

# Entrance as King - Palm Sunday

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 05 April 2020

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning and welcome to Palm Sunday worship here at Pendleton Center and First Niagara Falls United Methodist Churches. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad.

This is the day This is the day That the Lord has made That the Lord has made Let us rejoice Let us rejoice And be glad in it And be glad in it This is the day That the Lord has made Let us rejoice And be glad in it This is the day This is the day That the Lord has made Let us pray Holy God A Redeemer And King All glory Laud and honor Is given to you With songs of praise And shouts of Hosanna As we open our hearts to you Fill us with your spirit Cover us by your grace And unify us Through Jesus Christ Our Savior And Lord Amen Amen And now

Even though you're at home I'd like to invite you all to stand If you're able As we sing together All glory Laud and honor All glory Laud and honor To the Redeemer To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring Thou art the King of Israel Thou David's royal son Who in the Lord's name Commest the King And blessed one All glory Laud and honor To the Redeemer King

To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring The people of the Hebrews With psalm With psalms Before the wind Our praise And prayer And anthems Before the We present All glory Laud and honor To the Redeemer King To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring To thee To thee Before thy passion They sang their hands of praise To thee Now high Exalted Our melody We raise Of glory Laud and honor

To the Redeemer King To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring Thou didst accept their praises Accept the praise we bring Who in all good delightest Thou good and gracious King Of glory Of glory Laud and honor To the Redeemer King To whom the lips of children Made sweet hosannas ring The Lord be with you And also with you Please be seated We are so glad that you are here worshiping with us this morning on Palm Sunday And we just wanted to draw your attention to a few things First of all there is an online friendship card so I encourage you to click on that link and fill it out so we know who is worshiping along with us and if you have any prayer concerns or if you have any praises where you want to shout out a praise a blessing of what God has done in your life put that on the friendship card as well and we can pray over them and rejoice with you in all of the blessings.

[ 4 : 2 4 ] Also there's a link for children's activity page an audience and they can only have children's positivity page so if you have children with you you can download that just like when they come to worship and they get the clipboard and they get the clipboard and they get the clipboard anyways then for them. Well there's a link baesYeah, we can y' and they get the clipboard and they can color and such, that is available too.

So you can see the links for those and those are an opportunity to engage. We did wanna also mention that we have opportunities for engagement through our Facebook group.

So you can join PCUMC Fellowship Group. And that is a group of people that are gathering together and they're giving each other support and encouragement.

There's evening devotions and prayer and there's Bible studies and it's just a wonderful way to keep connected with one another. I also wanna let you know that for the most part, there's nothing going on because we wanna follow all the rules, right?

We wanna make sure that we're doing all the social distancing. We do have a couple of things that are happening though. The dinner in Niagara Falls is happening on Thursday night.

[ 5 : 45 ] So if you know of anybody in need, that dinner is happening on Thursday nights. It's being done in a very safe way and following all the rules, but we wanna make sure we take care of people. And in that same venue, we also have the dinner that goes out for the homeless in the city of Buffalo.

That is also happening. But again, check with Sandy on that because in following the rules for both of those ministries, we have just a very small amount of people who are working with that so that we can make sure we're maintaining the social distancing.

So I just want to encourage you in this moment to think about how God has blessed you. God is moving, even though this seems crazy, even though some of us are like really like going a little stir crazy, we are being blessed.

God is moving in some way in all of our lives. And so I encourage you to open up our eyes, open up our ears, open up our hearts and souls to actually notice what God is doing in our lives and rejoice in the many blessings, the many blessings that God is giving to us.

And so we have an offering, a time where we give back to God as a way of expressing our gratitude to God. So at this time, we're going to hear a song by Sue Aceowicz.

[ 7 : 01 ] It's a tradition in our church, the Holy City, and she plays it on the organ every year. And it's a wonderful blessing to us all. And it's a tradition in your church.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 11 : 39 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Let us pray for our offering. Lord, thank you for this opportunity that we have to have a church, Lord God, that we can give to.

Thank you for the finances that you have provided for them. And Lord, I pray that you would give us an extra special portion. And right now there's people that can't give because of their own financial struggles.

Lord, I pray that you would bless them. And Lord, I pray that you would help us to be able to be a blessing to them. But Lord, I pray for this gift of the tithes and offerings that have been prepared for you.

[ 13 : 30 ] It's a little different than normally we do give, but Lord, we know that you bless. And I pray that this church would be a blessing and this offering would be a blessing in your name.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna to the King of Kings! Hosanna to King David! Hosanna to the King who sits upon the throne! Hi! Hi, Junior Church!

I'm excited because today is Palm Sunday. And on Palm Sunday, we remember the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. And all of the people got so excited that they waved palm branches and they threw all of their cloaks down on the ground so that Jesus' donkey wouldn't have to ride in the mud.

This was a very special time that Jesus was going into Jerusalem because he was going into Jerusalem knowing that he was going to die on the cross eventually later on in that same week.

But he went to Jerusalem anyway.

[ 14 : 43 ] Do you know why? He went to Jerusalem because he loves us so much. And we remember what he did when we wave our palm branches on Palm Sunday.

And then we go through the rest of the week and remember everything that he did when we come to the day when Easter Sunday happens. I remember getting palm branches here at church every single year.

They don't always look like this. This has got lots of palm leaves on it, doesn't it? It does. It has lots of palm leaves. Sometimes when we're in church, they just give us like one of them and it's a real, real long one.

And then some people know how to turn those palm leaves into a cross. And they fold it up in a special way.

And someone gave me this last year because they made it out of their palm branch. Did you ever have someone take a palm branch and make a cross for you out of it?

[ 15 : 43 ] I hope you did. And next year when we're all together, we're going to make palm branches. We're going to take our palms and wave them. And we're going to make palm crosses again. Maybe you'll be able to make something like a palm cross.

When our palm cross is in our room or it's in our book, like sometimes I use my palm cross as a bookmark for my Bible so I can remember where I've been reading.

And that reminds us of why Jesus went into Jerusalem that day when the people waved their palms. Why he died on the cross because he loved us to save us from our sins.

Now, Jesus loves us so much that he saved us from our sins. And we want to share God's love with everybody, right?

Yeah, I know you know what's coming next. Get down on the floor and we're going to say God's love fills us up and fills us up and fills us up and fills us up until we overflow.

[ 16 : 48 ] That's right. And then we can say, if you make your heart with me, can you make a heart?

Yep, don't forget how. When God's love is in my heart, I can love everybody.

That's right. Let's do it one more time all together. When God's love is in my heart, I can love everybody. Everybody, that's wonderful.

I know that you remember the verse that we were talking about a few weeks ago. It was a few weeks ago and it's from Psalm 107. It says, give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

His love endures forever. Can you say that with me? Let's try. Ready? Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

[ 17 : 57 ] His love endures forever. That's right. And I know you want to be thankful to the Lord. And I bet you can think of lots of things that you're thankful for.

So now we're going to sing that song all about how we want to be thankful and grateful for everything God has done, for who God is in our lives.

We're going to be so, so excited. We're going to wave our palm branches. Are you ready? Are you ready to sing the song about being thankful? All right. I like to think about the goodness of the Lord.

He gives me everything I need and so much more. So I just want to lift my hands and say that I love him. I just want to lift my heart in prayer.

And I want to be thankful. I want to be thankful. I want to be grateful. I want to be grateful. I want to remember everything that the Lord has done. I want to be thankful. I want to be grateful.

[ 18 : 59 ] I want to be grateful. I want to be grateful. I want to be grateful.

The Lord has done I want to be Faithful I want to be Faithful I want to be I want to be I want to be Faithful I like to think about The goodness of the Lord He gives me everything I need and so much more So I just want to live My hands And say that I love Him I just want to live My heart in praise And I want to be Faithful I want to be Grateful I want to remember Everything That the Lord has done I want to be Faithful I want to be Faithful I want to be I want to be I want to be Faithful

I want to be Grateful I want to remember Everything That the Lord has done I want to be Faithful I want to be Grateful I want to be I want to be I want to be I want to be I want to be I want to be I want to be Our online prayer vigil is going on too and it's an ongoing prayer vigil that we want you to participate in During this time lots of folks are in need of prayer Your family Your neighborhood Our community And our whole world Marilyn Barney A member of our prayer team shared this prayer prompt for our prayers for this week It comes from Isaiah chapter 12 verse 2 Surely God is my salvation I will trust and not be afraid The Lord The Lord is my strength and my song

He has become my salvation And Marilyn points out that God is always with us God is our strength And we rejoice in knowing that God is with us God is our song God is a very very present help in our lives So pray this week that we may all live in trusting in God in that way And take time this week for praise and for thanksgiving Please let us know that you're praying Let us know what time Let us know what day You can tell us that on the friendship card in the notes And now as we move into our prayer requests I want to let everyone know that we have a couple of people in the hospital We have Patrick Hahn who is in ICU at Buffalo General and Sean Mahalski's dad Leanne's husband

And there of course their families are all very concerned that they can't go in and visit It's a hard time for us all when we can't go visit loved ones in the hospital So we want to keep them lifted up along with folks our families who are dealing directly with the virus and with other issues of health And we want to bring the sad news and pray for the families of Julie Maciejewski whose husband Mike passed away this week and for the family of Ursula Morrison who passed away this week as well We've had some other concerns raised within our church family just within the past couple of days Please pray for Irene Tate She was in the hospital She's been discharged but continues to have serious health issues Also pray for Carmen Falbo and for his wife Gloria Carmen has been admitted to the hospital with critical health issues We do have some praises Patrick Hahn is actually home now but he's got a long road of recovery ahead of him

[ 23 : 15 ] So continue to lift up Patrick in your prayers And Judy Snow's son Sean is doing well and she's back home here with us As we consider these needs that have been brought to us and those needs that are on your heart let's turn to the Lord in prayer Our gracious God of all creation You are always with us You are always willing to hear and to answer our prayers At this time, Lord God we are concerned for many things There are folks, Lord God who are sick who are in need of a healing touch from you

There are folks, Lord God who are grieving losses of all kinds Lord, we bring them to you We come to you with our hearts full of love for them full of concern and we ask that you would touch them Bring wisdom to doctors and nurses and healthcare workers of all kinds Let them know what to do how to care well for those people who are in need of a healing touch Bring them your healing power Lord God Bring comfort to families who cannot visit their loved ones and to those who cannot be visited Let them know, Lord God that you are with all of them That you have put your love in their hearts in such a measure that even though there is a physical distance between us there is no distance in love

We pray also, Lord God for those who are in a state of grief over those loved ones who have passed on Comfort them, Lord God by your Spirit Draw them near to yourself Give them the hope of eternal life that is in you Let them know that you have got their loved ones that you love and care for them deeply Father, we pray now in Jesus' name for our ongoing situation that is so frustrating and is so troublesome to us We pray, Father, in Jesus' name that you will deliver us quickly from the effects of this virus in our land in our world in our communities in our homes We pray in Jesus' name that you would continue to provide all that we need that you would protect those who are unable to be at work

Lord God that you would hold up and protect those who are necessary workers who are caring for all kinds of folks first responders and healthcare workers Lord all of those people who have to be out on the front lines risking exposure and we just pray in Jesus' name that you would grant all of your people wisdom to care for one another in ways that we have not had to care for one another before Help us, Lord Protect us Protect our children Protect our elderly loved ones Protect all those that we care for Be with us Lord God And now Lord we just lift up the prayer that Jesus taught us because it is the prayer he gave us when his disciples asked him teach us Lord teach us to pray

And so we say a phrase at a time for all of those folks who don't know the prayer well and for those who are learning it especially our youngest members 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

[ 28 : 39 ] But deliver us From evil For thine is the kingdom And the power And the glory Forever and ever Amen And now Lord we just lift up Pastor Tom As he brings this message to us We come to hear from your word and to be blessed by hearing from you Lord we pray that all of our worship would be a blessing to you In Jesus name Amen Shall we hear from the word of the Lord The scripture reading today is Matthew 21 verses 1 through 16 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives Jesus sent two disciples saying to them 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 If anyone says anything to you say that the Lord needs them and he will send them right away This took place to fulfill what spoken through the prophet 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 The disciples went and did as Jesus instructed them They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted Hosanna to David the son of David Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest heaven When Jesus entered Jerusalem the whole city was stirred and asked Who is this?

The crowds answered This is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves It is written He said to them My house will be called a house of prayer but you are making it a den of robbers The blind and the lame came to him at the temple and he healed them But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts Hosanna to the son of David They were indignant Did you hear what these children are saying?

They asked him Yes Jesus replied Have you never read from the lips of children and infants you Lord have called forth your praise? This is the word of the Lord Thanks be to God Thank you Dan A parade A great gathering of people so yesterday We don't do that much anymore do we?

That would be wrong to gather together to celebrate God Or is it that we have lack of faith in God and we don't trust God to protect us Can we celebrate Palm Sunday without a crowd?

[ 32 : 04 ] Early in the service you saw an image of the children coming into the sanctuary with Jesus Now you know that was from last year Because we're physically distancing from each other Because to be honest we have a fear When I was young we had a big fear we were taken out in the hallways and lined up against our lockers as the teachers would go down through the hallways making sounds like bombs dropping Sometimes we'd actually when we were little we would crawl under our desk duck and cover they called it because we were afraid a nuclear bomb was going to be dropped on our head We really honestly believed it We saw it everywhere Then when I was an adult we saw the Berlin Wall come crumbling down and our fears melted away We won So we said let the good times roll

I got to tell you we were little kids out in the hallway we were praying to God Dear God don't let this be the day that the real bomb is dropping But we don't need to pray to God when we don't have any problems right? There's no bombs coming We're okay Don't need God anymore We have other things Things that in some ways are an illusion of power but we give our confidence to it They seem strong The government and an army a mighty church our boss People who have a lot of money They talk sometimes about what are called estates It began in the middle ages when they were talking about the three estates which were the clergy the nobility and the people the three sources of power if you will in that culture in our culture we have the church still we have the government we have big business we have the schools and the academies and the universities we have the media sometimes they call themselves the fourth or fifth estate we have the military they seem so powerful yet all their power doesn't seem to be able to stop this little invisible virus spreading through our culture not blaming anyone just recognizing that sometimes what we think is so powerful can actually be so impotent in our culture in 1st chronicles it says to us for great is the lord and most worthy of praise he is to be feared above all gods for all the gods of the nations are idols but the lord made the heavens everything but god is simply an illusion

Jesus talks about the robbers the thieves in the temple that were changing money what they would do was very simple people would come from around the world and in the temple they had special coins that could only be used in the temple that looked different from everything else and so unless you had those coins you couldn't do anything you couldn't make your offering you couldn't purchase a sacrifice you had to have those special coins so they charged this interest this exchange rate that was outrageous and they charged it to everybody it wasn't just that they were taking money from the rich or taking it from the poor which it says that Jesus went in and he turned over the table of the money changers and he took the place where they were selling doves and tossed it apart why doves?

because doves were the offering of the poorest of the poor and somehow these people thought it was okay to take advantage of people's faith their religion their faith in God and their need for this little dove to overcharge them to say their doves were not worthy enough to steal from them and worst of all to steal from them in the name of God so Jesus turned everything upside down kind of like the virus has turned our lives upside down Jerusalem was the capital of that region it was the capital of the political establishment where King Herod had his palace it was it was the place the Romans had a palace with Pontius Pilate it was the place where the high priest had the temple it was the capital of power and Jesus it says in here in verse 11 is a prophet a prophet of God and Jesus comes into the capital and in that short little passage we have here

God is making his claim on all the power of the earth he is saying that he is more powerful he is more important he takes precedence over everything all of those things whether it be the government or the business or the military or the schools or anything even the religious organizations Jesus tears down the political power the economic power the religious power because he's God our God is too small our God is too small we simply don't recognize how much power he has we relegate God to corners of our life and that bow down to the idols of the nations that we have made oh the politicians seem so strong oh we're afraid of the military or the police oh we're worried about those who have money oh we're concerned about what will they say about us in the media can we be a star but where is

[ 38 : 24 ] God God is a corner I like to think of it as a pie we have a circle of life and each corner of our lives people think of as a piece of that pie our family our work our politics our social activities even our church has a piece of the pie and we think of God as being a piece of that pie we give him we give him some time we give him space he has a piece for some it's even a fairly large piece but you see God doesn't see himself as a piece of the pie he sees himself as the whole pie he's the boundary of the whole thing he holds the universe in his hands they sang Hosanna Hosanna which means God saves us and Christians know that our lives are in the hands of a living

God who made heavens and earth so he overcomes sickness he drives out demons he is the power of power he is the king of kings and that's what we proclaim on Palm Sunday there's a parable in the Bible we've been using parables as we talk about kingdom living and this is a very short parable it talks about how Jesus at one time was accused by the religious leaders of casting out demons in the name of Satan so the parable is this it's actually a very simple little story it says that there was a powerful man a strong man which represents Satan and it says that if you want to go into the strong man's house and take their possessions first you have to bind up the strong man because you can't take the possessions of the strong man until they're bound up and what the meaning of this is is that Satan has been given authority over some things in this world and Satan uses fear and brokenness and pain and worry all these kind of things to hold us but if we want to take them back from

Satan so that he doesn't possess us through the power of God we bind up Satan we bind up the powers of evil we bind up the fear we bind up the idolatry we bind it all up and we can live because God is the power to overcome our God is too small we see God as almost our servant that we give a little bit of time to when we feel like it we play lip service to him when he deserves so much more so he speaks about it as children would speak about it they were cheering him the children saying wonderful praises about him and shouting in the temple courts Hosanna to the son of David and the leaders were indignant do you hear what the children are saying about you and he says haven't you ever read from the lips of children and infants you lord have called forth your praise sometimes we have to remember that compared to god we are we are not even little children we are less than little children but if we would have the attitude towards our heavenly father that he is there for us that our god is huge bigger than a grown parent is to a little tiny child and we realize that we are dependent on our heavenly father we will have the victory of god we will remain frightened until we accept the power that holds all creation that holds all eternity as the guiding force of our lives i'm not afraid of the coronavirus i don't want you to misunderstand i'm not foolish i'm not going out and trying to look for it i don't want it i don't want you to get it and i don't want other people to get it either so we didn't have a parade and a gathering here at church today i'm not afraid of it because i know who holds my life and i know who holds my eternal destiny our god is too small but on top of that our god comes in such unexpected ways kind of like this your sword was stolen k but here's excalibur he has drawn the sword k did you free excalibur from the stone yes no i didn't arthur did the sword the sword you freed it arthur i did father i beg your forgiveness you must put it back god k now

Wait! Our unions will try! Stand back! Let the boy try!

Let the boy try! Come on, Arthur! Don't be afraid!

[ 44 : 39 ] We have our king! Let us be true! We have our king! I love the line where he says, put it back.

Put it back! The reason I chose this clip is because it was the only one I could find about King Arthur pulling the sword from the stone, where King Arthur didn't look like some hulky, muscular, strong and powerful hero kind of guy.

He looks like, well, like he doesn't belong being king. But he pulled the sword from the stone because he was the one chosen to be king.

The difficult we sometimes have is that our God is too small, but sometimes we feel that the God we talk about as being so powerful appears too small, moves too slow, doesn't seem to care, He's weak.

He's weak. Not a God that we would want to stake our lives on. Not a God with power.

[ 46 : 00 ] Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. I want you to think about that. Have you ever ridden on a donkey? I've ridden on a donkey. They are uncomfortable. They are weird. They're kind of strange looking.

And they certainly don't look noble. He didn't ride in on a horse or an elephant or a camel or something like that. He rode in on a donkey.

Now all the movies show the great kings, they all ride in on white horses with the sword high, right? Jesus rides in on a donkey and talks about being like a little child.

Simplicity. Humility. Not prestige. Jesus didn't come to Jerusalem because He wanted to show how powerful He was.

He came to Jerusalem because He wanted to connect with the people that were His people. He didn't bring a sword.

[ 47 : 01 ] He didn't bring an army. Because He knew the power is not something that comes from outside us.

It comes from within us. In the book of 1 John, it says, You, dear children, are from God. And have overcome them because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

We have the power to overcome demons, to overcome fear, to overcome the dangers of the world. Because God is with us. God is within us.

But you notice He calls us dear children. I'm not a child. They start saying that when they're, what, about three or four? By the time you get to be a teenager, I'm an adult.

And when we get to be around my age, we keep saying to our children, stop treating us like children. But God sees us as His children.

[ 48 : 01 ] A good king sees the people that serve Him, that follow Him, as His responsibility that He serves.

Sometimes we just misunderstand that. Because we're so impressed with the power that we see around us.

Do you know what the sword was used for? Remember, the sword was used by the king to protect His subjects, the people of His kingdom. Rarely was a sword used on people within the kingdom because they didn't need to do that.

The people in the kingdom were working with the king. And if they did use it within the kingdom, it was to protect the people in the kingdom from people who were abusive. The sword of the king exists to protect.

Not to hurt. Not to show great and incredible prestige and power. But to help those who are weak.



[ 49 : 12 ] Hosanna! God saves us! We follow God. Not just for our good, but for the good of the kingdom.

It's really fun in this story that in verse 14 and 15, Jesus actually is in the middle of a conversation with people all around Him. Big crowd.

He's got the religious leaders there and everything else. And He stops, it says, And the blind and the lame came to Him at the temple and He healed them. He just stops. Well, let's take a pause from the big parade.

Because there's somebody over here who's hurting. Let's stop the general procession. Because I need to take care of this person along the sidelines here.

Like a general who's leading the charge into battle. But they say, wait a minute, one of our soldiers is hurt and stops. Now that wouldn't be practical from a military perspective. But it's wonderful.

[ 50 : 13 ] From a perspective of seeing our leaders who care. God cares. He takes care of the weak, the sick. The king actually made provisions for the poorest.

To help them and love them. And in this case, the leaders, they get jealous. They're upset. How could you treat us with such indignation? We are the leaders of the nation.

Palm Sunday is also the Passion Sunday. It's a Sunday where we look forward to Easter. But first we have to see the cross on the way. Now we will have Good Friday service this week.

We encourage and invite you to come and attend that as well. Because we don't really understand the resurrection until we understand the cross. But we call this Passion Sunday because some people don't make Good Friday.

It's easier for you this year. Come and join us. Passion Sunday is the time when we remember our mortality. And the goal of this life is to get to the next.

[ 51 : 24 ] That we want to be on the right side of eternity. We want to be citizens. We want to be members of the kingdom of heaven. We want to be citizens.

The people shouted, Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We use that every week when we celebrate communion, right? Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

And they're referring to Jesus here. And that's why we use that in communion. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. But it's also about us.

If we come in the name of the Lord, we will be blessed. We will find joy and happiness even in the midst of brokenness. We will find healing even in the midst of suffering and pain.

We will find hope even in the midst of despair. We will find courage when everyone else is feeling afraid. But we need to come in the name of the Lord.

[ 52 : 24 ] Because kingdom living is a partnership. You cannot have a king without anybody in the kingdom. And if the people have no one leading them, they wander aimlessly.

It's a partnership between the king and the people. Hosanna! God saves! The next week we'll be proclaiming hallelujah! God is to be praised.

And so interestingly, if you read this, the people are honoring Jesus. They're putting their coats and they're putting palm leaves down on the ground so that even the feet of the donkey don't touch the earth as a sign of respect.

They put their coats over the donkey so Jesus isn't actually sitting on the donkey, sitting on the coats. Because they love him. They're honoring him.

Because they love their king. As we're supposed to love our king as well. It's an understanding we just don't have in our western democracy.

- [ 53 : 32 ] We look for every reason we can to criticize our leaders. We look at how to somehow bring people that are powerful down from their perch. To equalize them.
- Make it more democratic so everybody's kind of even. In a democracy, that may even be the right thing. But in a kingdom, the whole idea is to lift our king up.
- To make our king look better. To talk about how wonderful our king is. Because as our king succeeds, so do we succeed.
- So they praise him. And interestingly, it says that the praise of children is better than the praise of adults. And I have to kind of agree with that.
- You see, because children haven't learned to restrain themselves yet. Have you ever noticed that? Even in the midst of a worship service, you'll hear a child cry out. Now, we think they're crying, but they're crying out.
- [ 54 : 34 ] We see children that make noises or say things at the wrong time because they haven't learned how to properly restrain themselves. And so they'll say, hallelujah. Because they don't understand they're not supposed to anymore.
- We've learned how to restrain ourselves from being what God wants us to be. Attend VBS sometime. Amazing scene.
- Our entire sanctuary filled with children and young people. And they're not just worshipping God like we do in our nice, solemn, proper way. Listening to what people do and making sure we don't sing off-key.
- They are shouting and singing and jumping and praising God. So filled with excitement. That the power of it is hard for you to even imagine what it's like to be leading a group of people that are so excited about God.
- It affects even the person leading. Just as our worship of God affects our king. They love the king. And the king honors them with a parade.
- [ 55 : 43 ] Not to show his power. But to show his love. We think of parades. And we've got these crazy ideas of parades that are about tanks and missiles. And showing just how powerful we are.
- Maybe we'll have some jets fly over top. We used to have a parade out in Wyoming County. When my wife and I went to it the first time, we were like from this urban area. We were kind of like, what the heck is this?
- They're showing farm vehicles. And trucks. And regular kind of vehicles that we wouldn't associate with a parade. But they were just proud of what each other do to make the kingdom, that community, work.
- That's what a kingdom is about. They love the king. And the king loves them. 1 John in chapter 4 also says to us, and you know this verse, Remember the sword?
- The purpose of the sword is to punish those who are doing evil to our brothers and sisters. Or to protect those who would be harmed by someone who wants to do something nefarious to hurt our brothers and sisters.
- [ 57 : 04 ] That's the purpose of the sword. Not to oppress, but to protect and liberate and release. And the best of kings, the best of leaders, know that that's the purpose of why God gave them a sword.
- I put this thing down. I'm going to hit myself with it. Providence is a very strange thing. And I need to speak to that before we close today.
- It says in verse 4 that this whole thing took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet. Say to daughter Zion, see your king comes to you gentle and riding on a donkey on a colt and the fowl of a donkey.

This was all predicted. This was all determined by God beforehand. In fact, even the use of the donkey, they said go into the city and tell the people to let you have the donkey that was prepared for this.

It's all set up. Preordained. Sometimes I hear that from people. It doesn't really matter what we do because God has already made a decision about what will happen.

[ 58 : 19 ] What will happen with my life? What will happen with this world? What will happen with all of creation? And there's nothing we can do about it. We just have to wait for what God has already decided in our life.

This virus, a lot of people don't like hearing it this way, but this virus is nature's way of weeding out the weak. That's what nature does.

Nature figures out ways to test a species, whether it be us or any other species, to take those who are weak and lessen them and those who are strong and make them more.

That makes a species stronger over the course of years and over the course of centuries. And so some people think viruses are inevitable.

There's nothing we can do. And yet Genesis tells us that we are supposed to subdue or rule over creation for the better good.

[ 59 : 25 ] We're supposed to do our part. Remember, a kingdom is a partnership between the king and the people of the kingdom. We aren't supposed to just let things happen, however they might occur.

We're supposed to help the kingdom meet the kingdom's goals. A parade is so yesterday. Gather and celebrate God together.

Is it that we lack faith that we don't fill this room with people gathering together to show that they trust God? No, it's because we believe that we can help you not to get sick.

Hello. Right? Because we believe that there are things we can do to change the course of our culture, our nation, even creation itself.

Because God made us to do that. He made us to participate in the dominion of this world he made. It's not a lack of faith.

[ 60 : 31 ] It's love of neighbor. When you get together with people and take the chance of sharing with them something that could literally kill them, you're not showing how brave you are.

You're showing that you're not concerned about your neighbor. I'm not afraid of the coronavirus. I'm really not. I have made my peace with God a long time ago.

But I know there are people in this world that look to me and depend on me right now. And I need to be here. And I know that it isn't going to help if I go around trying to figure out how I can get myself in the middle of situations where I'll catch the coronavirus so I can give it to all of you.

So, that's not courage. That shows a lack of love for our neighbors. So we will celebrate Palm Sunday without a crowd.

But I don't think that gathering for the parade was the whole point anyways. In the book of Luke, in chapter 17, it says, Once I'm being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, And Jesus replied, The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed.

[ 61 : 46 ] Nor will people say, here it is or there it is. Because the kingdom of God is within you. Within our hearts. It's not the parade.

It's not the gathering. It's not the power of the nations or the military or the business or the church. It's not this wonderful building we have.

It's not any of us. It's not Pastor Tom. The kingdom of God is when we take God himself into our heart.

And stop focusing our lives around idols of our own creation that only have an illusion of power when God offers us genuine, life-transforming, heart-changing, hope-giving, eternity-promised, power, love, and life.

The kingdom of God is yours today. I invite you to join me in prayer as we turn our hearts to receive God's kingdom. Dear God in heaven, I sometimes fail to live to the kingdom's goals, the kingdom's behaviors, the kingdom's hopes, the kingdom's promise.

[ 63 : 27 ] Change my heart, Lord. Cause me to repent, to turn towards you, forgive my sin.

Make me a part of a generation that lives for you and honors you now and into eternity.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You know, God, God has been looking for you to be a part of his kingdom all of your life.

And the kingdom of God isn't something we have to go and find ourselves physically in. God will put it in your heart. Today, today he makes a promise to you that any brokenness in your life will be removed.

Any demons will be cast out. Any powers that have been controlling you or fears that have been dominating you can be removed. and the brokenness of your life will not be remembered any longer.

[ 64 : 36 ] In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Hosanna. Amen.

Amen. I see the king of glory the Lord começae worshiped with a woman in the Lord of the Lord.

On the clouds red by the whole earth shakes, the whole earth shakes.

I see His love and mercy, watching over all our sins.

The people sing, the people sing. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

[ 65 : 51 ] Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

I see a generation rising up to take their place with selfless pain.

I see a new revival stirring as we pray and seek.

We're on our knees, we're on our knees. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

[ 67 : 12 ] Heal my heart and make Him clean. Open up my eyes to the things I see.

Show me how to love like you have loved me.

Break my heart for what breaks yours. Everything I am for your kingdom's cause.

As I walk from earth into eternity. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

[ 68 : 27 ] Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Praise is rising Eyes are turning to you We turn to you Hope is stirring Eyes are yearning for you We long for you Cause when we see you We find strength to face the day In your presence All our fears are washed away Washed away

Hosanna, Hosanna You are the God who saved us Worthy of all our praises Hosanna, Hosanna Come have your way among us We welcome you here, Lord Jesus Give us our hearts We turn to you We turn to you In your kingdom Proclaims like I'm with you

You make us new When we see you We find strength to face the day In your presence In your presence All our fears are washed away Washed away Hosanna, Hosanna You are the God who saves us Worthy of all our praises Hosanna, Hosanna Come have your way among us We welcome you here, Lord Jesus Hosanna, Hosanna

Come have your way among us We welcome you here, Lord Jesus The Lord be with you  
Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks to the Lord our God It is always right and a good  
thing to give thanks to God Even in the midst of a crisis God is with us Through the course  
of our service today We heard about people in our congregation that are struggling We've  
heard about people who face difficulties And about how Jesus faced difficulties And we're  
going into Holy Week Where we'll see the passion of Christ Even in the midst of struggles  
God is with us To take us through the shadowy valleys To the blessing that he offers to us  
So we come and we respond to God Some of us bring our gifts to God

[ 73 : 00 ] And we appreciate that We're using those to help people in this ministry And outside this  
ministry God is blessing us So that we can be a help to other people And you can be a  
help too I know it's hard Because you can't come to the church To specifically do the  
things that we normally do To give up our time and effort But we can do things still To be a  
blessing for God Right now There's a lot of people Who are getting a little Well, I'm just  
say squirrely From sitting in their houses all the time They could use a call Maybe it's a  
child Or a teenager Or an older person Or just anybody We all like to hear I got a card the  
other day From somebody Who just said they had time To write a card I don't know if I've  
ever gotten a card From them It was so nice It lit up our day We can send out a note We  
can wave to the people Across the street You can turn on a light You can find out a way  
To reach out with God I'll give you a couple examples

I read about And I saw this week I read about a fellow in the newspaper Who decided to  
just start paying For the groceries of people In a poor neighborhood So he went into the  
store And he just told them Just let the register run And he paid for about 30 people's  
groceries Maybe you could do that Maybe you can't Maybe you could do it for one I think  
that person would feel Their day has been lit up Some people are turning on their lights  
They put a teddy bear in their window We have one in the front of our church Because the  
kids are going On a teddy bear scavenger hunt And looking for those teddy bears I know  
of a woman Who took a couple dowels That she's owned for years She sanitized them  
Sprayed them all down With Lysol And gave them to the kids next door They went to bed  
Sleeping with those Feeling like they were safer now In the midst of this issue What could  
you do?

You can do things To brighten up people's life Today Right here And right now I'll give you  
something else That I think you could do I think you could come to the church On your  
own Just your family And if you'd like to You can make a little chalk drawing In one of our  
parking lots Now I don't want to have A whole lot of people here We're not doing that  
We're not gathering In the church parking lot We're keeping the rules About safe distance  
But you can look And there's no one here It's a quiet day Or you're at one end Of the  
parking lot And somebody's at the other And you want a little drawing To praise God We'll  
make some drawings In our parking lots For Easter Just to celebrate The blessings God Is  
giving to us There are so many ways We can bless God Some are making face masks For  
people who need it Because they can sew You find what God Is calling you to do And lift  
up the praise of God To everyone Shall we return our blessing To the God Who's given us  
so much By praying the prayer That Jesus taught us 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 And the power And the glory Forever and ever Amen Hosanna Hosanna  
Hosanna Hosanna Hosanna The little children say Through pillar court And temple The  
lovely and the brave To Jesus

Who had blessed the cross Hold it to his breast The children sang their praises The  
simplest and the best From Olivet they followed In an exultant crowd The victor Palm  
branch Weaving And chanting Clear and loud The Lord Of earth and heaven Wrote on In  
holy state Nor scorned That little children Should on His bidding Wait Hosanna Hosanna  
Hosanna Hosanna Yes Thy ancient song We sing For Christ is our Redeemer

[ 77 : 50 ] The Lord of heaven Our King Oh may we ever Praise Him With heart And life And voice  
And in His Blissful presence Eternally Rejoice And now may God Carry you through this  
Light week May God take you Through the holiest Of weeks of all Holding you close to  
Him Taking away your fears Driving out your demons Giving you the power To claim the  
kingdom In this life And in the kingdom to come Go in His peace And may God be with  
you Now and forever Amen Forwent Amen Right

God And now and ever Vollect intrigued And again Which wieder Shall we Habáz In this III  
enclave And kiedy And between To long And miles Of sound And way To Sh lugares