

Sunday 24 March 2024 Palm Sunday 10am Cooma

Hymn - All glory praise and honour

Chorus

All glory praise and honour to you Redeemer King
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring

You are the King of Israel and David's royal Son
now in the Lord's name coming the King and Blessed One

The company of angels are praising you on high
And we and all creation exultant make reply

The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went
Our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present

To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise
To you now high exalted our melody we raise

Their praises you accepted: Accept the prayers we bring
Who in all good take pleasure our good and gracious King

The Grace

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you.
And also with you.

'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Lord have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.

Sentence of the Day

Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Mark 11:9

Prayer of Preparation

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.

Prayer of the Day

Holy and immortal God, as we enter into this holy week turn our hearts to Jerusalem, so that, united with Christ and all the faithful, we may enter the city not made with hands, your promised realm of justice and peace, eternal from age to age. **Amen.**

Zechariah 9:9–13

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰ I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹ As for you,

because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. ¹² Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. **13** I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalms 113

¹ Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, you his servants; praise the name of the LORD.

² **Let the name of the LORD be praised, both now and forevermore.**

³ From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the LORD is to be praised.

⁴ **The LORD is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens.**

⁵ Who is like the LORD our God, the One who sits enthroned on high,

⁶ **who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth?**

⁷ He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap;

⁸ **he seats them with princes, with the princes of his people.**

⁹ **He settles the childless woman in her home. as a happy mother of children. Praise the LORD.**

Revelation 7:9–12

⁹ After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." ¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Mark 8:1-26

¹¹ As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'" ⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.

⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" ¹⁰ "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!" ¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - Jesus's Triumphant Entry

Question Time

The Apostles Creed

We believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the world and the church

Response: Christ Jesus, intercede for us, and in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

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 from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Scripture Sentence

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one, so that your Father who is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. Mark 11:25

Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to 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 we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.

Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn - Trotting

Trotting trotting through Jerusalem

Jesus sitting on a donkey's back

Children waving branches singing 'Happy is He that comes in the name of the Lord'

Many people in Jerusalem

Thought He should have come on a mighty horse

Leading all the Jews to battle - 'Happy is He that comes in the name of the Lord '

Many people in Jerusalem

Were amazed to see such a quiet man

Trotting trotting on a donkey - 'Happy is He that comes in the name of the Lord '

Trotting trotting through Jerusalem

Jesus sitting on a donkey's back

Let us join the children singing 'Happy is He that comes in the name of the Lord '

Thanksgiving for Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us. By his death on the cross, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin, and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given 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, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

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

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son and bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

The Holy Communion

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread: so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

The gifts of God for the people of God

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord

Grape juice is available.

Please come to the Communion Rail if you are able, observing appropriate social distancing.

After Communion

Gracious God, we thank you that in this sacrament you assure us of your goodness and love. Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and help us to grow in love and obedience that we may serve you in the world and finally be brought to that table where all your saints feast with you for ever.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen

Notices

Hymn - Ride on ride on in majesty

Ride on ride on in majesty

Hark all the tribes Hosanna cry

O Saviour meek pursue Thy road

With palms and scattered garments strow'd

Ride on ride on in majesty

In lowly pomp ride on to die

O Christ Thy triumphs now begin

O'er captive death and conquer'd sin

Ride on ride on in majesty

The Angel armies of the sky

Look down with sad and wondering eyes

To see the approaching sacrifice

Ride on ride on in majesty

The last and fiercest strife is nigh

The father on His sapphire throne

Awaits His own anointed Son

Ride on ride on in majesty

In lowly pomp ride on to die

Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain

Then take O God Thy power and reign.

Blessing

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Sermon - Jesus's Triumphant Entry- Mark 11:1-11

Some time ago I spoke about Australia's longest serving prime minister when I preached. Today I want to look at the other end of the spectrum, Australia's shortest serving prime ministers. Frank Forde was prime minister for 7 or 8 days after John Curtin died in 1945. During that time he was pretty well fully employed with Curtin's funeral, but Ben Chifley was planning a leadership bid that successfully deposed Forde. His 8 days make Tony Abbott's 23 months look like a lifetime, but they both show the roller coaster of Australian prime ministerial popularity, racing ahead in the polls one day, and out the door the next.

Today in our reading we see Jesus at the zenith of his popularity. Up until now, people have been crowding to Jesus out of curiosity or to be healed, but today he enters Jerusalem to the adulation of the people. He's going there to celebrate the Passover with his disciples. He also knows that he will be killed there in just under a week, although the crowds would never have guessed this.

We'll get to the crowd's response shortly, but first I want to look at the strange story of the donkey.

You heard this part of the reading this morning: Jesus tells two of the disciples to go into the city, find a donkey no one has ever ridden, bring it back to him, and if anyone questions them, just say "The lord needs it."

The disciples find the unriden donkey where and when Jesus said, and the owners let them take it when they told them the lord needed it. In other words, it all happened just as Jesus said. I reckon one of 2 things happened: either Jesus used his divine supernatural power and authority to guide the donkey's owners to put the right donkey in the right place at the right time and to let the disciples take it, or perhaps he had other disciples arrange it all with the owners of the donkey, but only told two other disciples to collect it when the time was right.

Either option, the miraculous or the well coordinated could be true, but the important thing is that Jesus ensured that the right, donkey was in the right place at the right time so that he could ride it into Jerusalem to fulfil the prophecy Zechariah made in our old testament reading: *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Like all other prophecies, fulfilling this one also said a lot more about Jesus. Not only is he the peaceful king proclaiming peace to the nations, *his rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth., and because of the blood of his covenant he will free prisoners from the waterless pit.*

I won't tease it out this morning, but can I recommend you read through Zechariah 9, and see how much it tells us about the Jesus we worship - the king of peace, ruling to the ends of the earth, freeing prisoners from the waterless pit, which is the place of the dead.

Anyway, Jesus got the donkey and rides it into Jerusalem and the crowds go wild. *Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. 9 Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" 10 "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"*

The crowds praised Jesus with the honour worthy of a conquering king, spreading clothes and branches so the king's colt wouldn't get dirty from the dust of the road. They cried out Hosanna, literally "save, we pray", but really the general word of praise of God.

And so, Jesus gets to Jerusalem with the honour and praise of the crowds. And then what does Jesus the king do? Does he stride into Herod's palace, take control and install himself as king? Does he stride over to the Roman governor's residence and force the Roman's out? Does he perhaps go to the temple and take rightful charge as God's true representative?

Well he does go to the temple, but he only seems to do a bit of sight seeing and then walks right back out of Jerusalem with his disciples back to Bethany. How could this be the way for the king of the universe to behave?

We know that in a few short days he will return to Jerusalem and die the death that he has told his disciples about at least three times already, the death that is necessary that he might rise again on the third day. But he doesn't even provoke this, because the time is not yet right. Jesus' death and resurrection had to happen over the Passover, so that he himself would be the sacrificial lamb whose blood would save his people. We will learn more about the salvation Jesus brings, and how he brings it in a week's time as we come together on Good Friday and at Easter, but this morning I want to focus on the crowd's response to Jesus.

At this time, the crowds are on Jesus' side. They are worshipping Jesus, the one who makes the right things happen at the right time and fulfils all prophecy. They see him as the Messiah, the promised king who would save them from all their enemies, even death itself. But in the period leading up to today, the crowd had only been curious. They only wanted to see what all the fuss was about, who was being healed, the miracles that were being done, the people raised from the dead.

In the next few days they will be baying for Jesus's blood. Crucify, crucify, they will cry. He's guilty, execute him, they will demand. They will mock him, they will physically abuse him and demand his death.

Even Tony Abbott, with the shortest term of recent prime ministers, may have moved from almost messianic popularity to become an object of derision and ridicule in just 23 months, but Jesus moved from being worshipped as the Lord of life to being executed in less than a week.

This was God's plan, but at least in part it happened because of the responses of the people, and in a way, it is still happening because of the responses of people. People move from curiosity to praise to rejecting him and sometimes back again in the same time it is taking you to hear this sermon.

As a young man who had grown up in a Christian family, I recall being openly committed to Christ one day, and then denying the very existence of God with atheistic pseudo scientific nonsense the next. It seemed smarter to me to deny the sanctity of life than to acknowledge the author of life, although just as quickly God showed me my error and brought me back to him.

But how about you. How are you responding to Jesus the king?

Are you just curious? Are you accepting Jesus's claims, or are you rejecting them?

If you are in one of those positions, how firmly are you in that position?

Do you change your position at whim, moving from worshipping Jesus to rejecting him as the weather changes like the crowds, or are you welded on to Jesus?

Is Jesus merely like a politician to you, popular one moment, losing his seat the next?

Jesus performed his miracles that you might worship him as the god of life. He raised the dead that you might rise with him, and he died in your place that you might live eternal life with him.

Are you like the crowds, with Jesus rising and falling in popularity, or are you living your life eternally for him?