

Sunday 2 April 2023

Palm Sunday



Sermon © Lucie Reilly.

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The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Welcome Liturgy of the palms

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Lord be with you,

All and also with you.

HYMN 1 All glory laud and honour [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

The people hold up palms or branches while this prayer is said by the president

God our Saviour,

whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die;

let these palms be for us signs of his victory

and grant that we who bear them in his name

may ever hail him as our King,

and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life;

who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Palm Gospel

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it".' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their

cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

‘Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!’

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, order your disciples to stop.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.’

Luke 19:28-40

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Procession

So let us go forth, praising Jesus our Messiah.

HYMN 2 Hail thee festival day [\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion, and confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Gloria

The Gloria is usually omitted during Lent.

The Collect for Palm Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

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 wakens—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 backward. 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? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

Isaiah 50:4–9

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Philippians

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. 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.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. *Philippians 2:1-13*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 3 Make way! Make way!

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

When Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a

scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son".' The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.' Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!' *Matthew 27:11-54*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

In today's Gospel Jesus seems like he's finally made it. Palm Sunday is the only day we hear about when 'All Glory, Praise, and Honour' is given to him, the crowds come to him—not looking for free food or healing or to kill him, but to shower him as the 'king who comes in the name of the Lord'. Jesus looks every bit the King he came to be.

The warning for us today... is not to mistake the King we want for the King we need. Jesus is acting like a king should act. Kings send their servants to do their bidding ... Jesus sends two of his disciples to retrieve a colt. Kings don't ask for permission to use their subject's property, they demand it—and Jesus tells his disciples to say, 'the Lord needs it'. A donkey doesn't appear to be a very kingly mode of transportation—the state Rolls Royce or at least a horse-drawn carriage might seem more appropriate—however, this is the only time in the Gospels where we hear that Jesus is riding at all, he usually got where he was going the old-fashioned way, his own two feet. This type of arrival combined with Zechariah's prophecy that Jerusalem's true King would come into the city riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9) show us that Jesus is making a statement with his transport. He was openly claiming to be the King of Jerusalem, the rightful successor of David, who would bring peace to Israel.

And, the people went crazy. They loved it. This is what they'd been waiting for. Just like we celebrate and throw homecoming parades for winning football teams; the people of Jerusalem gave Jesus a welcome fit for a king. They threw their coats down, and he rode into Jerusalem on a carpet. John says that they took palm branches and went out to meet him (John 12:13). The palm branch was like the national flag of the people of Israel. At the forthcoming coronation people will wave their union flags before King Charles, the people of Israel were waving their palms before their king.

Never had Jesus received a welcome like this. Never, had they publicly and boldly broadcast all that Jesus had done. And, Jesus accepts their praise. He doesn't tell them to keep his miracles to themselves, as he had before. He didn't turn around and go into hiding like he did when they tried to make him king after feeding the 5,000. He doesn't tell them 'My kingdom is not of this world' as he would tell Pilate less than a week later. No, Jesus tells the Pharisees that this praise is so fitting and necessary that if the crowds didn't do it the stones themselves will start shouting.

Today it looks like the baby born in a stable in Bethlehem and raised in the backwoods of Nazareth has finally lived up to the hype, right? Finally, he has the glory, the crowds, the praise; finally, Jesus isn't worshipped by just a few lowly peasants

in rural Galilee but by a huge crowd in the capital. Finally, it seems Jesus has come to do something more important than just preach and teach, he's come to take power and control. Finally, Jesus is acting like the king the people want.

This is a very powerful, life-changing Jesus who rescues people from their slavery to drugs and alcohol. The Jesus who came down from heaven to deliver people from the clutches of sickness and depression. And doesn't this Jesus sound great? Who wouldn't want this kind of Jesus? This Jesus is useful, practical, and always relevant. Even the sceptical world can get behind this Jesus.

Just a few verses before today's Gospel Luke says 'the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once ... because he was near Jerusalem. (Luke 19:11) They were expecting Jesus to be the king they wanted; a king who would throw the Romans out of the Holy Land and restore prosperity and power to Israel. That's the version of Jesus the world can—and does—gladly accept.

It's easy to make mistakes about Jesus on Palm Sunday because the appearances can be deceiving. He appears to march in as David's legitimate heir who has come to be the earthly King the people want. But if you look past the palm branches and adoring crowds, you can see the real Jesus. Jesus isn't riding into Jerusalem on a war horse to establish his kingdom on earth, he's riding on a colt as the sacrifice for the sins of the world. He comes not to slaughter his enemies but to be slaughtered. Even as the crowds shout his praises and prepare to install him as King—he knows what really lies ahead: that he is going to be beaten, tortured, and crucified. He knows that the palm branches brushing his face today will be replaced by the Roman's whip. He knows that each step on that carpeted path is one step closer to Calvary where his hands and feet will be nailed to a cross.

On Palm Sunday, it's easy to be mistaken. It looks like Jesus comes to be the king the world wants. It looks like Jesus belongs on the throne so much that even the stones would shout it. But they do not cry out today. No, when do the stones cry out? Good Friday! Only after Jesus is lifted on the throne of the cross; only after the notice is nailed above his head identifying him as 'The King of the Jews' (Luke 23:38); only after King Jesus gave up his spirit do the stones shake and quake and split and give up the death beneath them (Matthew 27:50–51).

The Palm Sunday crowds don't proclaim the king we need, but the Good Friday stones do. We don't need a King who hangs out in a palace, we need a King who hangs on a cross. We need Jesus who meets us where we are, who knows what it is to grieve and weep, be weak and helpless, who is despised and hated by the same world we are. When we are suffering, we find comfort in a King who suffers too. When we are burdened by sin and haunted by demons, we have a King who knows

the weight of sin. The world might not want a Jesus who comes to Jerusalem on a donkey to die, but I do.

May the Lord help us this Holy Week to never mistake the King we want for the King we need. Amen.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

Let us pray to the Father through his Son
who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption.
Fill with your Spirit Christ's broken body, the Church ...
Give to Christian people everywhere a deep longing
to take up the cross and to understand its mysterious glory.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Bless those who lead the Church's worship at this solemn time ...
In the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments
draw your people close to you.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Strengthen those who are preparing for baptism,
together with their teachers, sponsors and families ...
Teach them what it means to die and rise with Christ
and prepare them to receive the breath of his Spirit.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Look in your mercy upon the world you loved so much
that you sent your Son to suffer and to die ...

Strengthen those who work to share
the reconciliation won at such a cost upon the cross.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Bring healing by the wounds of Christ
to all who are weighed down by pain and injustice ...
Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying,
to find strength in the companionship of Jesus,
and in his passion to know their salvation.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Welcome into paradise all who have left this world in your friendship ...

According to your promises,
bring them with all your saints
to share in all the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

**All Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

Merciful Father,

All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The peace

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 4 [Amazing love \(what love is this\)](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 5 [Alleluia! Alleluia!](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For as the time of his passion and resurrection draws near
the whole world is called to acknowledge his hidden majesty.

The power of the life-giving cross
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world
and the triumph of Christ crucified.

He is the victim who dies no more,
the Lamb once slain, who lives for ever,
our advocate in heaven to plead our cause,
exalting us there to join with angels and archangels,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.

Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you;

this is my blood of the new covenant,

which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,

in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,

we proclaim his death and resurrection

until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,

help us to work together for that day

when your kingdom comes

and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,

gather us in your loving arms

and bring us with all the saints

to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,

for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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 the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after 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.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.