

Message

Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!... Wave the branches – shout for joy! We are part of a passionate crowd – swept up in the excitement and the enthusiasm of the moment.

The energy and expectation are palpable – the air is charged, and we are part of it all – part of the parade. Like all parades, this one takes some preparation. Jesus has two disciples go ahead as the advance party to get things organized – to prepare – yet when Jesus arrives – riding into Jerusalem – everything is in turmoil.

His arrival is the fulfillment of scripture, but not quite in the way people expect – Jesus is not exactly what the crowd is prepared for. They are – we are – caught up in the thrill of the moment – we shout Hosanna! – And follow the crowd – unprepared for what will happen next.

In fact, the preparation for this parade has been going on much longer than even the disciples realize. This is what Jesus ministry has been building toward. Jesus tells his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem. He announces that the last shall be first, and the first last – he reminds those who follow him that Jerusalem is the destination – the place where he will be condemned, tortured, crucified and raised. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus opens the eyes of a blind man – yet those who follow, who claim to believe, walk with closed eyes.

They are – we are – seized by the momentum of the crowd – proudly announcing Jesus as prophet – honouring Jesus as king – crying *Hosanna!* – unable or unwilling to see the cross that will confront us in the week ahead.