



Welcome

A very warm welcome to worship on this Palm Sunday.

My name is Richard, one of the retired Ministers in the East Solent and Downs Circuit, our physical presence is to be found on the south coast of the United Kingdom.

Today, I'll be joined by my wife, Dee, who will read the Gospel and lead the prayers.

It's a joy to welcome you to Digital Church on this Palm Sunday. All are welcome, thank you for joining us.

During our time together, there will be music, a Bible reading, prayers and a short reflection.

You may come with burdens or trouble; you may come with questions or comments. Please make use of the comment box or do add any prayer requests you may have. On the screen will be a dedicated email address for you to post your prayer requests. We will read every one and hold them in our prayers.

Call to worship

From the East to the West,
from the North and the South,
all nations and peoples bless the creator of creatures with a new blessing,
for he made the light of the sunrise today over the world.

O congregations of the righteous,
who glorify the Holy Trinity in the morning of light,
praise Christ, the morning of peace,
together with the Father and the Spirit;
for he has made the light of his knowledge shine over us.

By the church in Armenia

Song/Hymn: 'Ride on, ride on in majesty!'

Our first hymn, marks Palm Sunday as a time of action, movement and drama.

Written in 1822 by the now largely forgotten early 19th century writer, poet and priest, Henry Hart Milman, 'Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!' was first published in 1827.

One critic said of this hymn, with some truth it should be said,

'Objective, robust, confident, and stirring, it possesses that peculiar combination of tragedy and victory which draws the singer into the very centre of the drama. It is this which gives the hymn its power and its challenge

We sing, 'Ride on, Ride on in Majesty!' . . .

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.

TITLE: Ride on, ride on in majesty!

BY: Henry Hart Milman (1791–1868)

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Prayers of Adoration

Mother and Father, God,
we humble ourselves as your church universal
in celebrating and bringing to our memory
that you gave yourself up for the whole world.

Join our hearts together that it may be known that we are your children,
that your presence will be among us,
and we may keep unity in the bonds of peace,
which you prepare in the covenant we have with your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

- silence -

Prayer of Confession and our seeking after forgiveness

Mother, Father God,
In your love you seek us out,
holding us in our hurt and despair,
you guide us through light and dark places.
So, we come as your people, offering ourselves to you in penitence and hope.
Remembering times when we have hurt one another by what we have said and done.
Hurt ourselves by what we have said and done.
Damaged our relationship with you, the Word made flesh, through our words and actions.
We fall silent, confessing our faults in hope and expectation of renewed love and forgiveness.

- silence -

Forgive us, for the ways in which we retreat from your love.
May we, each of us, like the prodigals we have become,
return to you, to be held by you once again.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Word made flesh,
Father, Mother, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

- silence -

Song/Hymn 'All glory, laud and honour'

Another hugely popular hymn for Palm Sunday, 'All glory, laud and honour, to thee Redeemer King', is one of our oldest hymns.

Written by Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans in the early 9th century it was translated by that master of the art, John Mason Neale, in the mid 19th century.

A hymn of praise, but also preparing us for the journey to Good Friday, we sing, 'All glory Laud and honour, to thee Redeemer King' . . .

<i>All glory, laud, and honour to thee, Redeemer, King, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!</i>	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. 4 Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring, who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King. All glory, laud, and honour to thee, Redeemer, King, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
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TITLE: All glory, laud, and honour

BY: St Theodulph of Orleans (d. 821) translated by John Mason Neale (1811–1866)

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Gospel Reading John 12 v12-15

The next day a great crowd who had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.
So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying,
"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"
And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written,
"Fear not, daughter of Zion; look, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!"

Reflection - Palm Sunday: Norman Adams – 'Christ's entry into Jerusalem'

In twelve twenty-seven King Henry III granted a Charter to the Bishop of Salisbury to hold a fair on the third Monday in October. Seven hundred years later, growing up in the 1960s, the annual Salisbury fair was beyond thrilling for me, with its rides, spinning colours, screams, shouts from excited adults and children alike as they revelled, intoxicated by the aroma of Hotdogs, Candy Floss, Toffee Apples as well as the noise. For once I was free, to stand and stare, be with friends, be part of an extraordinary event in this ancient market square. Norman Adam's painting, 'Christ's entry into Jerusalem' captures an explosion of colour and joy, not at a fair, but a

festival time nonetheless. Jesus, at the centre, rides a donkey, accompanied by a foal, flags flying while the traditional palms are replaced by sun flowers.

Now walk into the painting, move among the bunting, decoration, children, adults rejoicing. Why are they there? For Jesus? Or simply following the crowd, being part of the excitement, a release from the rigour and boredom of the day?

Stand in Gloucester Cathedral, somewhere I know very well, stand, look up to the stained glass in either the East or West window. What you see is an explosion of light, colour; it crashes into our face, body, then, soars downwards, seeking heart and soul. Christ, manifest in that ancient glass, seeks to shatter our illusions with a richness and luminosity we simply can't escape.

Christ in us, with us, close to us, we don't recognise him, yet his light and life will fill us.

Is this what Palm Sunday was all about? What all the noise and fuss was about?

I sit and ponder Adam's glorious, excitable painting and once again it draws me in, encourages me to see something else, something different, something bigger, something new. For in the midst of the vibrancy, there is, at the centre, Jesus, on a donkey, undisturbed by all that's going on around him, travelling slowly into the events of Holy Week, Upper Room, Gethsemane, Cross.

Without looking at us, he calls each of us to take that same journey into this week of tragedy into joy.

Song/Hymn 'Blest are the pure in heart'

Having sung two hymns of celebration for Palm Sunday we're now going to sing one of the most beautiful, reflective and powerful hymns written during the Victorian period.

'Blest are the pure in heart,' speaks of humility in faith, 'Still to the lowly soul, he does himself impart', wrote John Keble in vv3.

Keble himself was born in Gloucestershire, becoming later in life one of the leading lights of the Oxford Movement, which sought to bring renewal to the Church of England through closer alignment to the Catholic Church.

However, by reading and singing the words of this wonderful hymn, it's clear that above all John Keble's life was, as one writer put it, '...simply the life of a devoted and indefatigable parish priest, varied by intellectual pursuits'.

We sing, 'Blest are the pure in heart' . . .

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| 1 Blest are the pure in heart,
for they shall see our God:
the secret of the Lord is theirs;
their soul is Christ's abode. | 3 Still to the lowly soul
he does himself impart,
and for his dwelling and his throne
chooses the pure in heart. |
| 2 The Lord, who left the heavens
our life and peace to bring,
to dwell on earth in lowliness,
our pattern and our King. | 4 Lord, we your presence seek,
a vision of your face;
give us a pure and lowly heart,
a temple of your grace. |

TITLE: Blest are the pure in heart
BY: vv. 1, 3 John Keble (1792–1866)
vv. 2, 4 William John Hall

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Prayer of Concern

O Lord, open my eyes
that I may see the need of others,
open my ears that I may hear their cries,
open my heart so that they need not be without succour.
Let me not be afraid to defend the weak
because of the anger of the strong,
nor afraid to defend the poor,
because of the anger of the rich.
Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,
and use me to bring them to these places.
Open my eyes and ears that I may, this day,
be able to do some work of peace for you.

Intercession from Zimbabwe

- silence -

The Lord's Prayer

**All 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.
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**

Song/Hymn 'When I survey the wondrous cross'

Born in Southampton, Issac Watts, along with Charles Wesley, strides across the landscape of 18th century hymn writing, offering the Gospel to all who would read and sing the words of genius that flowed from his pen.

Our final hymn is no exception, written and first published in 1707, each verse of 'When I survey the wondrous cross' leads us, draws us, closer to that cross.

But just as we begin to think that the death of Jesus in vv 4 is the end, we discover, that for each of us, there is more to be offered.

'Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all'.

We sing, 'When I survey the wondrous cross' . . .

- 1 When I survey the wondrous cross,
on which the Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.
- 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.
- 3 See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

- 4 His dying crimson, like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the tree;
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me.
- 5 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

TITLE: When I survey the wondrous cross

BY: Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

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Blessing

Holy God, Mother and Father God,
may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,
the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,
the gifts of your Spirit equip us
to serve and worship you now and always.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, **Amen**