

Sunday 10 April 2022

Palm Sunday



Sermon © Pete Haslam.

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The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please hover the mouse over each link, press Ctrl and then return.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Welcome Liturgy of the palms

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Lord be with you,

All and also with you.

HYMN 1 All glory laud and honour (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

The people hold up palms or branches while this prayer is said by the president

God our Saviour,
 whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die;
 let these palms be for us signs of his victory
 and grant that we who bear them in his name
 may ever hail him as our King,
 and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life;
 who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Palm Gospel

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it." So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their

cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

‘Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!’

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, order your disciples to stop.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.’

Luke 19:28–40

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Procession

So let us go forth, praising Jesus our Messiah.

HYMN 2 Hail thee festival day (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Preparation

All 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.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion, and confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

The Gloria is usually omitted during Lent.

The Collect for Palm Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

First reading

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

Isaiah 50:4–9

This is the Word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God.**

Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Philippians

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. *Philippians 2:1-13*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 3 Make way! Make way!

(click on this link to hear the hymn)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

All Glory to you O Lord.

The assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, ‘We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.’ Then Pilate asked him, ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ He answered, ‘You say so.’ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, ‘I find no basis for an accusation against this man.’ But they were insistent and said, ‘He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.’

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.’

Then they all shouted out together, ‘Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!’ (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, ‘Crucify, crucify him!’ A third time he said to them,

'Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.' But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus[e] there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the

women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. *Luke 23:1-49*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

We may have seen sporting programs that show both successful sporting events and then finish with a spectacular failure by an athlete at an inappropriate time. What that's that got to do with Palm/Passion Sunday? Well, on this day, when the church commemorates our Lord's entry in Jerusalem, we are reminded that things are not always what they seem. What seems like a victory may well lead to agony, while what initially appears as to be defeat may well be a threshold to triumph. This is true for Palm Sunday because it's also Passion Sunday. For today is all about the agony of victory and the triumph of defeat. A little background might prove to be helpful here. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on young colt. There is rich meaning in this choice of animal. Kings would ride this animal as a sign that they were coming in peace, as opposed to a horse which meant they were coming to conquer. So Jesus' choice of animal ride was symbolic, he was making a point. In this one symbolic act Jesus proclaimed himself a king, he proclaimed himself the Messiah who came in peace.

The Pharisees tried to shush the disciples and the people because they knew what Jesus was saying. The Pharisees were either insulted by the thought of Jesus being the King/Messiah and the people accepting him as such, or they were worried that the Romans would see this as an act of treason and hold the people accountable. Whatever the Pharisees feared, they were actively involved in trying to stop Jesus.

But what about the people? How did they interpret Jesus' act? Well, the people were in Jerusalem for the Passover. Scholars believe that as many as 100,000 people had come for the Passover Celebration. It means the crowd was surely a mix of people from all over the region. Their common bond though, was their Jewish faith. They knew and understood the symbolism of Jesus' act. They knew of the prophesy of Zechariah,

'Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!

Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King comes to you!

He is righteous, and having salvation;

lowly, and riding on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The people were educated in their faith. The people had been raised to be on the look out for the Messiah/King. The people knew what to look for so they shouted, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!'

But the question quickly becomes what kind of king, what kind of Messiah did the people understand Jesus to be? That's still a question that resonates today. The Jewish crowd lived under Roman rule. While they were not enslaved as they had been in Egypt so many years ago, they weren't free either. They were under the careful watch of the Romans. Pontius Pilate was the representative for the Romans, the regional governor in that area, and his power over the Jews were fairly sweeping. This meant that, for the average Jew, the Romans were the ones they felt they needed to be delivered from. So, when Jesus comes into Jerusalem proclaiming himself king, many in the crowd must have said, 'We've got a king! Glory to God! Hosanna! This king will deliver us from the Romans!' Many in the crowd wanted to overlook Jesus' riding the colt, the symbol of peace, they wanted to see past that and think of Jesus as a military king, someone who would soon be leading an uprising against the Romans.

Think how this must have made Jesus feel. This is the agony of victory. Jesus came to deliver the people not from the Romans, but from a much more dangerous enemy, sin—and sin's consequence, death. But here he is riding into Jerusalem in kingly peace and the people don't understand. They don't get it. They want Jesus to be something he is not. The mob mentality takes over and soon the crowd grows to the point where this is not just an entrance but a parade, complete with shouts of 'Hosanna' and 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!' In a single instant Jesus had become the object of great hope and expectation. How disappointed the people must have been to discover Jesus was not the kind of king they expected, not the kind of Messiah they wanted. How disappointing for Jesus to discover the people still did not understand, they still lacked the eyes to see and the ears to hear. Such disappointment led Jesus to cry over Jerusalem. Such disappointment led the people to move, in just a few day's time, from shouts of 'Hosanna!' to shouts of 'Crucify Him!'

But Jesus knew what he was doing. He had, time after time, proclaimed his death to be near, proclaimed his death would come in Jerusalem, proclaimed that his death was necessary. But here was the city of Jerusalem welcoming him. How tempting it must have been for Jesus to give in to the will of the people and say, 'O.K., I'll be your kind of king, your sort of Messiah.' How tempting it must have been to simply respond to the expectations of the people, give them what they want. But Jesus stayed the course laid out for him by God. Jesus knew that what the people wanted, what the people expected, was different than what they needed. Jesus would be the only one who would go against the wishes of the crowd and say, 'No. I will not be that kind of king. No. I am not that sort of Messiah.' And

by doing this, Jesus knew full well it would cost him his life. But from the Cross comes our victory. From the Cross comes the triumph of defeat.

You know, as much as I'd like to think things have changed in 2000 years I don't think that a lot has. We are still the people in the crowd. We still have our own set of misguided expectations of who God should be. We still have our demands that we place upon God and threaten God with our 'leaving him' if he doesn't meet our demands.

So how do we live out our calling? What is our focus? Who is our focus? Is the standard of success measured in worldly terms/ Or, is our focus Biblical? Is our focus on others: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and imprisoned?

Now putting it that way, the 'right answer' seems obvious and most of the time we're happy to give lip service to the 'right answer' while we go on living self-centered lives and bargaining with God to get what we want out of him, Think about our own lives. Where is it that you know the agony of victory and the triumph of defeat? Raising children? At work? At school? In personal relationships? When have you lived victory but been misunderstood in the process? When have you experienced apparent defeat only to discover you were really winning. Remember those times and you begin to catch a small glimpse into the mind of Jesus during Holy Week.

The Good News, the Gospel for today, is what we need to hear, not what we want to hear. The Good News, the Gospel for today, reminds us that we are the crowd on this Palm Sunday, we are the ones who seldom understand, we are the ones whose fickle nature often has us turning on our God when our demands are not met, when our expectations are not lived up to.

We are the ones who shout not only 'Hosanna!' but also 'Crucify Him!' Nevertheless, the Good News, the Gospel for today, drives us to give thanks that God's love for us is bigger than our misguided demands and flawed expectations. The Gospel drives us to give God thanks for the love that will not die in Jesus Christ. The Gospel drives us to give thanks for the agony of victory and the triumph of defeat that makes life possible today, tomorrow, and in the age to come. Amen.

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All **We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

We believe and trust in one God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayers of intercession

Let us pray to the Father through his Son
who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption.
Fill with your Spirit Christ's broken body, the Church ...
Give to Christian people everywhere a deep longing
to take up the cross and to understand its mysterious glory.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Bless those who lead the Church's worship at this solemn time ...
In the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments
draw your people close to you.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Strengthen those who are preparing for baptism,
together with their teachers, sponsors and families ...
Teach them what it means to die and rise with Christ
and prepare them to receive the breath of his Spirit.
By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Look in your mercy upon the world you loved so much
that you sent your Son to suffer and to die ...
Strengthen those who work to share

the reconciliation won at such a cost upon the cross.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Bring healing by the wounds of Christ

to all who are weighed down by pain and injustice ...

Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying,

to find strength in the companionship of Jesus,

and in his passion to know their salvation.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

Welcome into paradise all who have left this world in your friendship ...

According to your promises,

bring them with all your saints

to share in all the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

By the Saviour's cross and passion,

All Lord, save us and help us.

All Holy God,

holy and strong,

holy and immortal,

have mercy on us.

Merciful Father,

All accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The peace

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 4 Amazing love (what love is this) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

HYMN 5 **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For as the time of his passion and resurrection draws near
the whole world is called to acknowledge his hidden majesty.

The power of the life-giving cross
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world
and the triumph of Christ crucified.

He is the victim who dies no more,
the Lamb once slain, who lives for ever,
our advocate in heaven to plead our cause,
exalting us there to join with angels and archangels,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.

Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,

which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

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

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,

in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All **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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All **We do not presume
to come to this 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 our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.**

Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
give us the mind to follow you
and to proclaim you as Lord and King,
to the glory of God the Father.

All **Amen**

All **Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.**

Amen.