

Bride Valley: A Service for Palm Sunday 2020

Please join with us at 9.30 or another time more convenient to you. You will need a bible for the readings and a cross, possibly last year's palm cross if you still have it, a cross that you wear or you may make one from paper or use reeds if you have some in the garden if you are creative.

Hosanna to the Son of David, the King of Israel. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Introduction

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 join 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.

Hold up your cross and pray with me

God our Saviour, whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die;

Let these crosses 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 with you,

In the unity of the Holy Spirit,

One God, now and forever.

Amen.

Bible Reading: Philippians 2. 5-11

The Collect

Let us pray: True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah:

Grant us the faith to know you and love you,

That we may be found beside you on the way of the cross

Which is the path of glory.

Amen.

Hymn: 'Ride on, ride on in majesty' (chosen this week by David Woodford)

<https://youtu.be/VAh1lzSQ3P4>

Gospel Reading: Matthew 26.14 – end of 27
(Shortened to Matthew 27. 11-54 if you prefer)

Reflection by the Reverend Jane Williams

Victory

Today we think about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jewish families, men, women and children out in the streets hailing him as their King and yet, because we know what happens later in the week, on that first Good Friday we can barely imagine what it must have been like for him.

What a difference a week makes.

For us too, in these weirdest of times, one minute we are going about our everyday lives, seemingly without a care in the world and the next, our country is in complete lockdown. Our freedom gone. We are at risk of being stopped by the police for driving to the beach! All because of a potentially life-threatening virus.

Day by day we are being given new advice and guidelines to follow in order to save as many lives as possible from this dreadful virus and I don't know about you, but I'm finding it all a bit confusing and disconcerting.

And the questions I'm being asked the most are about 'hope' and 'trust'.

What a difference a week makes.

Next Sunday we will be celebrating the biggest triumph, Jesus' resurrection and ultimate victory over sin and death.

As Christians, that shows us just how much God loved us, God loves us, giving us a sure and certain hope, a confident expectation of life after death for us all.

We are living in uncertain times and who would have thought at the beginning of this year, 2020, this decade even, that we would be facing our own mortality head on.

This Holy Week, as we look together at the Cross of Good Friday, we can be confident that God who has begun a good work in each of our lives will be with us until it is finished, “until the day of Jesus Christ”. (Philippians 1. 6)

I believe that this coming week, more than ever as Easter approaches, we are reminded of all that God has achieved for each and every one of us on the cross and so we can trust him absolutely with our future. Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. He has the victory. **Amen.**

Keep a time of quiet for 2-3 minutes, focusing on the Cross; hold up to God in your prayers your own needs, your family and friends as we shall all try to unite ourselves in prayer this Sunday even though we cannot meet together in Church.

Let Us Pray:

What a difference a week makes

Here we are again, meeting apart, but praying together in unity across our churches:

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.

Loving God, we pray for the whole church across the world and especially those suffering the effects of war and famine, we particularly pray for those suffering from Covid – 19.

We pray for our Queen and governor, Elizabeth and all in authority, especially parliament navigating our country at this time. We pray also for our Archbishop Justin, our Bishops, Nicholas and Karen and for all who continue to minister here in the Bride Valley.

Be with everyone working to keep essential services going, NHS workers, teachers, carers, pharmacists, food retailers, lorry drivers and refuse collectors.

Give wisdom and insight to scientists and engineers working on tests, vaccines and equipment to help.

We pray for all our businesses across the Bride Valley, those who continue to provide essential services and those who are at risk because of lack of work too.

Be near to those who are sad because they are far apart from those they love. We pray for those who have lost loved ones, their grief and mourning made more painful by the restrictions on meeting even for funerals.

Let your love be present in every home and your great power protect our loved ones.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
For ever and ever. Amen.

As we say the following prayer for blessing, let us pray for God's blessing on each other

Blessing: May the Father; who so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
Bring you by faith to his eternal life.
May Christ who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will,
Keep you steadfast as you walk with him the way of his cross.
May the Spirit, who strengthens us to suffer with Christ
That we may share his glory, set your minds on life and peace
and may the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with us and remain with us always. **Amen.**