

A BIBLE WORD PRAISE CELEBRATION
Palm Sunday – Triumph of God's Humble King

The service is conducted on Palm Sunday, in contemporary or traditional form. The minister/pastor/priest/worship leader does the narration of the Introduction, each reading (in bold), and Closing Message. The readings are best done by members of the congregation. God's people need to hear our relationship with the Bible in Easter worship, or lose faith balance. Any non-expanded good Bible version can be used for the readings. It is recommended that readers from Children's Church be included for all ages ministry. Songs/hymns should be chosen appropriately so as not to clash with other Passion or Easter services, and also to fit with the reading they follow after. The service can be used with contemporary music/band group or traditional choir-based format, with Traditional and Contemporary Service Orders provided at the end. Items for soloists, music/band group/choirs should number 2 to 4 of the Song/Hymn items for good quality gifted ministry input. The service begins with the Bible being processed into the Church, the welcome given, and the call to worship from Psalm 147.1-3 (or like psalm) being given.

Opening Song/s/Hymn:

Leader - Introduction: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit..." were God's words to Zechariah the prophet about how God would reveal his sovereignty over the universe. Zechariah was part of the struggling group of God's people trying to rebuild Jerusalem and revitalise the people after the Hebrew slavery in Babylon and Persia. God gave him startling prophecies – a special humble king would come on a donkey, he would have the insulting price paid for him thrown to the potter's floor in the temple, and he would be looked upon by all as he was pierced and suffered by God's will. Yet God would use this humble king to bring victory to pass by his Spirit.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

Almighty God, out of a 500 year old prophecy came a picture of one to come –
a humble shepherd king, betrayed cheaply, and pierced to death.
But you would cause the Hebrews and the world to look upon this leader
with a mixture of grace, but also grieving as for a one and only son.

Jesus came to us in great humility, conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, and anointed for ministry by the holy Spirit.
He preached that each person should repent and accept part in God's kingdom.
He ministered the works of God to as many as approached him,
and he called and trained disciples, and sent them out on this same mission.
Jesus taught that He would die for the forgiveness of the world,
and that each person should repent and accept part in God's kingdom.
For this he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried,
and descended to the dead, according to the scriptures. On the third day
he rose again from the dead, to ascend and sit at God's right hand,
and pour out the baptism of the Holy Spirit on his people.
Now we call him your one and only Son.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
We acknowledge our sins from which your Son came to redeem us.
We pray in his name for your gracious forgiveness.
Please make new in every faithful heart the promise of grace.
Give us your peace in this world and in the world to come.
On the last day, when this Jesus shall come again in glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead, we shall rise to life everlasting,
through him who was dead, is alive, and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Reading 1: God's Spirit moved Zechariah to foresee what 'not by might, nor by power, but by God's Spirit' would mean. First, let us hear the expectation of God's humble king to come, as Zechariah foretold it: Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey--- on a colt, the foal of a donkey. The LORD says, "I will remove the war chariots from Israel and take the horses from Jerusalem; the bows used in battle will be destroyed. Your king will make peace among the nations; he will rule from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth."
(Zechariah 9.9-10)

Reading 2: In this 'not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' Zechariah also saw a shepherd king for whom an insulting and demeaning price was paid. God led this anointed shepherd king, who caused it to be said to God's flock: "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me "throw it to the potter" – the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord to the potter.
(Zechariah 11.12-13)

Reading 3: Let us hear, last and most tragically from Zechariah's vision ahead, of how the humble shepherd king spoke about the way the Hebrews and the nations would have to look upon Him. "I will fill the descendants of David and the other people of Jerusalem with the spirit of mercy and the spirit of prayer. They will look at the one whom they stabbed to death, and they will mourn for him like those who mourn for an only child. They will mourn bitterly, like those who have lost their first-born son.
(Zechariah 12.10)

Song/Hymn:

Reading 4: Let us hear how in the fullness of time Jesus entered Jerusalem, humble and riding on a donkey. Zechariah's first prophecy of the humble king was fulfilled: The next day the large crowd that had come to the Passover Festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the King of Israel!" Jesus found a donkey and rode on it, just as the scripture says, "Do not be afraid, city of Zion! Here comes your king, riding on a young donkey."
(John 12.12-15)

Song/Hymn:

Reading 5: Jesus was welcomed as king, yet who could have known that Zechariah's second prophecy would be fulfilled in the treachery of Judas, the betrayer? When Judas, the traitor, learned that Jesus had been condemned, he repented and took back the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned by betraying an innocent man to death!" he said. "What do we care about that?" they answered. "That is your business!" Judas threw the coins down in the Temple and left; then he went off and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "This is blood money, and it is against our Law to put it in the Temple treasury." After reaching an agreement about it, they used the money to buy Potter's Field, as a cemetery for foreigners. (Matthew 27.3-7)

Behind the betrayal of Jesus was our God at work, like a potter, moulding and shaping history for his purposes. God, El Shaddai, is the 'potter' who moulds our lives and through the years has made it clear that the time of Christ is here.

Song/Hymn:

Reading 6: Jesus' own self-consciousness of his work was to call himself the Son of Man, title of God's heavenly one. So He spoke of his suffering and rejection as focus of the work God sent him to carry out before being raised to life. Jesus said "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it." (Mark 8.34-36)

Song/Hymn:

Reading 7: We have heard the prophecies of Zechariah and how Jesus fulfilled them. Let us also hear from Mark's gospel how Jesus was anointed as God's humble king: While Jesus was eating, a woman came in with an alabaster jar full of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head. Some of the people there became angry and said to one another, "What was the use of wasting the perfume? It could have been sold for more than three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor!" And they criticized her harshly. But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! Why are you bothering her? She has done a fine and beautiful thing for me. You will always have poor people with you, and any time you want to, you can help them. But you will not always have me. She did what she could; she poured perfume on my body to prepare it ahead of time for burial. Now, I assure you that wherever the gospel is preached all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." (Mark 14.3-9)

Song/Hymn:

Offering: In celebration we bring our offerings to the Lord.
The offerings are brought forward by the office-bearers, who remain standing before the table for the Offering Prayer.

Offering Song:

Reading 8: Jesus faced the cross knowing he would be pierced for our sins. So he fulfilled the visions of the prophets of the Hebrews as the one who was himself the last prophet. Jesus also foresaw things still to take place about himself, the Son of Man, when he came in ultimate victory: "In the days after that time of trouble the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. He will send the angels out to the four corners of the earth to gather God's chosen people from one end of the world to the other. (Mark 13:24-27)

Song/Hymn:

Ministry Prayer: O God our heavenly Father,
Jesus lived and taught your kingdom on earth, forgiving and giving healing,
and opening new opportunity and motivating like no other ever did.
Surrounded by palm branches and the fellowship of Jesus' people,
like the Hebrews did, we also celebrate this on our Palm Sunday.
**Holy, holy, holy Lord; God of power and might;
Heaven and earth are full of your glory;
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Heavenly Father, Jesus set his face to Good Friday and the suffering of the cross.
You gave your Son for us, raising him on Easter Sunday.
it is also correct, our discipleship and our joy to praise you
and give you thanks at all times and in all places.
You are our Holy Father, our Almighty and everlasting God.
You created us in your own image as stewards of the earth, but we strayed.
You provided the lifework of the Lamb of God to work our forgiveness.
You opened the tomb of Jesus, and gave the new life of his resurrection
and of our salvation which has come - the good news of the everlasting gospel.

Almighty God, every year you bring us face to face
with the fulfillment of your prophecies
and the great act of love and the suffering for our sin that Jesus did.
Give us belief beyond doubt to joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
and to behold him when he shall come to be our judge.
He is alive, reigning with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. Amen

[A time of ministry can be used....

Closing message: From Palm Sunday, Jesus went on to the Last Supper, the betrayal by Judas for the Hebrews to shout "Crucify him", and to his suffering and death on Good Friday. But God is the Lord of how history unfolds. He raised from the dead. Jesus was seen alive in the body of his crucifixion. He tasked the Church to carry out God's mission that He had established. Jesus then ascended to heaven and from there poured out the Holy Spirit as empowerment on all who believe to carry out his mission. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit..." was God's Word to Zechariah 500 years before Jesus. And God had done it as the victory of his humble king came true.

We close our service with praise:

Final Song/Hymn:

Benediction: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

A BIBLE WORD PRAISE CELEBRATION
Palm Sunday – Triumph of God's Humble King
Contemporary Order

Entrance of the Word
Welcome and Notices
Call to Worship

Opening Song/s **Shout for joy and sing**
 These are the days of Elijah
 My redeemer lives

Introduction

Prayer of Praise and Confession

Reading 1: Zechariah 9.9-10 Rejoice for the Humble King

Reading 2: Zechariah 11.12-13 The Potter's Way

Reading 3: Zechariah 12.10 Look upon the one pierced...

Song/s: **EI Shaddai**

Reading 4: John 12.12-15 – Fulfilled: Rejoice for the Humble King

Song/s: **Make way! Make way for Christ the King**

Reading 5: Matthew 27.3-7 – Fulfilled: The Potter's Way

Song/s: **Have thine own way Lord**

Reading 6: Mark 8.34-36 – Fulfilled: Look upon the Son of Man

Song/s: **From heaven you came... or I surrender all...**

Reading 7: Mark 14.3-9 – The Humble Messiah Anointed

Song/s: **When the music fades**

Offering and **Offering Song**

Reading 8: Mark 13:24-27 – The Humble Messiah takes dominion

Song/s: **Lion of Judah**

Ministry Prayer

Closing Message

Final Song: **Blessed be your name**

Blessing and Blessing Song

A BIBLE WORD PRAISE CELEBRATION
Palm Sunday – Triumph of God's Humble King
Traditional Order

Entrance of the Word
Welcome and Notices
Call to Worship

Opening Hymn: Tell me the old, old story

Introduction

Prayer of Praise and Confession

Reading 1: Zechariah 9.9-10 Rejoice for the Humble King
Reading 2: Zechariah 11.12-13 The Potter's Way
Reading 3: Zechariah 12.10 Look upon the one pierced...

Hymn: Before Jehovah's awesome throne

Reading 4: John 12.12-15 Fulfilled: Rejoice for the Humble King
Hymn: Ride on, ride on in majesty

Reading 5: Matthew 27.3-7 Fulfilled: The Potter's Way
Hymn: How sweet the name of Jesus

Reading 6: Mark 8.34-36 Fulfilled: Look upon the Son of Man
Hymn: The Old Rugged cross or *When I survey the wondrous cross.*

Reading 7: Mark 14.3-9 The Humble Messiah Anointed
Hymn: Hail to the Lord's anointed

Offering and **Offering Song**

Reading 8: Mark 13:24-27 The Humble Messiah takes dominion
Hymn: Mine eyes have seen the glory (Battle Hymn)

Ministry Prayer

Final Hymn: All glory, laud and honour
Blessing and Blessing Song