

PLACES *of the* PASSION

A Series of Services for Holy Week



Bethphage



The Upper Room



Golgotha



The Empty Tomb

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for the Places of the Passion special service for Palm Sunday. In this service we go to Bethphage, the place where the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey begins for Jesus. It is here where we discover that Jesus is a humble King who serves as he heads toward the cross.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this Places of the Passion service for Palm Sunday, we go to Bethphage, the place where the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey begins for Jesus. It is here where we discover that Jesus is a humble King who serves as he heads toward the cross.

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP
LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/palm-branches-leaves-sunset-vintage-retro-611990342

- This **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me." Matthew 21:1-2

- The **Invocation and Call to Worship** are spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Ⓟ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy

Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Let us ever walk with Jesus.

C To see the depths of his love.

P To behold the gift of his forgiveness!

C To gaze upon the heights of his grace.

P To marvel at the magnitude of his mercy.

C We walk with Jesus as he rides a donkey.

P He begins in Bethphage and makes his way to Jerusalem.

C He does it for us and for our salvation!

P Faithful Lord, with me abide.

C I shall follow where you guide!

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation while waving palm branches, with children and/or worship leaders processing in waving palm branches, if desired, according to local custom, to the tune Ellacombe 76 76 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;
Through pillared court and temple the joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed amid an exultant crowd,
The victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud;
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,
Nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

“Hosanna in the highest!” that ancient song we sing;
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav’n our King.
Oh, may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
And in God’s joyful presence eternally rejoice!

- The **Confession and Forgiveness** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P Merciful and mighty Father, you know us well. We are quick to speak of faith, but slow to live it out. We shout “hosanna” as Jesus approaches, as did the people of Jerusalem, but we do not want him coming too close to us, not close enough to really see—

C **Our greed and our grasping.**

P Our pride and our pretense.

C **Our envy and our strife.**

P Our hard hearts and lackluster prayers.

C **Our willful disobedience and ongoing sin.**

P Our harsh words and condemning judgments.

C **Our backbiting and badmouthing.**

P Our lame excuses.

C **Our fickle faith. Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, Christ’s love is greater.)

P Hear the good news! Jesus walked to places of rejection, suffering, torment and death—for you. Jesus was determined to go to Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha—for you. That’s why Jesus forgives you completely and loves you eternally. Faithful Lord, with me abide!

C **I shall follow where you guide!**

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in hand, gathered to greet your Son when he came into the City of David, grant that we may hail him as our King and walk with him in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- The **Children’s Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

“The crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:9)

- Ⓟ Do you have a favorite sports team? What do you say when your team wins? How about, “We’re number one!” “We’re the best!” “Our team is in first place!”

Do you know what the people said to Jesus on Palm Sunday? It was kind-of-like, “You’re number one!” “You’re the best!” “You’re in first place!” Instead, though, they said, “Hosanna.” The Bible says the crowds that went before Jesus and that followed Jesus shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’”

“Hosanna” was the way to say to Jesus, “Jesus, you’re number one!” The people waved palm branches, too. Palm branches, back in Jesus’ day, symbolized victory. “Jesus is in first place!”

Who was Jesus about to defeat? That’s right. There were three big, mean enemies on the other side—sin, Satan and death. How was Jesus going to defeat that team? How was Jesus going to be number one?

Just a few days after Palm Sunday, Jesus was arrested, tried, and led to a hill called Calvary to be crucified. Everyone thought that Jesus had lost. His friends buried him and everyone went home saying, “We’re not number one!” “We’re not the best!” “We’re in last place because Jesus lost!”

Then, get this. Three days later Jesus came back to life and gained the victory over those big, mean enemies—sin, Satan and death. What shall we say? How shall we respond? How about this? “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” Which is to say, “Jesus is number one, forever and ever and ever!”

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Zechariah 9:9-10, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

- Ⓟ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Philippians 2:5-11, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- The **Gospel Reading**, Matthew 21:1-11, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’” The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Winchester New LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark! All the tribes hosanna cry!
O Savior meek, pursue thy road, with palms and scattered garments strowed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die!
O Christ, thy triumph now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on, ride on in majesty! The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see the approaching sacrifice!

Ride on, ride on in majesty! Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh;
The Father on his sapphire throne awaits his own anointed Son!

Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die;
Bow thy meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, thy pow'r and reign.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

☐ Please repeat after me. Jesus Christ. (Jesus Christ). Is the best thing. (Is the best thing). That ever happened. (That every happened). To me. (To me).

James Bonham was a young lawyer from South Carolina. He had only been in Texas for three months when he volunteered to fight at the Alamo—a small fort near the Guadalupe River in San Antonio. On February 23, 1836, as General Santa Anna and his 2,000 Mexican troops gathered, the 182 men at the Alamo prepared for battle. Just then, James Bonham broke through enemy lines and rode his horse to find help in Goliad, Texas. No one in Goliad was willing to fight. Next, Bonham rode to Victoria, Texas. No one in Victoria was willing to fight. What did James Bonham do? He rode back to the Alamo—back to the fight, back to the battle, certain he would die.

We're in a series of sermons from Matthew's gospel called Places of the Passion. Today we begin our walk in Bethphage—a village on the Mount of Olives. At Bethphage Jesus rides into Jerusalem—back to the fight, back to the battle, most certain he would die.

“When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken up, asking, ‘Who is this?’” (Matthew 21:10) “Who is this?” That's the question for Palm Sunday—that's the question for the ages. Who is Jesus? We get this right; we get everything right. We get this wrong; we get everything else wrong.

Who is Jesus? Some say Jesus is a Therapist—he helps us cope with life's problems, tells us how valuable we are and encourages us not to be so hard on ourselves. Some say Jesus is a coffee lover—he drinks fair trade coffee at Starbucks, loves spiritual conversations and goes to film festivals. Some say Jesus is a Coach—he helps Christian athletes run faster and jump higher than non-Christian athletes. Some say Jesus is a Hippie—he says, “Give peace a chance, imagine a world without religion, and remember all you need is love.” Some say Jesus is a Spiritual Guru who says, “Get out in nature and find the god within you.” Some say Jesus is a Revolutionary—he teaches us to rebel against the status quo, stick it to the man and blame everything on the system. Some say Jesus is a Good Example—he shows us how to change the planet and help little old ladies cross the street.

Then there is the Plastic Jesus. Paul Newman stars in the movie *Cool Hand Luke*. He sings a song in the movie called “Plastic Jesus.” It includes these lyrics, “Well, I don't care if it rains

or freezes. Long as I have my plastic Jesus.” A Plastic Jesus believer sees the Savior as a good-luck charm, a rabbit’s foot, a four-leaf-clover. Someone they turn to when they need a favor.

We all need the real Jesus! Enter Matthew! Who is Jesus? Matthew tells us in spades!

Jesus is our humble King who serves. “Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them.’” (Matthew 21:1–3) Jesus employs the law of royal levy. The law of royal levy gave a king authority to get anything, from anyone at any time. “The Lord needs them!”

Who is Jesus? Jesus is a King—check that. Jesus is the King. But what kind of King? “Behold, your King comes to you, humble and riding on a donkey.” (Matthew 21:5) Compare this with the verse Matthew is quoting. “Behold, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, humble and riding on a donkey.” (Zechariah 9:9)

It is surprising that Matthew omits Zechariah’s phrase, “righteous and having salvation”—both words appear frequently in his gospel, seventeen and fifteen times respectively. By leaving them out, Matthew emphasizes Christ’s attribute of humility. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus makes this clear when he says, “I am humble and lowly in heart.”

The donkey further accents Christ’s humility. By not riding on a horse, Jesus announces that he doesn’t come to bark out orders, but to wash feet. Jesus doesn’t come to dominate and intimidate, but to love, forgive and shed tears. Jesus doesn’t come to marshal an army, but to stretch out his hands upon the cross—for us and for our salvation. Though rich, this King became poor so that through his poverty he might make us rich—beyond our wildest imagination. A King like this is worth shouting about!

Jesus is a King, alright. But Jesus is a humble King. Jesus uses his authority to serve. Who? Us! He says in Matthew 20:28, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey—back to the fight, back to battle, most certain he would die. Why would he do that? To give his life as a ransom for many. A ransom is a sum of money paid to release prisoners. Prisoners to anxiety, emptiness, fear, sin and selfishness—prisoners like us. Martin Luther says Jesus ransomed us, “not with gold or silver, but with his holy precious blood and his innocent suffering and death.” Prisoners to sin, we’ve been ransomed and redeemed—bought back by the blood! Jesus is our humble King who serves.

Jesus is our mighty warrior who fights. “The crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:9) Hosanna means, “Save us now!” Couple that with the palm branches—an ancient sign of victory—and Jesus is what? Jesus is a mighty

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PALM SUNDAY: BETHPHAGE

CHILDREN'S SERMON

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

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- ▣ Do you have a favorite sports team? What do you say when your team wins? How about, “We’re number one!” “We’re the best!” “Our team is in first place!”

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

MUSIC GUIDE

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The image displays a piano accompaniment for the tune 'Ellacombe 76 76 D'. The score is written in G minor (one flat) and common time (C). It consists of four systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system starts at measure 1. The second system starts at measure 6. The third system starts at measure 11. The fourth system starts at measure 16. The music is characterized by a steady, rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

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To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed amid an exultant crowd,
The victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud;
The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,
Nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

“Hosanna in the highest!” that ancient song we sing;
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav’n our King.
Oh, may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice,
And in God’s joyful presence eternally rejoice!

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PALM SUNDAY:
BETHPHAGE

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SONG
SUGGESTIONS

- The following song suggestions can be used for a more contemporary worship service in place of the more traditional hymns included in this kit. Rights to use these songs in the service must be purchased by your parish through CCLI or other copyright licensing agencies.

“Blessed Be Your Name” by Beth Redman and Matt Redman

“Sing Hosanna” by Joshua Blakesley

“10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)” by Jonas Myrin and Matt Redman

“Be Unto Your Name” by Gary Sadler and Lynn DeShazo

“Humble King” by Brenton Brown

“You Are My King (Amazing Love)” by Billy J. Foote