

Palm Sunday Kingswood 28th March 2021

Welcome to worship with Kingswood this Palm Sunday '**Make Way for Christ the King!**'- Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you. The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to... the altar. You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (Psalm 118: 26-29)

This Palm Sunday get ready to join the crowd in welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem - go and get your best cloak or coat, because I don't imagine many of you have palm branches to lay on the ground before Jesus!

Sing - 263 Hosanna, hosanna

Reading – Mark 11:1-11

Sing – 264 Make way, make way for Christ the King

Prayer of praise – The gates of Holy Week are open and we gather to celebrate our King who rides a donkey. We bring to you the best of what we are, Lord Jesus, laying down our lives in service as you laid down your life for us. Amen.

Message

Palm Sunday is a great opportunity to celebrate – to shout our praises and express our hopes for what Jesus might do in our lives. Many people are daring to hope for an end to the oppression that has come along with the Covid19 virus. The shouts of Hosanna meant ‘Save us’ – There was hope and joy in the Palm Sunday crowd, not realising there was still sacrifice to come.

And there were shouts of ‘Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!’ Jesus had spent three years telling parables of this kingdom of God; and now he was riding into Jerusalem in a way that many would recognise as the action of a king – cloaks laid on the ground just as cloaks had been laid on the ground for Jehu when he had been anointed king. (2 Kings 9)

Pick up your best coat now – hold it and think to yourself – would I hesitate before laying it on the road before Jesus – for the hoofs of the colt he is riding to trample it into the mud...? Does it help you to decide if you think of him as King?

When you think of Jesus - *do* you think of him as King? Maybe we prefer to think of Jesus as Friend, Companion on the road, or the Saviour who gave his life for us? But Jesus being King is less familiar to us perhaps.

Tom Wright has written a book called ‘How God became King’. He challenges us to ask ourselves ‘have we missed the message

of the four gospels; that in the life of Jesus, the living God was King on earth, as in heaven?’

Did the crowd sense the presence of a king that day in the drama of their rabbi riding a colt up to Jerusalem – and laying down their cloaks, paying their respect by letting go their hold on what would have been a precious possession. There’s not going to be a call on us to put our coats in the road, but is there a way that we too can respond to Jesus in a way that shows we do know that he is the King of kings?

In our house when the kids were young we used to say ‘what if the Queen came to tea?’ - warning them to behave better in company than they were doing at the time! It was a family joke – but I imagine that any of us would have been ready to do whatever pleased a royal or other famous visitor if we could! How much more then would we want to do what pleases our heavenly King.

Though part of what Jesus came to earth to do was to suffer and die, he also came to lead a kingdom-of-God movement! He lived and taught the ways of the kingdom, and still today we can be a part of his kingdom way of life – asking ourselves ‘how would he have acted?’, ‘who would he have loved?’, ‘who would he have challenged?’, ‘where would he be found?’

If you don't know the answers to these questions then read the gospels; if you do, then what are you waiting for? Join in with

all the crowd who have discovered the joyful, if self-sacrificing, pursuit of living out the Way of Jesus the King.

Amen

Prayers of intercession

On this day when we celebrate Christ the King entering Jerusalem, yet riding on a humble beast of burden, we make our requests in prayer. Let us pray.

We bring to you our planet, our wonderful world for which we are stewards, and yet besieged with the coronavirus pandemic. Heavenly Father, we pray for the nations as they deal with the problem, and pray that solutions may be shared fairly. We pray that those with responsibilities for distributing resources may keep in mind the needs of poorer nations which are without resources or skills to counteract the spread of the disease.

Lord, in your kingly mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for our own nation, that we may continue patiently in the discipline of the lock down as the situation improves. Save us from the temptation to relax the rules, and particularly be with those whose impatience is resulting in violence. We pray for those who are victims of violence, that they may be blessed by your healing touch.

Lord, in your kingly mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for our city of Nottingham, and especially for those who would unthinkingly endanger lives by joining in parties or large groups. We give thanks that the demonstration for Sarah Everard was peaceful and orderly in

Nottingham and pray that it may be an example to others. We pray that everyone may have a sense of responsibility for how their actions may affect other people.

Lord, in your kingly mercy, hear our prayer.

Father, we pray now for those near and dear to us who are in need. There are those who mourn the loss of loved ones, those who are ill, those who are confused or worried by the present crisis, those who are impatient at restrictions. In a moment of silence we name them in our hearts and pray for their comfort and strength to meet the future. PAUSE.

Lord in your kingly mercy, hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Sing - 276 Lift high the cross

Blessing –

Let the grace of Jesus our King redeem you, his power renew you, his example inspire you, and the love of Christ shine from you.

Go in faith to walk his way and make him known, to his glory.

Amen.