



The Methodist Church

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield, Pilning and Shirehampton Methodist Churches.

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We are part of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit (www.bsgc.org.uk),
a family of over forty churches serving communities across the local area.

“This too will pass” (Anon).

“All will be well, and all manner of things will be well” (Julian of Norwich).

PALM SUNDAY, 5th APRIL, 2020.

Dear friends, at this point of Lent, I am usually busy with preparations to mark Holy Week including special services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, then looking forward to celebrating Easter including a service at day break, decorating empty crosses, and joining Christians across the world to celebrate the glory of the resurrection. Despite the changes currently enforced on us, we can still mark key moments at the end of Jesus' earthly ministry: the 'Hosannas' of Palm Sunday, the inception of the simple meal Jesus shared with his disciples and which he continues to share with us through Holy Communion, imagining the pain of his trial and his subsequent death on the cross, before hearing the reaction of those early morning visitors to the empty tomb as they experienced the resurrection. It's my turn to produce the printed devotions this week (overleaf), and through them I invite you join the journey of Holy Week through to Easter using Matthew's Gospel.

'Hosanna' means different things in the Bible, depending on the context. In some, it's simply a word for 'help,' which I imagine is in many of our prayers during this pandemic. The pastoral visitors are continuing to make routine contact with you, so don't hesitate to ask for practical help should you feel you need it. Do reach out to them or to me, please don't be alone: even Jesus cried out for help on the cross. 'Hosanna' is also an expression of blessing and praise, and I have been blessed by the conversations and contact I've had in the past couple of weeks, not least hearing about the fellowship and friendship which is being shared on many levels, assuring us of God's love even in the midst of this difficult season.

The well-being of all those involved in our church life and the wider community continues to be the highest priority, so I hope and pray that this finds you well alongside those close to you. In the name of Jesus, the heart of all love,

Rev Patrick.

CHURCH NOTICES.

All churches.

- **Sunday Worship for Palm Sunday.** As Holy Week begins, the BBC1 service for Palm Sunday is 10.45am from Hereford Cathedral.
- **Songs of Praise for Palm Sunday,** at 1.15pm on BBC1, is from Glasgow.
- We are all called to be good stewards of the gifts and resources which God provides for us, including the financial well-being of our churches, which goes to support our ministry and mission including the buildings we care for. Much of day-to-day life is currently on hold, but not our regular bills! Can I ask you to ensure that you continue to bless your local church with your offerings during this period when our buildings are closed, if your financial circumstances allow. If you contribute cash through the offering, please put this aside in some way or consider transferring to using a standing order or the envelope scheme. More details about how to do this next week.
- **Younger members of our congregations,** I hope that you are well and enjoying school at

home, and that you will find this useful for you and everyone you are with <https://bit.ly/342SNpq> (provided © ROOTS for Churches Ltd (www.rootsontheweb.com) 2002-2020).

- **Weekly notices:** Please submit items to John Hopper by each Tuesday (p.hopper1@btinternet.com, or 0117 951 4529). To be added to the electronic circulation, please email John Hopper.

Shirehampton.

- Belated good wishes to Ess, who celebrated her 98th birthday last Thursday. Sheila is recovering well from her skin cancer operation last Monday week. Neil has had a bed delivered to his flat and they are putting a care package in place, but Michelle will carry on doing much of the caring. Vick has been experiencing some pain, which comes and goes, and has some family concerns. Please pray for these and Joan and Sylvia.

Horfield.

- **Fundraising quiz sheet:** keep your brain active with our fun quiz. Just £1 to enter, available from Helen Wallbridge at treasurer@horfieldmethodist.org.uk . Entries to be in by midday on Sunday, 17th May (note change of date). Quiz sheet can be sent by email to anyone else who would like one. People can pay the £1 entry when they next attend church! Answer sheets can either be either emailed to Helen, or posted to 20 Cransley Crescent, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4PG (not Church). **Note.** Small, but significant, error in the quiz. No 7 of the Missing Vowels should be **RS GRCS**, not RSG RCS.
- **Action:** This is a time for us and others to show a spirit of generosity and kindness. There are significant numbers of people who are at risk of becoming isolated and increasingly vulnerable. Feeding Bristol, FareShare, our Foodbanks, Bristol Noise, Christian Action Bristol and others are working closely with the Council to secure supplies of food to ensure they are able to support the vulnerable. Can you help with this great city-wide effort, by:-
 - **praying** that all agencies involved would have resilience and wisdom;
 - **being generous** in donating food and money to the work of foodbanks and FareShare - www.christianactionbristol.org.uk/food-poverty, or www.feedingbristol.org/donate/;
 - **volunteering time** via www.thenoise.org.uk/bristolchurchresponse;
 - **looking out** for isolated and vulnerable people in your local community, to support them where possible. This is a time when we need to come together as a city, to help build Bristol as a City of Hope, and the Christian community has a vital role to play in all of this.
- **Horfield Prayer Support.**
An important part of our discipleship is to pray for our community and each other.
This week you are asked to pray for the following people and their families:-
Rachel Canning, Sarah Chard, and Nicholas Chivers.

This weeks Lectionary readings are:

Isaiah 50.4-9a; Psalm 118.1-2,19-29; Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 21.1-11

For this week's devotions, **you will need a Bible**, open at Matthew 21:1-11, **something representing a palm branch or coat**, to imagine those strewn ahead of Jesus as he entered Jerusalem; and **somewhere in your home or garden to relax** as you use these devotions.

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with Your love, show us how to serve the neighbours we have from you.

Lent 6. On our journey through Lent, we remind ourselves about the road Jesus took, one of pain and suffering, yet self giving love, and his suffering challenges us to respond. Today we recall the palm branches and clothing strewn on the road as Jesus entered Jerusalem on a journey that would end in him losing his life. We remember all who are grieving today, thinking of those who are travelling the difficult journey of loss. **We pray together:** Lord Jesus, as you suffered, so many in our world still suffer today. Challenge us to make a difference through our actions and our prayers. Amen

'Be still for a moment; open your senses to all that is around you; be aware of all that sustains you in life.'

PRAY: Lord God, let us approach with shouts of praise: hosanna in the highest!
Let us draw close to you on this day that caused disturbance and disruption.
Let us approach the throne of the one who came as a humble servant,
who came to set us free, to change things for ever.
Hosanna to the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Amen!

READ: Matthew 21.1-11

ASK: What's familiar about this for me? What's new or different for me as I read this account? Is there anything I would like to share with someone about it? If you are with family members, share your thoughts. If you are alone, why not call a friend and share those thoughts now, or later?

IMAGINE: ... the following, which explores the bible reading. If you are alone, try reading it aloud with different voices (only God will know!) If you are with family members, share the parts out and read.

James and Andrew enter nervously.

James: Are you sure this is the right place?

Andrew: This is where Jesus said.

James: Well I am not used to donkeys. I am better with boats – they don't kick!

Andrew: (pointing off stage) Look over there! See the donkey and the foal? That must be them.

The owner enters, making Andrew and James start with fright.

Owner: Did I hear you guys want a donkey?

Andrew: Yes, sir. Err...just to borrow.

Owner: You weren't thinking of nicking those two over there?

James: Not nicking...borrowing?

Owner: Perhaps you'd like to borrow a horse instead. I own horses as well.

Andrew: Oh no. The Master was quite specific. It was that donkey and her foal.

Owner: So, did your Master give you a password?

James: A password?

Andrew: (whispering) Of course he did, James!

James: Oh! He said, 'the Lord has need of it'.

Owner: Then the Lord shall have it. Come with me and I'll introduce you to them, Mr Fishermen.

All depart. The sound of donkey hooves is heard.

[Sketch is provided © ROOTS for Churches Ltd (www.rootsontheweb.com) 2002-2020]

READ AGAIN: Matthew 21.1-11 then **ASK AGAIN:** What's changed as you read the story again? If you are with family members, share your thoughts. If you are alone, why not call a friend and share those thoughts now, or later?

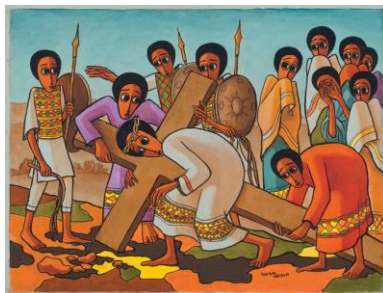
A CONCLUDING THOUGHT: In choosing a donkey, Jesus is a stark contrast to kings and generals who would prefer horses and chariots. Just as he was challenged in the wilderness at the start of his ministry, Jesus might well have been tempted to act differently as he entered Jerusalem nearing its end, perhaps with the hope of becoming the political leader that so many hoped for. Yet, once more, he acts out his liberating leadership, entering the city as a humble peacemaker, riding a working animal with her foal, symbols of the everyday and of weakness. Shouts of *Hosanna!* welcome this new order, the people hungry for righteousness and mercy. As the journey turns towards the cross, the Isaiah reading also reminds us of the cost of vocation, never more so than in Jesus (stated in Philippians 2.5-11).

'LORD, GRACIOUSLY HEAR US': offer some prayer, then finish with the Lord's Prayer.

BLESSING: 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.' Amen (Numbers 6:24ff, NIV)

FOR THE WEEK AHEAD: Why not read the account Jesus' journey to the cross, a chapter per day from Matthew's Gospel, starting with Chapter 22 on Monday, 23 on Tuesday, ... Read ahead a little so that you get as far as Chapter 26v30 on Maundy Thursday, then read from there to the end of Chapter 27 on Good Friday, have a break on Saturday, before reading Chapter 28 on Easter Sunday.

VIDEO REFLECTIONS: a video reflection from me will be available on church websites over the course of this weekend, then one for Maundy Thursday and for Easter Sunday. More details on the latter next week, but keep an eye out. **Rev Patrick**



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- On **Songs of Praise** last Sunday, Aled Jones interviewed the Archbishop of York designate The Right Reverend Stephen Cottrell and asked him, in view of the current situation, about a favourite hymn.

Stephen Cottrell felt an appropriate one for today's virus-stricken world was '10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)' by Matt Redman.

The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes.

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name.

- **From Colston Grady:** "Dear friends, I've not been able to contact everyone, hope you and families and friends are well, I've attached an encouraging prayer at the bottom, as words don't fall easy for me. I also thank the Lord for our NHS, Delivery Drivers, Shop workers and everyone working so hard through these unprecedented difficult times. Much Love. Colston Grady. X"

God of love and hope,
you made the world and care for all creation,
but the world feels strange right now.
The news is full of stories about Coronavirus.
Some people are worried that they might get ill.
Others are anxious for their family and friends.
Be with them and help them to find peace.
We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists,
and all who are working to discover the right medicines
to help those who are ill.
Thank you that even in these anxious times,
you are with us.
Help us to put our trust in you and keep us safe.
Amen.

- **The New Room – Friday reflection.** Like so many places, The New Room is currently closed. As there is therefore no communion service on Fridays lunchtimes, they are now posting a Friday Reflection across their social media channels every week, ie. @newroombristol, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. It is hoped that these short reflections will act as a point of spiritual focus, enabling people to have a moment of quiet thought and prayer.
- **Wordsearch for Easter.**

See next page.

Our thanks to Eurfron Parry.

The words you are searching for are the answers to the questions, and can be forwards, diagonal or backwards.

1. Jewish Festival
2. Carried Jesus
3. The word the crowd shouted
4. To die on a cross
5. Erected on Calvary
6. He saved us
7. Jesus did this in 3 days
8. An area where Jesus was betrayed
9. A woman who went to the tomb
10. He betrayed Jesus
11. He judged Jesus
12. Jesus overthrew the tables here
13. Conducted by the Roman Governor
14. Jesus wore a crown of these
15. Jesus wore this
16. They cast lots
17. The crowd chose this man
18. The people waved leaves from this tree
19. The period leading up to Easter
20. The number of times Peter denied Jesus

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