

SUNDAY APRIL 13TH

PALM SUNDAY



AND HOLY WEEK



Maundy Thursday



Good Friday

Praise to the king who rides a donkey.
Hosanna to the Lord!
Praise to Jesus, entering Jerusalem...
Let us praise him for all that he has done...
Amen.

Readings

Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 – 11

Luke chapter 19 verses 28 – 40



Holy Saturday

Not the obvious choice

Jesus headed straight on towards Jerusalem. As he came near the Mount of Olives, he called two of his disciples aside. Jesus said to them, 'Do you see the village ahead? Go into it and, as you do, you will see a young donkey tied up. No one has ever ridden this animal before. I want you to untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks why you are untying it, say this, "The Lord needs it!"' The disciples were puzzled, but they did as Jesus asked. 🕒

The disciples set off for the village and, just as Jesus had told them, they found the donkey. But as they began to untie it, they heard a voice: 'Why are you untying my donkey?' Looking up, they saw the animal's owner, so they replied just as Jesus had told them: 'The Lord needs it.' Amazingly, the owner let them take the donkey. The disciples took off their cloaks, threw them onto the animal's back and helped Jesus on.

As Jesus rode towards Jerusalem, lots of people kept taking off their cloaks and spreading them onto the road. As they reached the top of the Mount of Olives and began their journey down, the crowd shouted praise to God for all the amazing things that he had done. 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Peace in heaven and glory to God!'

Some of the Pharisees 🕒 were angry. They didn't agree with what the crowd were shouting. 'Tell them to stop!' they demanded.

But Jesus refused, saying, 'If these people were silent, the stones would shout out praise instead!'

See session outline on p.46

Stop and share 🕒

Read the story and pause at the 🕒 to share these points with the children.

- 🕒 Explain that the prophet Zechariah wrote: 'Your king comes to you [...] humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey'. Jesus' choice of a donkey wasn't the obvious choice, but it made sense to God and his followers: Jesus was giving the people a sign that he was the peace-bringing Messiah (Saviour).
- 🕒 The Pharisees were religious leaders, who spent their life dedicated to God. They were angry with what the people said about Jesus because it went against their understanding of who God was.

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Luke 19.28-40

Jesus finally reaches Jerusalem and arranges to enter the city on a donkey. As he joins the crowds of pilgrims arriving for the Passover festival, his disciples hail him as 'the king who comes in the name of the Lord' – to the annoyance of the watching Pharisees.

Arrival of a king? You will need: the small pieces of paper, pens.

- Give each child a small piece of paper and ask them to draw a question mark on it.
- Tell the children that you are going to tell them what happened when Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem. Ask them to listen carefully as you read the story, and when they hear something that seems unusual, or not the obvious choice, ask them to hold up their question marks.
- You can either stop each time a question mark appears or go through all the 'unobvious choices' at the end.

The Triumphant Entry

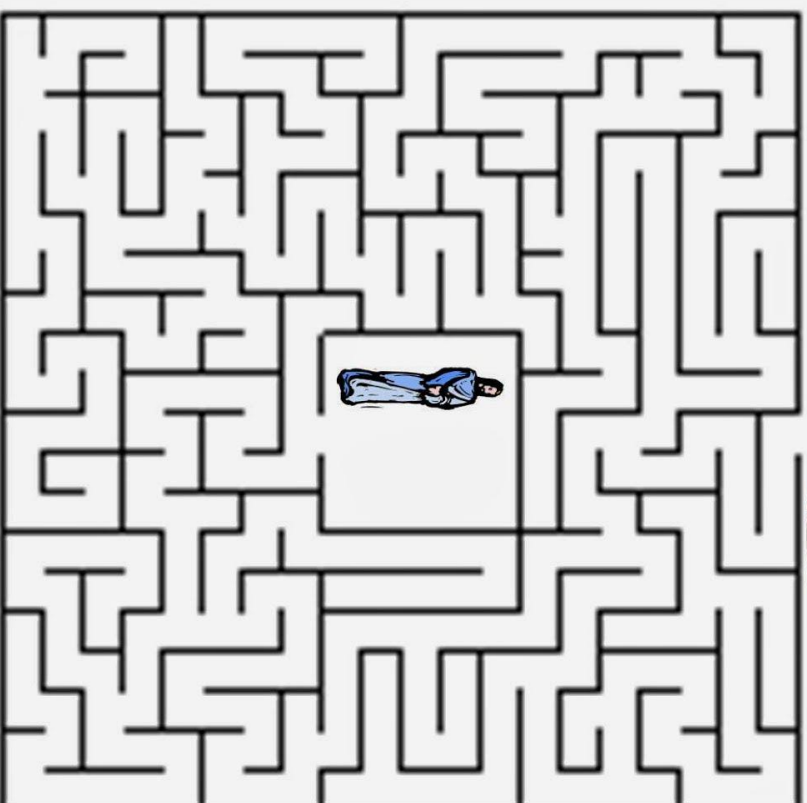
"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
 Luke 19:38 (NIV)



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

BLESSED SPREAD DISCIPLES NAME	MIRACLES GLORY CLOAKS ROAD	HIGHEST PRAISE VOICES JESUS	HEAVEN VILLAGE LORD HILL	CROWD PEOPLE PEACE COLT
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PALM SUNDAY MAZE



Decorate pebbles

Create a powerful sign

Provide clean pebbles and some paint and invite the children to decorate a pebble with a brightly-coloured pattern, to show the excitement that people felt when they welcomed Jesus.

FOR CHILDREN Design a royal animal

The donkey: a sign of Jesus, a servant king

You will need: junk modelling items, sticky tape.

- Divide the children into groups. Challenge each group to create an animal suitable for a king from the objects.
- Show the animal creations and discuss together: You might not expect a king to ride a donkey, but the people in Jerusalem might have done. This was because of a prophecy from the Old Testament (Zechariah 9.9). Jesus was showing them that he was the Messiah they had been waiting for; but also, by riding a donkey, he was showing he had come to serve them.

Bake rock cakes The rocks: a sign of Jesus' majesty

You will need: ingredients for [rock cakes](#), oven trays, spoons and bowls; access to an oven.

- Allow 10 minutes preparation time, and 15-20 minutes cooking time. Don't forget to keep an eye on the rock cakes in the oven as the rest of the session moves on.
- Talk with the children about how Jesus saying that the rocks would cry out with praise was a sign that he wasn't just a Saviour for the people in the city, but for the whole of creation.

Talk together

- What is the most exciting event you've ever been to?
- The Pharisees wanted people to stop praising Jesus. Have you ever felt you can't praise Jesus because of other people?
- What different ways can we praise Jesus this week?

Talk to God: Palm praise signs

The palm branches: a sign of Jesus being worthy of praise

You will need: green card, scissors, pens.

- Even if the crowd didn't fully understand who Jesus was, they were right to praise him. Encourage the children to think about what they would have shouted to Jesus. Ask: How would you have praised him?
- Invite the children to create palm branches and write words on them. When finished, ask the children to wave their branches and shout praise to God.

Praise chants How the crowd didn't fully understand the signs about who Jesus was

- Ask the group if they know any chants from sporting events. Teach them some simple ones.
- As a group, look at some of the things the crowd were shouting, and work together to deliver them in sport-chant style.
- Talk about how at sporting events, people often just copy everyone around them and cheer/boo without knowing exactly what is going on.
- Discuss reasons why some people in the crowd would have been cheering. Ask the group if they think everyone there that day really knew why Jesus had come to Jerusalem. Talk about how Jesus didn't turn out to be the Messiah everyone expected.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE Biggest cheer

A game exploring the cheering crowd

- Invite the young people, one at a time, to take a deep breath and do as many laps of the room as possible, while cheering. The moment they take a breath, they must stop moving. The person who gets furthest wins.
- Explore how the crowd was cheering loudly – some knew Jesus was entering Jerusalem as the Messiah, some were just caught up in the atmosphere. Ask: Where would you be in the crowd?


Standing with the poor Jesus is a sign of hope for the oppressed

You will need: TV/projector.

- Jesus riding a donkey is a sign of how he stands with the poor and oppressed. Invite someone from your local area who works with marginalised people to talk about their work, and how it can be supported by the church/group.
- If it isn't possible to invite a visitor to be interviewed, show [video clips](#) of people working with marginalised groups.

Creative praise Express praise for God through art

You will need: marker pens, pencils, paper, craft materials; Bibles.

-  Play the track '[The King Is Here](#)', Corey Voss on *Songs Of Heaven And Earth (Live)*, and give the young people some time to praise God creatively.
- Encourage them to draw, write poetry, make a journal or use other craft materials. Provide Bibles for inspiration.

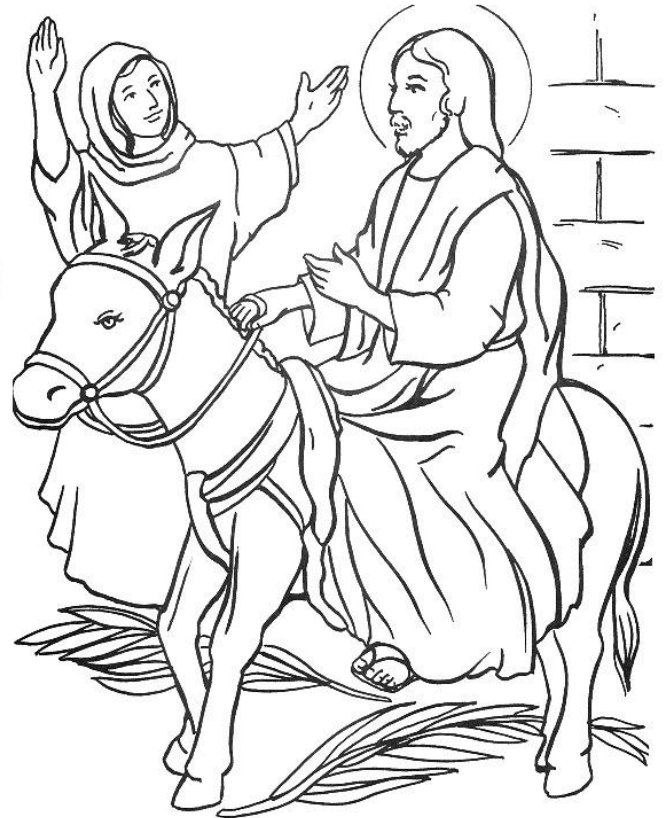
Praise pebbles Create and express our praise to Jesus.

You will need: pebbles, acrylic paint, paintbrushes.

- Work together to come up with ideas for what we might say to praise God. Give each person a pebble and invite them to decorate it with a word of praise.
- Discuss how Jesus' entrance was a sign of something even more than the crowd were expecting. Ask why Jesus deserves praise from all parts of creation.



“Hosanna in the Highest. . . .



Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord.”

Prayers

Lord Jesus, as the donkey carried you into Jerusalem, help us to carry others who need our help.
When they cry, let us cry with them; when they are happy, let us celebrate.
Let us journey together.

Amen.

Let us journey together this week towards the cross,
carrying with us those who need your love.

Amen.