



Join others in our parish and beyond on Sunday, from 10:30am (or at any other time that suits you) to worship God, in the comfort of your home.

God is good... all the time ....

## Palm Sunday

You have turned our mourning into dancing; you have taken off our sackcloth and clothed us with joy... (Psalm 30: 11)

**On Palm Sunday we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. This was a triumphal entry, but the events of Holy Week offer a stark reminder that this triumphal entry soon turned sour. There was no fairy tale ending; instead the entry into Jerusalem was the prelude to Jesus's betrayal and death.**

So, the transition from Palm Sunday into Holy Week provides (**especially at this time**) a place for us to bring to God our fear, restlessness, pain, failures, disappointed hopes and experience of betrayal. All of that is what Jesus experienced on the cross.

It is these experiences that are transformed by the celebration of resurrection on Easter Sunday. If Easter is to have any reality, then the services of Palm Sunday and Holy Week need to offer opportunities for reflection on difficult aspects of our life.

### A Call to worship and opening prayer

As the landscape takes on a city vista, as Christ takes to the roads and streets on the steed that carried him to Bethlehem, we come to sing our Hosannas.

Let our praise be from the depth of our souls. Let it not turn to shouts of 'crucify'. Let us stay loyal to the one who stays true to us, especially during tough times like this!

Glorious God,  
we gather in the name of your son, Jesus. We come to worship and adore you, not as a mindless crowd following a fad, but as devoted disciples ready to offer all that we have as Jesus offered all that he had so that we might have life.

We come united in our love for you, our only God whose love for us is beyond our wildest imagination. We come to respond to your love in word, action and silence. Move in our midst – even as we gather like this – in the comfort of our homes.

**Move us** into action: move us to shout 'Halleluiah'. **Move us** to proclaim your name. **Move us** to announce your kingship to the waiting and troubled world, showing others on this road that we will always be your people this day, this time, in this world and in the one hereafter, Amen.

@Spill the Beans (with a few adaptations)

### Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29 - A Song of Victory

- <sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His steadfast love endures for ever!
- <sup>2</sup> Let Israel say, 'His steadfast love endures for ever.'
- <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 for ever.

## Brief Reflection

On Palm Sunday (aka Passion Sunday) we read the opening lines and the final section of Psalm 118, which celebrate God's faithfulness: "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures for ever!" (v1)

This Psalm resonates with wonder and thankfulness. It shows us how God has taken what no one else wanted and made something amazing. It encourages us all to join in worship in language which resonates with Jesus's entrance into Jerusalem: "Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord." It also has an underlying sense of transformation. Rabbi Daniel F. Polish points out that Like all Psalms, this Psalm describes things moving in one direction and then abruptly reversing themselves for the better ... **It affirms that no matter what sloughs we may find ourselves in, there can be a reversal of fortune. The world can turn upside down and what is but a distant vision of contentment and joy can become our immediate reality.**

Verse 22 is key to this reading: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." In Christian tradition, the stone that becomes the cornerstone is associated with Jesus Christ from a very early stage, including in words attributed to Christ Himself. Psalm 118 in this way points towards Jesus's trial, death and resurrection.

*Prof Dr Charlotte Methuen, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow*



*A prayer from Rev Dr Lezley Stewart, the Church of Scotland's Recruitment and Support Secretary.*

## Locked Down

There were other doors once locked in fear, in a time of waiting and distress. It was an uncertain, questioning time - longing for what had been known and treasured before.

Into that space, calming and soothing, came these welcome words - "Peace be with you." Peace be with you in every worry, in every sleepless night, in every loss experienced, in every comfort now distant.

Peace be with you in every certainty, in the shared burden of these days, in the unexpected connections, in the gift of another sunset and sunrise.

Peace be with you and yours, the deepest peace, the strongest peace, the peace that passes all understanding. Christ is our peace and is in our midst. His words echo again - "Peace be with you." Amen.

## Hymn: "Ride on, ride on in majesty!" (2 verses)

Ride on ride on in majesty  
In lowly pomp ride on to die  
O Christ Thy triumphs now begin  
O'er captive death and conquered sin

Ride on ride on in majesty  
Hark all the tribes hosanna cry  
Thine humble beast pursues his road  
With palms and scattered garments strowed

Ride on ride on in majesty  
In lowly pomp ride on to die  
Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain  
Then take O God Thy power and reign

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## Closing prayer and Benediction

And so it begins, we walk through this week  
From palms now to passion, it's Jesus we seek  
Each moment we walk through these days now with  
Jesus, Is time to see people, the way Jesus...sees us.

To watch for the ones, who need hope, who need  
kindness. Seeking the light, not the darkness that  
blinds us. As we walk through these days, may the  
love we now know be spread to each person we  
meet on the go.

And may God who now blesses and keeps us in love  
Whose face shines upon us with grace from  
above; who looks on us with such joy and  
such favour. This God, three in one,  
gives us peace - life to savour, Amen

**God is good ...  
all the time...**