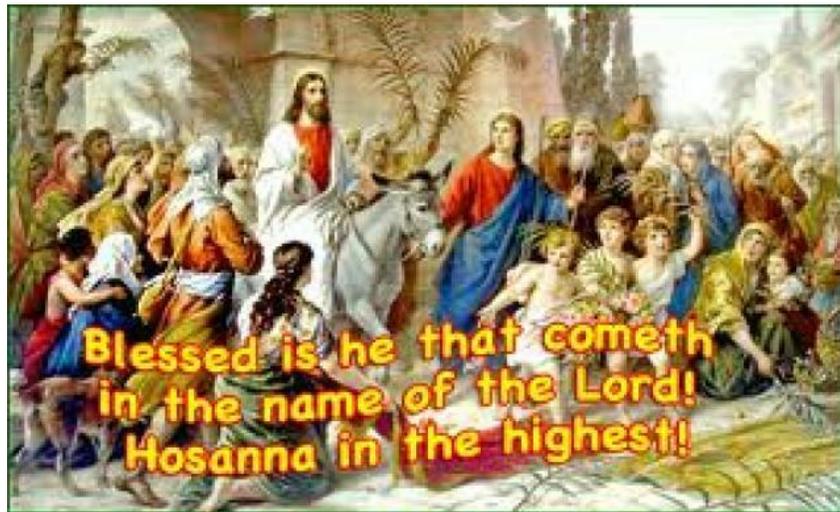


Coop's Scoops # 180, Palm Sunday Sermon, 2021



Dear friends in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing for the celebration of our Lord's paschal mystery. On this day our Lord Jesus Christ entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph. The people welcomed him with palms and shouts of praise, but the path before him led to self-giving, suffering, and death. Today we greet Him as our King, although we know his crown is thorns and his throne a cross. We follow him this week from the glory of the palms to the glory of the resurrection by way of the dark road of suffering and death. United with Him in his suffering on the cross, may we share His resurrection and new life. Amen.





Many of you will have received a palm cross made for you by volunteers from St. Thomas. These palms have been blessed, and will serve as a visible reminder of the

Liturgy of the Palms and the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you did not receive a cross, and would like one, please call the office and we will try to look after that.

Prayer: It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The Hebrews acclaimed Jesus as Messiah and King, with palm branches in their hands, crying, "Hosanna in the Highest". May we also, carrying these emblems go forth to meet Christ and follow Him in the way that leads to eternal life: who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect: Almighty God, whose Son was crucified yet entered into glory, may we, walking in the way of the cross, find it is for us the way of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson: Zechariah 9:9-12 *New Revised Standard Version*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem;
and the battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.
As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore
to you double.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

1 Give thanks to the Lord who is good; the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

2 **Let Israel now proclaim, "The mercy of the Lord endures for ever."**

19 Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them;

I will offer thanks to the Lord.

20 **"This is the gate of the Lord; those who are righteous may enter."**

21 I will give thanks to the Lord who answered me and has become my salvation.

22 **The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.**

23 This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 **On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

25 Hosannah, Lord, hosannah! Lord, send us now success.

26 **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord;
we bless you from the house of the Lord.**

27 God is the Lord and has shined upon us; form a procession with branches
up to the horns of the altar.

28 **"You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you."**

29 Give thanks to the Lord who is good; the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: Mark 11: 1-10

11 When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,



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

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Sermon:

In 2017, I was blessed to go to Disney World with Kelly, Bill and Gregory and Claire. A whole week of sunshine, happiness, amazement, joy and just plain fun. Three days at Siesta Key swimming in the ocean and four days at Disney...it was great being ten again! Wonderful to know that at the age of 70 I could still be shocked, surprised, scared, elated, amused, and just tickled pink by humour and technology and the magic of memory and dreams. For me, the most exciting event in the Magic Kingdom every day is the 3pm Grand Parade. It begins, of all things, with dancers carrying **palm fronds!** Thousands of people see the first float, Beauty and the Beast, and shout “Hooray Hooray, look it’s Belle, and the Beast!” Dancers scurry by. The next float is Peter Pan and Wendy Darling in a great boat high above a rainbow with Captain Hook dangling below, and the people all cheer and holler out “**Never never land! Hooray.**” And on it goes, with the excitement just building and building. Until finally Micky and Minnie arrive in their big hot air balloon and the place just erupts. Little children who’ve never even seen a Mickey Mouse cartoon just go crazy, dancing and clapping and cheering. Moms have tears streaming down their faces and many of the men are fist pumping! And then, it’s over. The cheering stops. People start walking to their next destination. Kids jump and skip or wail a bit. And life goes on in the Magic Kingdom. When the parade was over on our last day, Claire skipped away, looked back, and said “Do they have Messy Church at Disney?” Why? Because to her, Messy Church is the **most exciting** thing in her month, and she wanted

everyone at Disney to have that excitement too. Now let's bring all that into the parade we know as Palm Sunday.

People must have known that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem that day so long ago. It was Passover week. Where else would He be going? Were there people sitting on stones or curbs peering down the road? **“Here He comes, Here He comes! Hooray! He's here....wave the palm fronds, pick some more to make a soft path for the donkey...let's take off our coats and put them down to smooth the way for the disciples feet...keep the dust down so we can see better!” Hooray hooray for Jesus!”** Who was there? Well, for sure, the Gospels tell us that children and disciples were there. Wherever children are, you can be sure that moms and dads and grannies and gramps aren't far behind. We can with integrity believe that those whom Jesus had blessed would be there to welcome Him. Perhaps the once lame man, now running along beside the parade shouting “He healed me...made me walk again”. Or the man born blind now seeing and shouting “Once I was blind, but now I can see”. Or Lazarus, fresh from the grave, with his sisters jumping and clapping and singing Hosanna. How wonderful for Matthew, Mark, John, Peter, Bartholomew, James and James, Philip, Andrew, Thomas, and Judas. Finally, their Master is receiving honour and acclaim...and they themselves are also in the limelight! A wonderful day to be sure. And then the parade is over. And, like the pilot on our plane leaving Florida announced, it was time for a “flight back to reality”.

Jesus went immediately to cleanse the Temple. From joyfully welcoming the honour and praises of the parade, to angrily overturning tables and routing those extorting money. Judas went from the parade to offer to betray Jesus for

30 pieces of silver. Those who shouted “hosanna” were amongst those who shouted “crucify Him, crucify Him”. Within a short week, Jesus would be giving His life for our salvation on the Cross, and Judas would be dead of grief and sorrow and self-destruction. The disciples would be in hiding...not wanting attention, let alone praise or notice. **Everything was different** in the twinkle of an eye. Or as Tinkerbell would say “with a sprinkle of pixie dust”. (just re-living that Disney motif all the way today).

And yet, **nothing really changed** at all. Jesus had come to this earth to fulfill the Father’s will to save us all from our sins. Jesus had taught His disciples about His coming suffering and death. It was His mission, and it was His heart. That NEVER changed. The disciples loved Jesus...even Judas loved Jesus...they did not understand that the Kingdom of God would arrive through self-sacrificing love not by the power of might and arms and war. Even in hiding, they still loved Jesus, they grieved for Him and were “undone” by His death. That never changed! And the people? They had been looking for a Saviour, a prophet perhaps who would bring them close to God, and bring healing to their hearts and minds and bodies. Listen to two of them leaving the city to go to Emmaus: “We had hoped that He would be the One to deliver Israel”. The longings of the hearts remained constant, the circumstances had changed.

Easter morning, the rest of the story becomes the **new reality**. God is love. Christ is vindicated. Love wins. Evil is conquered. The last enemy of death is destroyed. The Church is born....and a new parade begins. The parade of all people who sing and shout “hosanna to the Son of David, hosanna to the King of Kings” throughout all generations. No matter what. Hosanna In the catacombs,

in the Roman persecutions, though the dark ages, in the reformation. On the lips of Martin Luther and Martin Luther King Jr. In the words and deeds of Nelson Mandela and Mother Teresa. And today in our own hearts as we remember the words “Ride on Ride on in Majesty. Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna to the King of Kings; glory in the highest heaven for Jesus our Messiah reigns”.

We can actually participate in the parade of Palm Sunday, every Sunday, every day of our lives when we lift up Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the healer, redeemer and Saviour of us all. There really is nothing more exciting than that! Ever. No reality, neither life nor death nor principalities nor powers not height nor depth nor anything in all creation can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So let’s get excited! Wave the palms. Live the mission. Alleluia. Amen.

Prayer:

On this Palm Sunday, things are different.

No children waving palm branches in processions,
no collective singing of hosannas, loud hosannas,
no exultant crowds, here or anywhere.

The streets are quiet. What resonates is the image of you, Jesus,
weeping over Jerusalem, crying for a people surrounded by enemies,
who do not know the things that make for peace.

God, hear our prayer from the lonesome valleys
of this world wide pandemic.

Open our hearts to the possibility that today is the day of our visitation;
you walk triumphantly through closed doors,
meeting us when others cannot come.

Accept our solitary hosannas, and gather us together in prayer:

“Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.” (author unknown)



Blessing:

May the Holy Spirit gladden your heart, strengthen your voice, and move you to praise the King of Kings! May the blessing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you this Holy day, and always! Amen.

-Judie+