

### Welcome and notices:

Holy Habits Daily reflection at 7.30pm via Zoom (Mon-Wed).

Maundy Thursday (1 April) Holy Habits study and Communion

Good Friday (2 April) 10.30am All-age service pre-recorded

Easter Day: 6.30am Sunrise Service in the Ruin/Patio

10.30am Easter Communion in person and pre-recorded

### Call to Worship

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey' (Zechariah 9:9).

### Opening Prayer and confession

Sovereign Lord Jesus, we come before you as the one who is worthy of our praise and worship. You are the source of life and joy. Lord, we pray that we may draw close to you and find in you hope and joy, for your kingdom's sake. Amen.

You are the Sovereign Lord, enthroned on high, holy is your name. Lord, in our sinfulness we cry out to you. Cleanse us from our sins that we may live and work to your praise and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord is full of compassion and forgiveness. He says, "Your sins are forgiven."

### Song: Praise is rising

[https://youtu.be/NSBR-r9B\\_94](https://youtu.be/NSBR-r9B_94)

Praise is rising, eyes are turning to you, we turn to you.

Hope is stirring, hearts are yearning for you, we long for you.

Cause when we see you,  
we find strength to face the day

In your presence

all our fears are washed away, washed away.

Hosanna, hosanna,

you are the God who saves us,

Worthy of all our praises.

Hosanna, hosanna,

come have your way among us,

We welcome you here Lord Jesus.

Hear the sound of hearts returning to you,  
we turn to you.

In your kingdom broken lives are made new,

you make all things new.

Cause when we see you,

we find strength to face the day

In your presence

All our fears are washed away,  
washed away.

Hosanna, hosanna,

you are the God who saves us,

Worthy of all our praises.

Hosanna, hosanna,

come have your way among us,

We welcome you here Lord Jesus.

### Bible Reading: Mark 11:1-11

**11** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>3</sup>If anyone asks you, "Why are you doing this?" say, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

<sup>4</sup>They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, <sup>5</sup>some people standing there asked, 'What are you doing, untying that colt?' <sup>6</sup>They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. <sup>7</sup>When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup>Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, 'Hosanna!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' <sup>10</sup>'Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!' 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

<sup>11</sup>Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

This is the Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

**Song: I see the King of glory**  
<https://youtu.be/Ht5QvAMDMzE>

I see the King of glory  
coming on the clouds with fire.  
The whole earth shakes,  
the whole earth shakes.  
I see His love and mercy  
washing over all our sin.  
The people sing, the people sing:

*Hosanna, Hosanna,  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Hosanna, Hosanna,  
Hosanna in the highest.*

I see a generation rising up to take their place,  
With selfless faith, with selfless faith.  
I see a near revival stirring as we pray and seek.

We're on our knees, we're on our knees.  
*Hosanna...*

Heal my heart and make it clean.  
Open up my eyes to the things unseen.  
Show me how to love like You have loved me,  
Break my heart for what breaks Yours.  
Everything I am for Your kingdom's cause,  
As I walk from earth into eternity.

*Hosanna...*

### Reflection: WHY ARE WE HERE?

(6) To be saved

I haven't met many famous people in my life. When I was a child, I met the host of Record Breakers, Roy Castle, who was performing in a panto I went to with my family. "It's really him" I remember thinking as Roy came out to sign autographs. "It's really him!" is what people would have been saying or thinking as Jesus entered Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday. There were those who welcomed Jesus as the Messiah, Israel's true king. There were, of course, those who were not so sure.

Just before our reading from Mark 11 we have the healing of Bartimaeus, who was blind. "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.' (Mk. 10:52). Can you imagine the sense of anticipation which the crowd would have felt as they approached Jerusalem? I can imagine Bartimaeus was there singing and shouting in praise of Jesus. Those who

witnessed this healing would also have been exuberant and maybe even sensing something great was about to happen.

Now that sense of excitement is added to by the fact that Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd are making their way up from Jericho to Jerusalem. Have you ever been on a journey where you are elated to have arrived? The walk from Jericho to Jerusalem involves a long, hard climb because Jericho is the lowest city on earth, about 800 feet below sea level. Jerusalem, only a dozen or so miles away, is nearly 3000 feet above sea level. The road from Jericho to Jerusalem goes through hot, dry desert all the way until you reach the Mount of Olives. Imagine with such a climb the sense of anticipation and relief when you reach the top and get into the city itself, not to mention the weariness.

Now add to that sense of excitement the feeling that all Jewish pilgrims would have felt every time they went up to Jerusalem for a festival. They were coming to the place where the living God had chosen to place his name and his presence. It was Passover time, that great Jewish festival where they remember and celebrate the freedom God won for them out of the hand of Egypt. It was also time to look forward as well as backward, to the time when God would usher in his kingdom, when the great hope of freedom would finally be revealed. The crowd felt that the long climb up to Jerusalem this time was a climb to be present at God's coming kingdom.

There is a sense that as Christians today we also long to see signs of God's coming kingdom. In one respect we are no different from that Palm Sunday crowd.

Now everything Mark tells us is designed to emphasize this sense of hope in the kingdom of God about to come with Jesus as the world's true king, who rides into the city on a colt commandeered for just this purpose. The whole part about sending two disciples ahead to get the colt is a way of saying Jesus has authority to commandeer it. That the people witnessing this asked "Why are you doing this?" (v5) and 'the people let them go' with the colt (v6) shows Jesus had authority to act. This is the coming king! We don't know whether Jesus had arranged this ahead of time or not. That isn't Mark's reason for noting it in his account. Neither is Mark interested in this act of riding a donkey as a sign of humility. That's Matthew's concern, not Mark's. Mark is concerned with the coming kingdom and Jesus' sovereign authority.

When were you last genuinely excited? Maybe you're excited for the end of lockdown and being able to go out and resume some sort of life. Maybe you're excited to be able to attend worship next Sunday, Easter Day. Maybe you're excited about what God has done in your life or is doing in your life. When was the last time you were really excited about what God is doing in your life?

In 1964 Martha and the Vandellas sang 'Dancing in the street' which for me is very much an anthem of the 60's. I think it captured the excitement and hope of the 60's. Well, I don't know whether anyone was dancing in the streets of Jerusalem as Jesus entered, but there was surely a great sense of excitement in the coming kingdom and Jesus as the coming king. The climax of this passage emphasises this. You

didn't spread your cloak on a dusty road or cut down branches from the trees or vegetation from the fields for anyone, just because you were excited. You would only do this to welcome a king.

Two hundred years before, Judas Maccabaeus defeated Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian king. He entered Jerusalem and cleansed and rebuilt the Temple, and as he entered the city people waved ivy and palm branches as they sang hymns of praise. Judas Maccabaeus started a royal dynasty that lasted a hundred years (cf. 2 Maccabees 10:1-9; compare 1 Maccabees 13:51).

Mark wants to make the point from his gospel account clear. From chapter 8 onwards, the disciples have believed that Jesus is the true and rightful king of the Jews, on his way to Jerusalem to be hailed as the nation's true king. Now as they arrive in the capital, the disciples and the crowd believe this is the moment of Jesus' royal reception.

The shouts of the disciples and the crowd show this is what they understood this moment to mean. "Hosanna!" (v9) is a Hebrew word which mixes exuberant praise to God with the prayer that God will save his people immediately. Their singing of these words is taken from Psalm 118, which is a Psalm that is also about going up to the Temple in Jerusalem.

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" is an Aramaic and Hebrew way of saying 'welcome!' But they also welcome Jesus with a dangerous prayer "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" (v10). That is what this

scene is all about – as the readers of Mark's gospel have known for some time and certainly since the healing of Bartimaeus. Jesus is the true king of the Jews, David's heir who is ushering his kingdom.

With such a sense of anticipation and expectancy, the story then ends on somewhat of a damp squib. Jesus enters the city and the Temple, looks around and then leaves! (v11). Mark leaves us in suspense. What will the true king do to make his presence felt in the city?

Over the coming chapters we see that Jesus radically redefines what it means to be the world's true King. Hosanna will become a reality. 'Save us, Lord' is exactly what Jesus comes to do, but not in the way they expect or want. Jesus will usher in his kingdom by means of a cross not a throne.

This passage should raise questions for us too. Are we ready to follow him lock stock and barrel? Are we ready to obey him even when his orders puzzle us? Are we ready to go out of our way to honour him, to offer exuberant praise? Or do we really want to domesticate Jesus, have him on our own terms, someone to help us through life and do for us the things we want to do anyway? Do we want someone to provide us with only comforting spiritual experiences or someone whom we will serve with our whole lives?

Jesus comes to save. Just as Jesus healed Bartimaeus and others, do you need a touch of hope or healing from the world's true king?

Maybe you need to ask him for a renewed excitement in following him. Maybe you need just to be still and listen to his voice

through the Scriptures and by his Holy Spirit. Let's pray.

### Prayers of intercession

Sovereign Lord, we pray for all those who long for celebration, for those waiting to get married, for those waiting for special celebrations like significant birthdays or anniversaries. And for those who simply want to enjoy the company of others and celebrate life.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

Sovereign Lord, we pray for Christians across the world who miss gathering for worship and especially miss being able to praise you. Lord, we long for the day when we can sing your praises together.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

Sovereign Lord, we pray for the continuing vaccination programme; for those working tirelessly in the NHS to bring freedom for so many isolated by the pandemic. We also pray for those countries that have not yet been able to access the vaccine, especially in poorer countries.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

Sovereign Lord, we pray for those who are victims of modern slavery, who are trafficked and exploited. We pray for organisations and governments across the world and locally here in Norfolk working to eradicate this evil.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

Sovereign Lord, we pray for St. Michael's Workshop and all small businesses at this

time. We pray for the Trustees as they make difficult decisions about staffing cutbacks. And we pray for the Trainees, those adults with learning difficulties and special needs, who society often forgets and devalues.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

Sovereign Lord, finally we thank you for all those who have departed this life in your faith and love, who now behold you face to face. We pray for those whom they have left behind, that in their mourning they may not grieve without hope.

Saving Lord **Hear us.**

### Song: Here is bread

<https://youtu.be/GgysV3EZKas>

Here is bread, here is wine,  
Christ is with us – He is with us.  
Break the bread, drink the wine –  
Christ is with us here.  
Here is grace, here is peace,  
Christ is with us – He is with us.  
Know His grace, find His peace –  
Feast on Jesus here.

*In this bread there is healing,  
in this cup there's life forever.  
In this moment, by the Spirit  
Christ is with us here.*

Here we are, joined in one,  
Christ is with us – He is with us.  
We'll proclaim, till He comes –  
Jesus crucified.

*In this bread...*

### THE PEACE

Peace, true peace is what our Saviour came to bring. The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also, with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

### HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord is here

**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

And now we give you thanks because for our salvation, he was obedient to death on a cross. The tree of shame was made the tree of glory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored. Therefore, the universe resounds with joy and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord, send your Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break may be for us the Body of Christ, and the cup we share may be for us the Blood of Christ. May we and all who share this food offer ourselves to live for you and be welcomed at your eternal feast where all creation worships you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, **we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread, and after he had given thanks he broke and gave it to them saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me'

After supper he took the cup and gave it to them saying, 'This is the cup of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.'

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### Breaking of Bread

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, **we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

### Receiving of Communion

The Body of Christ keep you in eternal life.

The Blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

### Prayer After Communion

As we have worshipped You in majesty,  
**make us ready for Your Passion.**

As we have listened to Your word,  
**make us ready for Your Passion.**

As we walk the road to Calvary,  
**make us ready for Your Passion. Amen.**

**Song: Ride on, ride on in majesty**

<https://youtu.be/CUYCw0quuQ>

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!  
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin  
O'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!  
Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh.  
The Father on His sapphire throne  
Expects His own anointed Son.

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!

**Closing Prayer and blessing**

Christ crucified draw you to himself, to find  
in him a sure ground for faith, a firm  
support for hope, and the assurance of sins  
forgiven.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the  
Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with  
you now and evermore. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**