

Jesus attracted a crowd as he rode into Jerusalem. There was anticipation in the air. It was Passover time when Psalm 118 was often used as a prayer for the restoration of the kingdom of David and, reminiscent of this, the people shouted 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' The Hebrew word 'hosanna' expressed praise to God as well as a prayer that God would save his people. The crowd hailed Jesus as a king who had come, riding on a donkey, in fulfilment of prophecy- '*See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation and riding on a donkey.*' (Zechariah 9:9)

<sup>14</sup> Image from Google Clip Art

Jesus did not charge into Jerusalem on a war horse to proclaim his kingdom but rode humbly and gently on a donkey. However, the crowd did not understand the meaning of Jesus' kingship and within days their shouts had changed to 'crucify!'

<sup>15</sup>We live today in turbulent and difficult times when we all hope for a better future.



Jesus offers us hope as he invites us to share in his kingdom of love and peace. As Jesus calls you to be a part of the great crowd that follow him today, seeking to proclaim his kingdom in word and action, where are you? Are you on the edge of the crowd observing all that is going on but not wanting to get too involved, or are you drawing nearer to Jesus, caught up with enthusiasm and eager to be committed to serving him?

**RESPONDING**

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### **PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD**

*If you have a Palm cross perhaps you would like to hold it in your hand as you offer your prayers for the world.*

God of love, we pray for peace across the world, and pray especially for the leaders of the nations that they may work for justice, freedom and peace for all.

We pray for this country – for those in government, that they will make decisions with wisdom, for those working in the NHS and all caring professions and essential services that they will continue to find strength to cope in this time of pandemic.

We pray for those who are unwell, those who are bereaved and those who are struggling to cope, uncertain what the future holds for them. We remember especially those members of our family and friends who need our prayers at this time.....

God of love, we pray for your church throughout the world that its message of love and joy will bring hope into the world this Easter time. Amen.

**Lord's Prayer....** *Our Father, who art in Heaven.....*

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<sup>15</sup> Image from Google Images

## Sing, Pray & Praise: make Way, Make Way

- 1 Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendour arrives;  
fling wide the gates and welcome him into your lives.  
*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.
- 3 And those who mourn with heavy hearts, who weep and sigh,  
with laughter, joy and royal crown he'll beautify.
- 4 We call you now to worship him as Lord of all,  
to have no gods before him, their thrones must fall!

## A SENDING OUT PRAYER<sup>16</sup>

May the blessing of God, who resides in our hopes and our dreams,  
grant us peace.

May the blessing of Jesus, who rides to wild acclaim and waving palm branches,  
grant us peace.

May the blessing of the Spirit, who holds us through fears and nightmares, grant  
us peace, and the hopes and dreams of the dawning of an Easter morning. Amen.



## Acknowledgements

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<sup>16</sup> ROOTS for Churches