



Palm Sunday Yr A – 2nd April 2023 - Communion

Where are you headed?

Greeter: *Wendy*

Meditation Hymn: Bless the Lord my soul (TIS 706)

(Please remain seated)

Bless the Lord my soul
and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul
who leads me into life. (repeat)

Welcome:

Greeting:

On this Palm Sunday, as we witness Jesus entering Jerusalem,
May the Lord be with you
And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

There is a rumbling in us that won't let go.
It stirs in us like the wind stirs leaves—inviting us to move, drawing us forth.
When we're quiet, we know that rumble is the Holy Spirit,
Dancing love awake in us.
We're here.

And we're still.
And we're quiet.

In this quiet moment let's be still and aware of the Spirit's presence within and all around us.

Lent Candles:

In Lent we set love upon our hearts and feet and walk with Jesus towards the cross. As a reminder that Jesus did not shy from entering the darkest and most difficult places, we blow out a candle each week.

On this final Sunday in Lent, we blow out all 6 Lent candles [*Blow out candles*]

In our walking we know that we are not alone,
for Jesus has walked this road before us,
and God's Spirit rests upon us as we take this journey forward.

Acknowledgement First Peoples:

We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people and that the Spirit was in the land revealing God to them through law, custom and ceremony.

We honour the wisdom of the Gadigal and Wangal Elders and their continuing culture, and pray that we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation.

Call to Worship:

Waving gently
Watching, whispering
The King comes riding
riding on a donkey

**He is coming
He is coming**

Waving wildly
Singing, shouting
Praise to the King
Hosanna, hosanna

He is here

He is here

Waving wistfully
Watching, wondering
What will happen
to the King in Jerusalem?

He is going

He is going

With them, with heart and voice, we shout:

Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord

Opening Prayer:

Holy God,
Sometimes it's hard to hear you over the hosannas.
Sometimes it's hard to hear you over the noise of city streets.
Sometimes it's hard to hear you over our racing thoughts,
our mental to-do lists,
or our desire to fit in.
Sometimes it is hard to hear you in this noisy world.
So just as you stopped traffic in Jerusalem,
stop traffic here.
Pause the rush.
Open the gates.
Dwell among us,
until your Word is all we can hear.
We are listening.
We are laying down our cloaks.

Amen

Hymn: Ride on ride on in majesty (TIS 348)

1 Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry.
O Savior meek, pursue your 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!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.
Bow your meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, your pow'r and reign.

Prayer of Confession:

In our prayer of confession, we trust that no matter what we do or don't do, this story ends with love. So, in this knowledge, let us pray:

God, forgive us for the times when we do not trust your word and do not follow where you lead. We long to be the ones who can go into the village ahead of you. Forgive us when we play it safe.

God, forgive us for forgetting that you are always coming toward us. You are drawing near, like a king on a donkey. Help us find you in our midst.

Creator God, forgive us for the moments when we choose greed over generosity, or when we choose our self-image over our loyalty to you. Give us the courage to be unabashed in our faith. Give us the strength to throw our coats on the road.

Son of David, give us the conviction to shout your name from the rooftop.
Give us the wisdom to sing, "Hosanna!"
With hope in our hearts we pray to you,
Amen

Words of assurance:

Family of faith, there will be days when we withhold our praise.
There will be days when we dare not follow.
There will be days when we ignore God's call,
when we choose comfort over courage,
and ourselves over others.
But even on those days,
even on our worst days,
we belong to God.

Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:
Nothing can separate us from God's love.
We are loved, forgiven, and sent out to serve.
Hosanna! Amen.

Peace:

As we walk the road of love with Jesus, let
us share God's peace with our companions:
May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Let's share Christ's peace with one another

Moment for the young at heart: Hector

Bible Readings: Paula

Introduction to the Hebrew Bible reading:

The middle part of the book of the prophet Isaiah contains four poems that we now call the songs of the suffering servant. Here the prophet meditates on his sufferings and the price of fidelity to God.

Isaiah 50:4-9a

The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,^[b]
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.

⁵ The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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;
⁸ he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
⁹ It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Matthew 21:1-11

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² 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. ³ If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.”^[a] ⁴ This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵ “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.”

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd^[b] spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ 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!”

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹ The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Hear the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Reflection: Joy

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People: Clabon

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.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever.
Amen**

Communion Hymn: Gather us in (TIS 474)

Here in this place, new light is streaming,
now is the darkness, vanished away,
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery;
we are the old, who yearn for your face,
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water,

here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat, the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven light years away,
but here in this space, the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, now is the day.

Gather us in, and hold us forever;
gather us in, and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

COMMUNION – LENT LITURGY

Dear friends, we are going to Jerusalem with Jesus.

He is our pardon, our healing, and our peace!

We will suffer the trial with him, resisting evil.

With him, we will walk the path to life.

But come first to the table where there is food for the journey.

With hearts full of joy we come,

giving thanks to God, our maker,

and offering our praise!

We are right to praise you, faithful God!

You answer sin with grace;

you guide our wayward steps toward home.

You are mending for the broken,

safety for the poor, belonging for the outcast,

strength for the weak, and pardon for the sinner.

You reveal your kindness in every sorrow,

your mercy even in death.

All your creatures see your works;

they sing your steadfast love.

We too declare your wonder and grace

as with angels and saints

we join in the triumphant hymn:

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

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Now, O God, we remember Jesus.
Silence...

He fasted and prayed; he was tempted and tried.
He relied on you for everything.
He was obedient to you and scorned by the powers of this world.
He confounded the haughty and gave hope to the humble.
He was betrayed and deserted. He died between thieves and was buried in a borrowed grave.
You gave him new life. He lives even now, our healer and friend.
He loved us well, loved us to the end, and loves us still.
Even on the night of betrayal, he ate supper with his friends.

And at that meal our Saviour Christ took bread
and gave you thanks.
He broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me'.

After supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,
'Drink from it, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for all people
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me'.

With thanksgiving we take this bread and this cup and proclaim his death and resurrection. **Receive our sacrifice of praise.**

Holy Spirit, come! Make all things new.
Bless this bread which you have given
and human hands have made.
Let it become for us the bread of life.

Bless also this cup, fruit of the vine
and work of human hands.

Let it become for us the cup of salvation.

Bless us also who eat and drink,
that in this sharing we may know the living Christ
who is with us now, and to the end of the age.

Nourish us by these gifts to be willing servants of your world until the kingdom
comes, and every creature beholds it.

We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

Christ is the bread of life,
Who satisfies the hungry heart.

Christ is the cup of hope,
Who revives the thirsty.

The bread that we break is a sharing in the body of Christ
The cup that we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Jesus welcomes everyone to his table,
and so, we offer everyone,
the bread and wine, which are Christ's body and blood.

Distribution

Let us receive what we are;
let us become what we receive.
The body of Christ.

Thank you, merciful God,
for gladness in this bread and cup,
for love that cannot die,
for peace the world cannot give,
for joy in the company of friends,
for the splendours of creation,
and for the mission of justice
you have made our own.
Give us the gifts of this holy communion:
oneness of heart, love for neighbours,

forgiveness of enemies,
the will to serve you every day,
and life that never ends.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Community News:

Offering Prayer:

Creator God,
Take our Lenten offerings
and make them radical;
Grow their actions,
enable their impact.
As we prepare for tomorrow,
may your will be done.
On earth as it is in heaven.
Amen.

Song: Hosanna

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Lord we lift up Your name,
With our hearts full of praise,
Be exalted oh Lord my God,
Hosanna in the highest.

Glory, glory, glory to the King of Kings,
Glory, glory, glory to the King of Kings.
Lord we lift up Your name,
With our hearts full of praise,
Be exalted oh Lord my God,
Glory to the King of Kings.

Benediction & Blessing:

As you leave this place,
may God bless you with seeking.
Seek out the hungry.

Seek the weary.
Seek the good in every person you pass.
Seek out the hopeful.
Seek the faithful.
Seek God in each of us.
As you seek and as you wonder,
may you find what you are looking for.
In the name of our loving God,
who is always seeking us,
go now in peace.

And the blessing of God Almighty;
Creator, Christ and Spirit
Be upon you and remain with you always.

3-fold-Amen

Pastoral Prayers: Hector

Acknowledgements:

Image: Power Play by Lisle Gwynn Garrity Inspired by Matthew 21:1-11 Silk painting with digital drawing and collage

Acknowledgement of Country: pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au - Using words from the Preamble to the Uniting Church Constitution

Other liturgy: Sanctified Art