

In & around the Benefice....

5th April | Palm Sunday

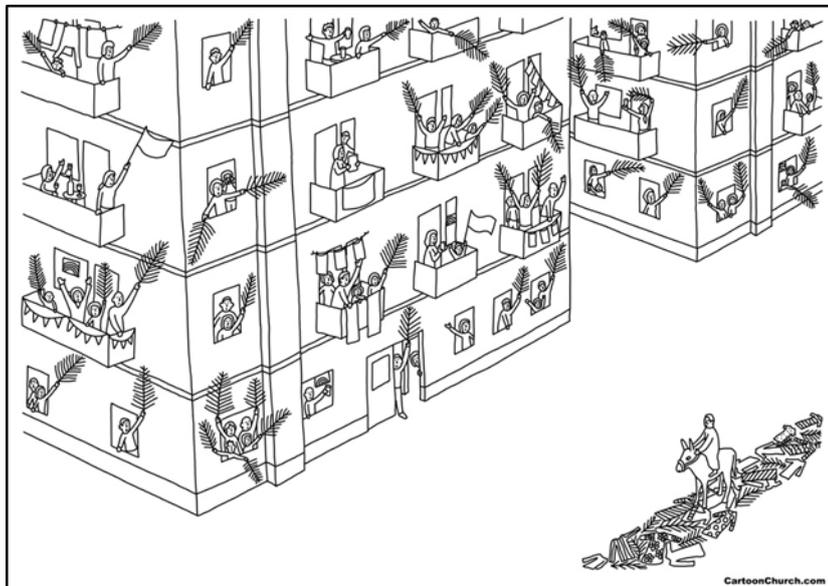
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Please hold in your prayers this week:

- ◇ Those suffering from, affected by or working to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, including the NHS, council workers, teachers in schools offering childcare for those who work in key jobs.
- ◇ NHS staff caring for Covid-19 patients, that they may have strength and resilience for their task, and be kept safe.
- ◇ Persecuted Christians across the world, especially in North Korea
- ◇ Those in residential care and the housebound, among them: Audrey Desborough, Ruth Williams, Gwen York, Ann and Colin Dix
- ◇ Those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, among them: Chris Sayles, Tom Stock, Nicholas Vaughan, Freddie Hogan, Diane Claber, Mandy Bates
- ◇ The recently departed, and all who grieve at this time



Hosanna, hosanna!

This wonderful noisy word has two different yet significant meanings in the Bible.

In the Old Testament, the rabbinic Hebrew translates as 'Save, rescue, saviour.'

In the psalm set for today, the author cries out, 'Come. O Lord and save us we pray'.

However, in the New Testament we encounter the word *Hosanna* in Matthew 21:9. Jesus is on his way into Jerusalem, the last journey he will take as a free man. He is surrounded by a jubilant crowd. They crowd around him. They break branches from the nearest palm trees and wave them, they are very noisy and excited. They are exclaiming,

'Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!'

Here we have two very different uses for the word:

1) Pleading for help, a deep gut-wrenching cry for help, 2) Acclamation of praise, joy and gratitude.

These 2 meanings perfectly represent our two places of spiritual wellbeing today. So, I cannot think of a better single word to represent just how many of us are currently feeling. We are isolated from our friends and extended family, yet many of us have no escape from others. We are no longer able to gather as church, we are constantly reminded of the dreadful consequences of this disease, yet we see God at work all around us.

It is for this that we are utterly thankful. Our gratitude extends to all those in the **NHS**, local volunteers, and others keeping our essential services going. There are a great many people putting the well-being of others ahead of their own. For this we are hugely thankful. So, as we celebrate this Palm Sunday, which ever meaning of the word reflects our current mood, let's cry out with confidence,

Hosanna!! Hosanna!!

The Collect

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory.

Amen

First Reading

Isaiah 50: 4-9a

The servant of the Lord said:

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Philippians 2: 5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 21: 1-11

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord

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

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Post Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant, and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation: give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen

A prayer for these difficult times:

Lord Jesus,
Who in your earthly life
bore our grief and carried our sorrows,
Stand with us, we pray,
In our fear, distress and uncertainty.
Draw near to all who are suffering:
Strengthen those who care for them;
And guide those involved in research.
Lead us all, through the depths of the cross
To the height and joy of the resurrection.

Amen