

A Seasonal All Age Worship Service

(SAAW012)

Palm Sunday: Jesus enters Jerusalem as King

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“PALM SUNDAY: JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM AS KING”

Service Aim:

To celebrate that Jesus is King and is worthy of our praise and obedience. At the end of the service the focus turns towards the events of Holy Week.

Biblical Reference(s):

Matthew 21:1-11, Luke 19:28-38, Zechariah 9:9 and also Matthew 8:20, 20:28, 22:39, 27:29, Luke 2:7, 6:37-38

Outline of Service:

Welcome	Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer:	“Welcome King Jesus”
Opening songs:	<u>A couple of songs welcoming Jesus the King</u> (See Appendix 1)
Warm up:	Road signs give a visual picture of what you might see on a road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey gave people a visual picture
Bible Reading:	A “Jerusalem reporter” interviews two disciples about Jesus’ arrival into Jerusalem based on Matthew 21:1-11 and Luke 19:28-38
Talk 1:	What is the meaning of the visual picture Jesus gave the people?
Song:	<u>Song about Jesus the King</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk 2:	What kind of King is Jesus? (using props) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus came to set people free from the chains for sin • Jesus came to rule over our hearts
Response:	The people praised Jesus. Jesus is worthy of our praise too. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare “Praise” flags
Songs:	<u>A couple of songs of Praise</u> (See Appendix 1)
Link:	The people honoured Jesus by laying down their cloaks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We honour Jesus by listening to Him and obeying Him
Film:	“Lord, Lord” with the encouragement to obey Jesus
Response:	Prayer of “laying down our lives” to Jesus (kneeling down)
Song:	<u>A song about surrendering to Jesus</u> (See Appendix 1)
Prayers:	With response: “King Jesus, come and reign” and the Lord’s Prayer
Notices	Hand out Palm Crosses
Monologue:	“Jesus’ journey to the cross” (with a drum beating slowly in the background)
Final song:	<u>Final song focused towards Jesus’ journey to the cross</u> (See Appendix 1)
Blessing	

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

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Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service and to the theme of “Palm Sunday – Jesus enters Jerusalem as King”

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship”¹ that the congregation can say together,
- or the following litany that the congregation can take part in:

See your King comes to you

We welcome the King

He is gentle and is riding on a donkey

We welcome the King of glory

Jesus is King

We praise His holy name

Opening Songs:

A couple of songs welcoming Jesus the King as per Appendix 1

Warm up:

The warm up is a simple quiz where you project some road signs (See Appendix 2) and ask people what they are.

I have a number of pictures or signs here that you might see when you are travelling on the road.

- Each one of these pictures shows us what we might find on the road.
- I wonder how many of you know what they mean.

After you have shown the road signs for: i) Road works, ii) Slippery road, iii) Falling or fallen rocks and iv) Toads crossing, say something like:

How do you know what the pictures I have just shown you mean? *(Receive response)*

- We know what the pictures mean because the book, “The Highway Code” explains them to us.

Today on Palm Sunday we remember the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

- In doing this, Jesus gave us a “visual” picture. *(Project a picture of Jesus on a donkey – see Appendix 3)*

This picture would have meant much to the people of His day, because they knew what the prophets had said and had written down.

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Before we explore what Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey meant to the people of His day, let's hear what happened.

Bible Reading 1:

The Bible reading is about Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem on a donkey and is based on Matthew 21:1-11 and Luke 19:28-38. It is presented in the form of an interview between a reporter and two disciples and can be found in Appendix 4. This drama works best if the two disciples are really excited and enthusiastic. If you are unable to put on the drama, read Matthew 21:1-11 from a modern version of the Bible.

Talk 1:

This talk would benefit from some Power Point slides of the main points with a relevant picture and words.

We saw from the road signs earlier that pictures can have meanings that go beyond what you see.

- They can be signs that tell you something.

There was a great tradition amongst the prophets of Israel to use actions as visual messages...

- When the words didn't work, they would put their message in a picture or an action that no one could fail to see.
- For example when the prophet Ahijah wanted to explain to Jereboam that God was going to give Jereboam ten of the twelve tribes of Israel,
- Abijah took hold of his new cloak and tore it into twelve pieces. He then gave Jereboam ten of those pieces.....(1 Kings 11:30-31)
- This was a visual picture of what God was going to do.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey He used the same principle. (*Project a picture of Jesus on a donkey – see Appendix 3*)

- His entry on a colt was a picture that all Jerusalem would have seen deep meaning in.

1) Firstly Jesus' action was a clear claim to be King

- Around 500 years earlier the prophet Zechariah had prophesied that Israel would overcome her enemies....and in the middle of that prophecy came this verse:
"See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." (Zechariah 9:9)

Jesus' followers had spent three years hearing him teach,

- seeing him perform miracles and telling them to keep quiet about the fact that he was the Messiah, the Chosen One sent to free Israel.
- Here at last, for all to see, Jesus went public.
- No wonder *they* celebrated.

For the crowds who were not yet his followers and who were living under Roman occupation, longing for freedom,

- here was Jesus acting out the prophecy that said.... "I am the king who will bring victory"
- No wonder *they* were excited.

2) Secondly Jesus' picture tells us what sort of King He came as.

- Jesus came on a colt, the animal of a man of Peace,
- not on a war horse, the animal of a conquering king.

Unfortunately the crowd were so intent on welcoming a Messiah, that they paid little attention to that part of Jesus' message.

- They wanted Jesus to be the one who overthrew the Romans.

But Jesus' message by riding on a colt was clear to those who wanted to see it....

- "I come in peace."

So Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey wasn't simply a convenient first century taxi!

- Jesus was saying through his actions that He was:
 - coming as King and
 - coming in peace.

Song:

A song about Jesus the King as per Appendix 1

Talk 2:

This talk would benefit from some Power Point slides of the main points with a relevant picture and words. You need the following props: a pile of money (you could use monopoly money), a purple (or red) piece of material to act as a robe, white linen tunic (a white cassock alb would work well), basin of water and a towel, a card crown covered in "jewels," a special chair (to act as a throne), a crown of thorns and a large cross (if you have one).

We said earlier that Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey showed by his actions that He was coming as King, coming in peace.

- But what sort of King is Jesus?
- I need a couple of people to come and help me please. *(wait for a couple of volunteers)*

Let's look at some of the words that we think of when we say the word King.

1) PALACE and RICHES

Most Kings have riches.....they have lots of money and land and wear expensive clothes....

- They live in beautiful palaces and enjoy the best that money can buy.
- So let's give *N1 (name of 1st volunteer)* a pile of money and a nice purple robe to wear. *(Hand over money and wrap piece of purple material around them like a robe)*
- Was Jesus like that? *(Wait for response)*

No He wasn't.

- When Jesus was born, he wasn't laid in a beautiful crib in an expensive palace.
- As Luke says, he was *"wrapped in cloths and placed in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them."* (Luke 2:7)
- As an adult Jesus said to His disciples: *"Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."* (Matthew 8:20)
- Jesus gave up his riches to come to earth. He wouldn't have worn a purple robe but ordinary plain linens, the clothing of the ordinary people.
- So let's give *N2 (name of 2nd volunteer)* a simple plain robe to wear. *(Hand over white alb for N2 to put on.)*

2) POWER and SERVANTS

Most Kings have power over others. They tell people what to do and they do it.

- They have servants.
- So let's have a couple of servants to come and kneel before *N1* ready to do whatever *N1* wants. *(Invite a couple of people to come and kneel before N1)*
- Was Jesus like that? *(Wait for response)*

No He wasn't.

- When a couple of his disciples started arguing about who was the most important, this is what Jesus said to them:
- *"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* (Matthew 20:28)
- Jesus came to serve and one of the things he did for his disciples was to wash their dirty and smelly feet before they ate the Passover meal together.
- So let's give N2 a basin and a towel *(Give N2 a bowl with some water in it and a towel)*

3) CROWN and THRONE

Most Kings have a crown to wear and sit on a throne from where they rule their kingdoms.

- So let's put a beautiful crown on N1's head and give them a throne to sit on. *(Place a crown on N1's head and give them a special chair to sit on)*
- Was Jesus like that? *(Wait for response)*

No He wasn't.

- The only crown that Jesus wore was a crown of thorns which was placed on his head by the soldiers before he was crucified (Matthew 27:29)
- Jesus didn't rule from a throne, but he was enthroned on a cross.
- So let's give N2 a crown of thorns and lean him against the cross. *(Place a crown of thorns on N2's head and lean them against a large cross, if you have one)*

So King Jesus is very different from other earthly Kings isn't He?

- Jesus didn't have a palace and riches.
- He didn't expect people to serve Him, but served them.
- He didn't wear a crown or rule his kingdom from a throne, but he wore a crown of thorns as He gave up his life on the cross.

You see Jesus didn't come as a warrior king to set people free from the oppressive Romans.

- He came as the King of peace to set people free from their chains of sin and to bring them peace with God the Father,
- which He did when he willingly laid down his life on the cross, and then rose from the dead three days later.

Jesus didn't come as an aggressive and dominating king to rule over a country by force.

- He came as the King of love, to rule over people's hearts.

The crowds in Jerusalem misunderstood what kind of King Jesus was and what He had come to do for them.

- That was why just a few days later they were calling for his crucifixion...

Do we understand what kind of King Jesus is and what He has done for us?

- You see Jesus didn't come simply for the Jewish people.....he came for us all.
- When He died on the cross, Jesus made it possible for each one of us to be set free from our chains of sin and to know peace with God the Father...
- What a wonderful King.
- Thank you volunteers.....would you like to sit down.

Response:

The first part of the response is to enable people to offer their praise to Jesus. You will need to have made some "Praise flags" earlier, enough for each person present to have one.

A "Praise flag" can be made by simply folding a piece of coloured paper / thin card in two, securing a drinking straw or a thin piece of dowel to the centre fold and then either gluing or stapling the edges together. Each person will also need a pencil or a pen to write with.

In our reading this morning we heard how the crowds praised Jesus as He entered Jerusalem, by waving palms and singing songs of praise to him.

- We have an opportunity now to praise Jesus for who He is and what He has done for us.

You should have all received a flag and a pencil.

- We are going to spend a couple of minutes making a "Praise flag".....which we can then wave as we sing the Lord's praises in a few moments.
- Write down on your flag your words of praise to Jesus.....or draw a picture of praise.

You might want to give words of praise for the kind, loving, gentle, forgiving servant King Jesus is,

- or you might want to give words of praise for what Jesus has done for you.
- Let's take a few moments of quiet as prepare our "Praise flags" (*People prepare their praise flags*)

Please stand.

- As the music begins to quietly play for our next couple of praise songs, let's all shout out the words of praise that we have written on our flags together.
- As we shout out our words of praise and sing, let's wave our flags too.
- So after I count to three shout out your words of praise.....1,2,3.....Praise you Jesus for you are.....(*The Service leader needs to keep speaking out words of praise as the congregation speak out their words of praise. When you are ready, move into a time of sung praise*)

Songs:

A couple of songs of Praise as per Appendix 1

Link:

Not only did the crowds praise Jesus when He entered Jerusalem by waving palms and singing songs of praise to him,

- but they also laid down their cloaks on the dusty street in front of Jesus' donkey.
- This was a way of honouring Jesus as King.

So how do we honour Jesus as King today?

- One of the most important ways we honour Jesus is by listening to what He says and then obeying Him.
- Kings are to be obeyed....they don't obey us, we obey them.
- Watch this:

Film:

The film is called, “Lord, Lord”² and helps show what allowing Jesus to be Lord over our lives really means in practice. At the end of the film you might say something like:

Can I encourage you this morning to not only praise Jesus our King, but also to obey Him?
When Jesus says, “*Love your neighbour as yourself*” (Matthew 22:39) – are we willing to obey Him?

- When Jesus says, “*Do not judge and you will not be judged.*” (Luke 6:37) – are we willing to obey Him?
- When Jesus says, “*Forgive and you will be forgiven*” (Luke 6:37) – are we willing to obey Him?
- When Jesus says, “*Give and it will be given to you.*” (Luke 6:38) – are we willing to obey Him?

Let’s honour Jesus our King by listening to what He says and then obeying Him.

Response:

The second part of the response is to enable people to surrender their lives to Jesus.

The people laid down their cloaks on the road in front of Jesus.

- Let’s lay down our lives before Him this morning. You might like to kneel down as we pray together.

Lord we want to see people through your eyes,
and see situations as you see them.

Lord, we give you our eyes.

Lord we want to hear your voice speaking to us,
and hear the needs of people around us.

Lord, we give you our ears.

Lord we want to speak your words,
words that are truthful and kind and which build others up.

Lord, we give you our mouths.

Lord we want to use our hands and our feet to serve you,
going to the places you call us to and doing the things you want us to do.

Lord we give you our hands and our feet.

Lord we want to love you with our whole hearts,
and love our neighbours as ourselves.

Lord we give you our hearts.

Lord we want to obey you, so we offer you all that we are and all that we have.
Not our will Lord, but your will be done in our lives.

Lord we give you our lives.

Amen.

² This film is made by “onetimeblind” and is called “Lord Lord.” It can be found on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlf9t8w5NoY> or by putting onetimeblind Lord Lord in the search bar of YouTube.

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Song:

A song about surrendering to Jesus as per Appendix 1. This song could be sung as people are kneeling down before the Lord.

Prayers:

Use a few simple prayers inviting Jesus to come and reign in various situations eg in the world, in the nation, in the local community, in the family. You might like to use the following response at the end of each prayer:

King Jesus,
Come and reign

End the prayers with the Lord's Prayer.

Notices:

If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that after the prayers. That way the flow of worship is unbroken. After the notices, hand out Palm crosses, so that everyone has one to take home. You might like to pray over them before you hand them out to people.

Monologue:

Introduce the monologue (See Appendix 5) by saying something like:

Today we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey.

- It was a day of great celebration as many people welcomed Jesus as their king;
- singing praises to Him, and honouring him by laying down their cloaks on the road.

However the praises didn't last long. Listen to what happened next.

While the monologue is performed, have a drum beating slowly in the background to generate a solemn atmosphere, and to help people make the transition from Palm Sunday into Holy Week.

Final Song:

Final song focused on Jesus' journey to the cross as per Appendix 1

Blessing:

Pray a simple prayer to end the service something like:

As we honour Jesus as King today,
May our praising hearts and obedient lives bring Him glory,
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you
and remain with you always. Amen.

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of songs welcoming Jesus the King. Ideas include:

- All glory, laud and honour (Theodulph Of Orleans)
- Come, let us worship the King of Kings (Nathan Fellingham © 2001 Thankyou Music)
- Come people of the risen King (Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend © 2007 Thankyou Music)
- Far and near hear the call (Graham Kendrick © 1995 Make Way Music)
- Give thanks to the Lord our God and King
- Make way, make way (Graham Kendrick © 1986 Thankyou Music)
- Welcome King of Kings (Noel Richards © 1991 Kingsway's Thankyou Music)

ii) A song/s about Jesus the King. Ideas include:

- Blessed is the King who comes (Ian Smale © 1993 Thankyou Music)
- Jesus is King and I will adore Him (Wendy Churchill © 1982 Authentic Publishing)
- Jesus is the name we honour (Philip Lawson Johnston © 1991 Thankyou Music)
- Lift up your heads to the coming King (Steve Fry © 1974 Birdwing Music)
- The splendour of the King (Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves © 2004 sixsteps Music)
- We have a king who rides a donkey (Fred Kaan, © 1968 Stainer & Bell Ltd)

iii) A couple of songs of praise. Ideas include:

- Glory, glory in the highest (Danny Daniels, © 1987 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing (Admin. by Vineyard Music USA))
- Hallelujah, hallelujah, you are worthy (Ben Cantelon © 2007 Thankyou Music)
- Here's a song bursting out (Alan Price, Matt Redman © 1998 Thankyou Music)
- Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest
- Jesus we enthrone you (Paul Kyle © 1980 Thankyou Music)
- Let everything that (Matt Redman © 1997 Thankyou Music)
- Praise is rising (Brenton Brown, Paul Baloche, © 2005, 2006 Integrity's Hosanna! Music)
- You're King and you reign over all things (Carey Luce, Geraldine Agatha Latty © 2003 Thankyou Music)

iv) A song about surrendering to Jesus. Ideas include:

- All I once held dear (Graham Kendrick © 1993 Make Way Music)
- All of my heart (Doug Marks-Smircich © 1991 Right on the Mark)
- I give you all the honour (Carl Tuttle © 1982 Shadow Spring Music)
- I'm giving you my heart (Marc James © 2000 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire))
- Jesus my King, my wonderful Saviour (Andy Bromley, J. M. Harris © 2005 Thankyou Music)
- King of Kings, majesty (Jarrod Cooper © 1996 Sovereign Lifestyle Music)
- We bow down (Viola Grafström © 1996 Thankyou Music)

v) Final song focused on Jesus' journey to the cross. Ideas include:

- How deep the Father's love for us (Stuart Townend © 1995 Thankyou Music)
- My song is love unknown (Samuel Crossman)
- Ride on, ride on in majesty (Henry Hart Milman)

Appendix 2 – “Road Warning Signs”

1. Road Works



2. Slippery road



3. Falling or fallen rocks



4. Toads crossing



Appendix 3 – “Jesus riding a donkey”



Appendix 4 – Drama: “Jesus’ arrival into Jerusalem”

Cast: Reporter for the “Jerusalem Herald”, Disciple 1, Disciple 2

Props: Clipboard for the reporter. (This could hold their script), a couple of palm branches for the disciples. (The scripts could be stuck to the back of the palm branches)

.....
(Enter Disciples waving their palm branches)

Disciple 1: What an exciting day!

Disciple 2: I know. Who would have thought that Jesus would have caused such uproar in Jerusalem?

Disciple 1: It was so wonderful to hear the crowds praising Jesus, although I did notice a few hostile faces.

Disciple 2: Mmmm.....it is a bit worrying isn't it especially after Jesus told us that he was coming to Jerusalem to.....

Disciple 1:be condemned to death, mocked, flogged and crucified.....(PAUSE)

(Enter Reporter)

Reporter: Hi there. I am a reporter from the “Jerusalem Herald” and I seem to have missed all the excitement. My editor sent me off to Bethlehem to write a report about stray donkeys....just my luck! Did I hear you say that Jerusalem was in uproar today?

Disciple 2: You could say that.

Reporter: Please tell me what has happened.....I need to know for this evening's news article.

Disciple 1: Early this morning we were travelling with Jesus towards Jerusalem and we arrived at Bethphage on the Mount of Olives.

Disciple 2: Jesus turned to us and said, “Go to the village ahead of you and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me”

Reporter: Hang on a minute.....Jesus told you to help yourself to a donkey and her colt?

Disciple 2: That's right.

Reporter: But what if someone asked you what you were doing?

Disciple 1: Jesus told us to say that the Lord needed them.

Reporter: I see. So you went off and found the donkey and the colt I assume. What happened next?

Disciple 2: We placed our cloaks on the colt and Jesus sat on it. He then rode the colt towards Jerusalem.

Reporter: Really?

- Disciple 1: Yes really. As Jesus rode along, a very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road in front on him, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.
- Disciple 2: People were singing and shouting.....but of course his followers sang the loudest!
- Reporter: What were you all saying?
- Disciple 1: Hosanna to the Son of David!
- Disciple 2: Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!
- Disciple 1: Hosanna in the highest heaven!
- Reporter: I bet the Pharisees weren't happy with that.
- Disciple 2: You're right there. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" We were obviously singing too loudly.
- Reporter: So what did Jesus say?
- Disciple 1: *(Laughs as he speaks)* He told them that if we kept quiet the stones would cry out!
- Reporter: That would be worth hearing!
- Disciple 2: By the time we arrived in Jerusalem the whole city was stirred and asking "who is this?"
- Reporter: You know this reminds me of something that I read in one of the books of the prophets.
- Disciple 1: Yes us too.....it's in the book of Zechariah isn't it?
- Reporter: Let me find it....*(Pulls out a small Bible from their pocket and opens it)*. Here we are.....this is what Zechariah said over five hundred years ago: "*Say to Daughter Zion, "See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*"
- Disciple 2: Wow.....Jesus has ridden into Jerusalem today as King to fulfil Zechariah's prophecy.
- Reporter: Thank you for speaking to me.....what a wonderful story....I must get back to the office and write it up.

(Exit Reporter)

Disciple 1: I think we need to go and find Jesus. I wonder what He is going to do next.

(Exit Disciple 1 and Disciple 2)

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Appendix 5 – Monologue

Cast: Disciple

Props: Palm cross

Staging: While the monologue is taking place have a drum beating slowly in the background.

.....
(Enter Disciple carrying a palm cross)

Disciple: I knew the excitement couldn't last forever but I didn't expect it to end like this.

Riding into Jerusalem was always going to be risky for Jesus.....you see the Pharisees hated him and were looking for a way to arrest him, but I didn't expect the people to turn against him so quickly.

One minute they were praising him, singing their hosannas and waving their palm branches, then the next minute they were shouting "Crucify him, crucify him."

Had they forgotten how he had fed them on the hillside with five loaves and two fish?
 Had they forgotten the many people he had healed?
 Had they forgotten the amazing things he had taught them?

What I can't understand is why Pilate listened to the people. Why couldn't he see that Jesus wasn't a common criminal who deserved to die?

I will never forget the sight of Jesus stumbling through the streets of Jerusalem, carrying his heavy cross on his back with a crown of thorns on his head.

We had hoped that Jesus was the Messiah, the One sent to set us all free, but it looks like we were wrong because Messiah's aren't crucified.....and yet I do remember something He said to us.....it is coming back now.

Jesus told us that he was coming to Jerusalem to be condemned to death, mocked, flogged and crucified.....*(spoken slowly)* and on the third day he will be raised to life.

Maybe there is some purpose to it all.....maybe.....

(Exit Disciple)