

Joys and Concerns / Celebrations

God's blessing on you. God's blessing on you.

God's blessing, dear friends. God's blessing on you.

Scripture **Matthew 21: 1-11** (NT 23)

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately."

This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "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."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them.

A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?"

The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

> ***Hosanna, loud hosanna***

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Lenten Liturgy

God calls the servant-Christ to sustain the weary:

...the ones in exile, the ones in despair, the ones who are afraid.

Jesus enters the city in humility

...lauded by the crowds: "*Hosanna! Save us!*"

questioned by the powers that be, betrayed and denied by his friends.

We watch with unease and bewilderment

**...complicit with the fickle crowd, misunderstanding true power,
frightened and looking to our own interests.**

Lord, have mercy

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy. Let us pray...

Creator God, we give thanks to you for you are good, your steadfast love endures forever. We seek courage for the living of these days. Let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, so that we may give ourselves in love and humility to further your purpose of life for the world. So may all people come to know the height and depth of your redeeming love; through Jesus Christ our crucified and risen Lord. Amen

> ***We lay our broken world in sorrow at your feet*** (verses 1, 5, 6) **202**

DEAR JESUS...¹ (sent as a separate file)

† Prayers

God of children's voices – of donkey's hooves on cobbles – of waving palm branches – as we give you a royal welcome this day hear our prayer for Jerusalem and all places that suffer conflict. Bring to every street peace and stability, that city dweller and tourist, market-stall trader and shopper may walk, live and work in security.

As this week unfolds and we remember how Jesus was left friendless hear our prayer for the lonely – the widow and widower, the patient vulnerable in hospital, the youth with a learning disability, the homeless person on the street.

May your Holy Spirit strengthen and support us so that we may be given courage and conviction when justice is challenged, and peace is threatened.

Lord Jesus, like us, you did not know the future. You came to Jerusalem ready for pain and death – not knowing how or when. Be with us when we do not know what is in store for us.

¹ *Dear Jesus, we did enjoy the parade, but...*, The Next Voice You Hear, David Steele, Geneva Press 1999, pages 73-74.

We praise you O God and ask you for courage.

You came to the city of danger with no great army to fight for you, with no power to get you out of trouble – only patient, forgiving love.

You did not make people listen by physical force – by words spoken in anger – by making them afraid. You used no other way but love, even when it meant dying on a cross.

Thank you for the good news of this day: the king is a servant, and the judge is a redeemer.

We thank you for all those in times past who glimpsed this vision and built their lives upon it – who struggled for peace and refused to give up. Join our voices to theirs as 'Hosannas' stretch from heaven to earth and earth to heaven in gratitude and praise for all that you have done and are doing now.

We give you thanks and yearn for your help O Lord. Have mercy on us. **Amen**

> ***Tell me the stories of Jesus*** (verses 1 and 5)

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Scripture

Matthew 26: 14-29 (NT 29)

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What will you give me if I betray him to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."

And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?"

He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?"

He replied, "You have said so."

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

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

Message (sent as a separate file)

Blessing

Beyond this day of waving palms and joyful hosannas may we reach out to others with welcoming spirits – opening ourselves to the living presence of Christ. And may the grace of Jesus, the love of God and the community of the Spirit guide us all as we journey to Jerusalem...

> *Hosanna*

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[A Good Friday service will be sent on Thursday, April 9)