

Available to listen to on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/0BqnPvXeYFY>

6th Sunday of Lent – Palm Sunday - Sunday 5th April 2020

The Royal Welcome – Matthew 21v1-11

1-3 When they neared Jerusalem, having arrived at Bethphage on Mount Olives, Jesus sent two disciples with these instructions: “Go over to the village across from you. You’ll find a donkey tethered there, her colt with her. Untie her and bring them to me. If anyone asks what you’re doing, say, ‘The Master needs them!’ He will send them with you.”

4-5 This is the full story of what was sketched earlier by the prophet:

Tell Zion’s daughter,

“Look, your king’s on his way,
poised and ready, mounted

On a donkey, on a colt,
foal of a pack animal.”

6-9 The disciples went and did exactly what Jesus told them to do. They led the donkey and colt out, laid some of their clothes on them, and Jesus mounted. Nearly all the people in the crowd threw their garments down on the road, giving him a royal welcome. Others cut branches from the trees and threw them down as a welcome mat. Crowds went ahead and crowds followed, all of them calling out, “Hosanna to David’s son!” “Blessed is he who comes in God’s name!” “Hosanna in highest heaven!”

10 As he made his entrance into Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken. Unnerved, people were asking, “What’s going on here? Who is this?”

11 The parade crowd answered, “This is the prophet Jesus, the one from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Thought for the day

How can you tell that we are into week two of the lockdown in this country?

There are many signs of this but the main one for me is that my ER DVD boxset has sold on EBay! When Emma and I got married many years ago we loved watching the American hospital drama ER. So last year I bought the complete set of DVD’s (all 235hours) as a birthday present for her, thinking we could watch them together and rediscover our youth. Long story short she was not interested so onto the online auction site they went just before Christmas. For months there has not been a sniff of interest until the other day when somebody bought them out of the blue. Hopefully not some fella as a surprise for his wife wanting to recreate their youth!

It is hard for human beings to be in lockdown as it’s just not what God designed us for. Some of you will remember that previously, on more than one occasion, I have shared my views with you that when God made us he made us with three characteristics in mind. He made us to create, to celebrate and to be in community.

All humans are creative and curious and ponderous and nosey and like the feeling of a job well done. All humans love to celebrate and to remember and love music and some dancing. All humans know that loneliness is a killer and that we are at our best when we are living and working in communities. He made us to create, to celebrate and to be in community. Basically God made us to be party animals in the most reverent sense of the word. Proof of this is when your favourite tune comes on the radio, or Spotify if you are a youth, and you find your foot starts tapping or you start singing along.

Which is why when Jesus wanders into the main gates of Jerusalem 2000 years ago on the back of a donkey people went wild. We are told in John’s gospel that word of what he had done in raising

Lazarus from the dead, which we talked about last time, had spread like wildfire. Along with that some people had had a nose in the scriptures and when they saw Jesus entering the city on an animal they put two and two together. They saw him as the next King, which he was in a way, coming to save them from the Romans and oppression.

They lobbed branches in front of him, hence the name Palm Sunday as in palm branches, and they threw coats on the floor, like they would a king, and they started shouting 'Hosanna' which is basically a cheer or rally cry out to God. It acknowledges that Jesus is going to save and help and is from God. What a wonderful picture of acceptance and happiness and goodwill and cheer. Humans coming together to celebrate the arrival of the King with noise and smiles. Humans being typically human you may say.

Sadly though it does not last long.

As we journey through this Holy week we will be reminded again that God's big idea is more amazing than anything we humans could plan ourselves but also more shocking that we could ever imagine either.

Palm Sunday.

Jesus arrives in Jerusalem to a natural human reaction.

Is God is on the move?

Oh yes. But not in the way we would ultimately expect.

Keep safe everybody – until next time.

Rev Ian

Questions to ponder

1. How do you as a person create, celebrate and fit into your community?
2. Have you ever had the disappointment of plans changing last minute?
3. What have you got planned?
4. Do you believe God has good plans for you?

Song for the day

The old favourite 'Hosanna' by Hillsong United: <https://youtu.be/oY0y3pWCrtA>

A prayer

Dear God, thank you for the big plan to send Jesus to teach us all about you and to go through that first Holy Week. Thank you that you know each one of us and have good plans for us to walk in. Amen.

Into your spacious

heart

AND LOVING HANDS

dear God

I place



my fears, my "what ifs," my spinning world and mind

Comfort me with the

TRUTH

NO FEAR

is too big for the

GREAT ONE

who is always with me.



am never alone.

CALMING GOD, BRING COURAGE

TENDER SPIRIT, BREATHE PEACE

GENTLE JESUS, Be CLOSE

Amen

WORDSEARCH

Try to find the words from Matthew 21 in the word search below. Words may go diagonal, up OR down and forward OR backward.

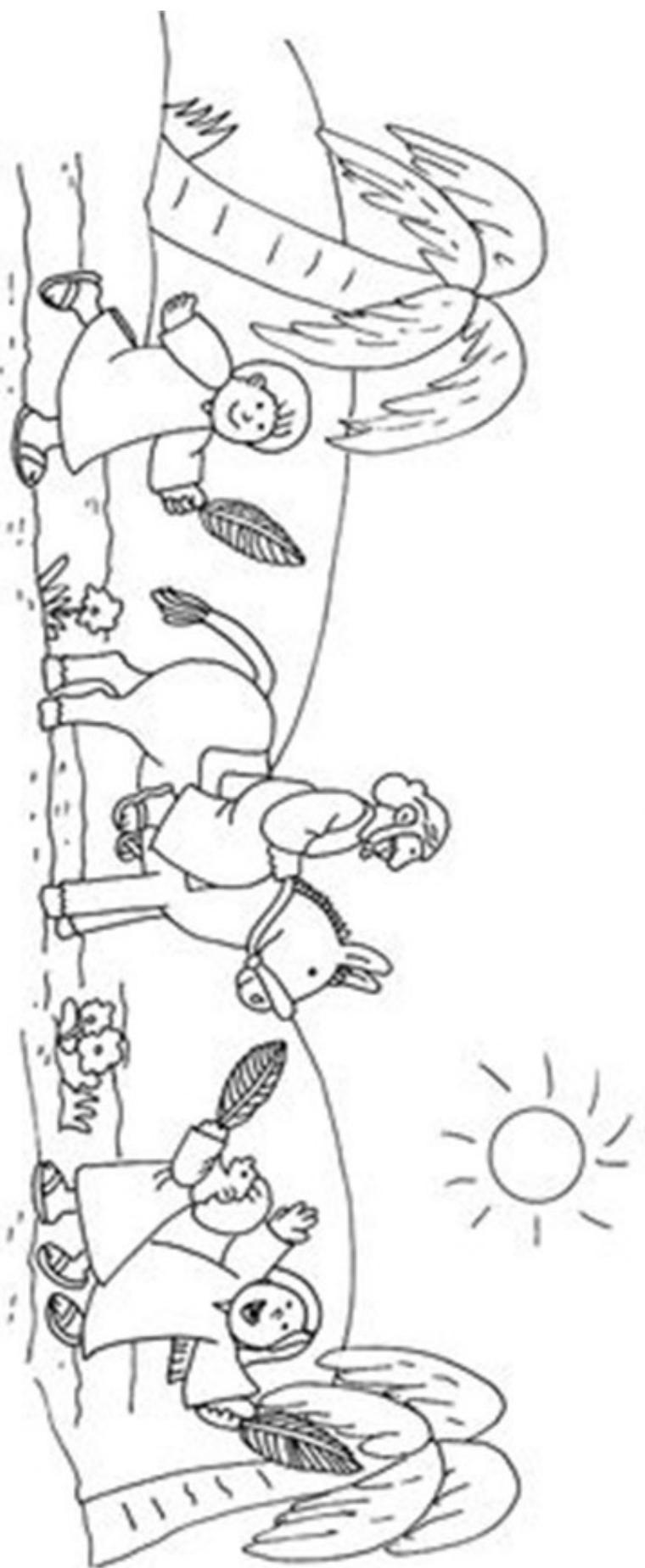
R G H Y N O H I N T U D L K Z
W V W W H C T C N N L W R S N
J E S U S K L U N R G O C E B
M A C S M W O O M A P R W L M
R Q O H O M F E T D R C C P L
E T L O C S L F I H B B H I A
T H A U D A P V P L E O V C P
N P S T S G A R E Y S S G S K
E B Z U E D D S O A D O R I D
L C R I H T S R N P Z B Q D R
V E T Q E I X N Z I H X N O O
J N A W N I A D R C V E P S L
U V D G W G J Q L B Q I T O V
D Y E Y O R M T V A C D Y V G
S I D O N K E Y W X N H R T S

JERUSALEM
MOUNT
ENTER
UNTIE
DONKEY
JESUS

LORD
PROPHET
DISCIPLES
COLT
CLOTHES
CROWD

PALM
BRANCH
HOSANNA
BLESSING
SHOUT
DAVID

The Triumphal Entry



HOSANNA!

BLESSED IS HE THAT COMES IN
THE NAME OF THE LORD!

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!