

Eden Uniting Worship Service

Sunday 5 April, 2020

Let the festival begin!

All Welcome

Read Matthew 21:1-11 (NLT)

As Jesus and the disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the town of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead. "Go into the village over there," he said. "As soon as you enter it, you will see a donkey tied there, with its colt beside it. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks what you are doing, just say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will immediately let you take them."

This took place to fulfil the prophecy that said,

"Tell the people of Jerusalem, 'Look, your King is coming to you.

He is humble, riding on a donkey— riding on a donkey's colt.'"

The two disciples did as Jesus commanded.

They brought the donkey and the colt to him and threw their garments over the colt, and he sat on it.

Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Jesus was in the centre of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting, "Praise God for the Son of David!

Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Praise God in highest heaven!"

The entire city of Jerusalem was in an uproar as he entered. "Who is this?" they asked. And the crowds replied, "It's Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

**** Before the first song - Discuss and Prepare** - As Jesus entered Jerusalem what did the people lay down on the road? Take a moment to get a bit of garden foliage or a coat and lay it down on the floor of your home. When your foliage or garment is in place lets join in the first song.
(Song is on the next page)

Acknowledgement of Country
St Georges Uniting Church, Eden acknowledges that we are on the traditional lands of Aboriginal people. We pay respect to the Yuin people, especially to their elders past and present, and recognise the continuing gift of their culture to the life and spirit of Australia.

Opening Song - a Palm procession -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YApEljvE6S4>

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

God of the festival,

we come to worship you with joy and thanksgiving. God of peacemaking, we search to find you in our midst to bring peace this day. God of mystery and encounter, we begin this Holy Week journey, attentive to your voice, seeking your way, your wisdom, and your word for this time and place. Be with us as we journey together. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus, on the day of the festival,

you were not what people expected, but then again you never are.

Forgive us when we seek a Messiah who rides a horse not a donkey, who represents the powerful and not the vulnerable.

Jesus, on the day of the festival, people crowded the streets to catch a glimpse of you, even if only for a moment. Forgive us when we carry on with our lives, forgetting to even look for you among us.

Jesus, on the day of the festival, people shouted praises to you, loud and clear, strong and unashamed. Forgive us when we forget to honour you or we are unwilling and embarrassed to use your name. Be with us as we reimagine the festival, remembering the scenes of heightened emotion, heightened devotion, heightened passion, heightened tension, heightened risk. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Jesus was an unexpected Messiah riding a donkey. Jesus was the one who emptied himself of power, and was filled with love. Christ's arms are stretch out wide in forgiveness. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

Michael's reflection -

Let the festival begin!

(See separate sheet)



Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!

His faithful love endures forever.

Let all Israel repeat:

“His faithful love endures forever.”

Open for me the gates where the righteous enter,

and I will go in and thank the Lord.

These gates lead to the presence of the Lord,

and the godly enter there. I thank you for answering my prayer and giving me victory!

The stone that the builders rejected

has now become the cornerstone.

This is the Lord’s doing, and it is wonderful to see.

This is the day the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Please, Lord, please save us.

Please, Lord, please give us success.

Bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The Lord is God, shining upon us.

Take the sacrifice and bind it with cords on the altar.

You are my God, and I will praise you!

You are my God, and I will exalt you!

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!

His faithful love endures forever.

Song - Ride On Ride On in Majesty -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MD9rMkIS1yw>

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

An Adapted Offertory Prayer

God of Holy Week, your gifts to us this week surprise us – vulnerability, humility, wisdom, compassion. We pray that you may shape us in our giving of ourselves in life whole worship that we too may be willing to be vulnerable and live with humility. **Amen.**

General Intercessions

Jesus Christ, who journeyed through Jerusalem to the cross and beyond, we pray for those whose burden is heavy and whose fear is great.

(Consider this in silence and private prayer)

We pray for people who are swayed by public opinion or through peer pressure, to make unwise choices. Bring wisdom, loving God.

(Consider this in silence and private prayer)

You came to bring peace and were crucified unjustly for your message of love. We pray for peacemakers in our world and those who seek justice at great personal cost. Bring courage, loving God.

(Consider this in silence and private prayer)

You came into the city to the shouts of the crowd and the palpable emotion of the city spilled over into violence. We pray for places of protest this day. For those whose voices are silenced or ignored, and for those who have power but are disconnected from the people. Jesus Christ, your road was difficult, and your path held much suffering.

We pray for those who suffer this day.

(Consider this in silence and private prayer)

We bring before you those who are close to us who face particular challenges at this time. Bring peace and strength, loving God.

(Consider this in silence and private prayer)

Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ we pray. Amen.

Closing song - Prepare ye the way of the Lord - Michael W Smith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFRsNaoC3yg>

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

Today is a strange day for we know what lies ahead for Jesus: the cries of “hosanna” quickly turn to “crucify”; faithful disciples fail and all hope seems lost. But still we want to follow Jesus as he journeys to the cross - for this journey shapes, teaches, forms and reforms us. And so, go into the week ahead, open to walking the path with Jesus in courage and truth. May God’s justice be in all we say and all we do;

Christ’s faithfulness be our guide,

and the endurance of the Holy Spirit hold us firm. **Amen.**