

Palm Sunday



St. Mark's At Home



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ST. MARK'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome to St. Mark's At Home! This packet is our effort to help you bring worship and spiritual formation into your home. It is a menu to choose from, not an outline to follow from beginning to end. We know the merry-go-round of some households are operating at break-neck speeds of stress while others have twiddled beyond thumb and index finger to previously unknown depths of boredom.

This is offered as a gift, with no strings or expectations, and not meant to be a burden. Some resources are recommended for specific ages, some are for all; some will change each week, some things will stay the same. Choose what is a gift to you wherever you are right now and ignore the rest. We are all in this together.



What' Inside

- Gathering: Suggestions for Virtual Worship
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Gathering (Suggestions On Preparing for Virtual Worship)

Worship is intended for in-person gatherings in physical space, which is why it is not easy or natural to worship virtually. Our brains and bodies encounter screens in very different ways than our brains and bodies encounter physical spaces. So while we wait; while we rightfully long to gather in-person for worship once again, here are a few practical suggestions for engaging virtual expressions of worship in the meantime:

- On whatever device you're watching on, take a few moments to shut down all other running programs and applications. Temporarily disable your push notifications. Place your phones in another room on silent or Do Not Disturb mode.
- Wash your hands and face, like an Old Testament temple priest. Today we are washing our hands to stay healthy, but it is also a way of signaling through your senses that you are preparing to worship.
- Light a candle--a symbol of Christ's presence with you wherever you are. You can even prepare a small home chapel. Clean off a table. Set out a cross. You are not alone even if you are alone.
- Take a few deep breaths and say a short prayer to prepare your heart to "enter" a different kind of space. We recommend the Collect for Purity:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Suggestions For A Palm Sunday Procession

Option 1:

Gather branches, leaves, or plants from around your home, or make some drawings of them. They do not have to be palms — the Gospel lesson just says that the people cut branches to prepare the way for Jesus. You can also collect some stones to make a small model of a road somewhere in your house. If you have children, ask them to pick a favorite coat or jacket to spread on the “road” (since the Gospel lesson says that people laid their cloaks before Jesus). Here’s a prayer you can pray for the blessing of the “palms”:



It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches along his way. Let these branches 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 lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Option 2:

Find something with which you can make a small handheld cross. If you are fortunate enough to have a garden, see if there is something growing you could use. If not, look inside for something you can recycle into a cross for today. Simply take a walk holding the cross in your hand. The disciples must have wondered why he’d sent them on this strange errand. Jesus must have wondered where all the faces in the crowd came from. As you go about yours, open your heart to whatever Jesus has to show you in worship today. Here’s a prayer for your walk:

God, whose son Jesus Christ challenged the powers that be to think and feel another way, let these improvised crosses remind us to question assumptions and check our motives at every turn; He endured mockery for speaking the truth, so let them be for us signs of his enduring wisdom; he was tortured in an attempt to isolate him, yet in death he bound himself to all suffering people, let these crosses remind us we are not alone and kindle our hope that he gives us the victory over sorrow and death. Amen.

Prayers and Suggestions for Your Table

A suggestion for your household table:

It is a sad thing that we cannot gather as a church family to share the eucharistic meal in this season. But that does not mean that the echoes of our eucharistic feast must cease to be heard in our homes. Set your dinner table with a white tablecloth and two candles, just like our altar at St. Mark's is set. You can add something red if you have it, which is the liturgical color for Holy Week. Just because we can't share Eucharist does not mean we cannot enjoy table fellowship and household communion.

A suggested prayer for use prior to an evening meal:

Hosanna!

God of creation, who made all that grows, thank you for palms that rise from the earth, provide us shade, and dance in the wind. God of hospitality, who provides for our needs and makes for us a home in a frightening world, we lift our palms to welcome you as our Lord and King. God of love, who made a path for us, a way to you, we lay our palms before you as a reminder of the peace you bring to us and to all creation. As we come to the close of this day, we are grateful O God, for creation, shelter, welcome, love, and the way of peace. Your gifts to us each and every day.

Hosanna. Amen.



Resources for Children and Youth

CHILDREN

Join along with Mr. Casey for the Godly Play and Storymakers! Prepare your space, bring the following supplies (whatever you can find): pencils, markers, crayons, along with some paper to join the activities!

- This week's Godly Play Story, for children ages 3-6, is The Faces of Easter 6, with Mr. Casey, can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/3ixWqKoFvtM>
- Our StoryMakers lesson for Palm Sunday, "The Donkey," with Mr. Casey, for children ages 7-10: <https://youtu.be/FCDLDP5PBpc>

YOUTH

- Sunday nights, 8pm: Zoom check-in and prayer:
[https://zoom.us/j/655860629?
pwd=Tm00dks4cC9QSTZYV1NybGtKdWZ1UT09](https://zoom.us/j/655860629?pwd=Tm00dks4cC9QSTZYV1NybGtKdWZ1UT09)
- Thursday nights, 8pm: Every Thursday night we're doing GAME NIGHT on Zoom! All youth are welcome to join in Zoom check-in and prayer:
[https://zoom.us/j/760131952?
pwd=ZVFGbzIXWCtRZVkzRll2Z2JrNnI1QT09](https://zoom.us/j/760131952?pwd=ZVFGbzIXWCtRZVkzRll2Z2JrNnI1QT09)



Music and the Arts

MUSIC

A Latin poem written by the bishop Theodulf of Orléans (ca. 750-821) has become the quintessential way to experience the story musically. He wrote *Gloria, laus et honor* in the year 810 to be used as a Palm Sunday processional. His text was included in numerous missals and eventually was chanted as an entrance hymn throughout the Western world.

We know the words in a 19th-century English translation by Anglican clergyman John Mason Neale (1818-1866), and we sing it to a 17th-century German hymn tune.

Look at the original Latin refrain:

*Gloria, laus, et honor tibi sit,
rex Christe, Redemptor,
cui puerile decus prompsit
Hosanna pium.*

Glory and honor and laud be to
thee, Christ, King and Redeemer,
children before whose steps
raised their Hosannas of praise.

Theodulf of Orléans specifically mentions the praise of children (*puerile*). This is the bishop's own addition to the story, the scriptural account we will hear this morning does not specify that children led the chorus of Hosannas. Yet what a wonderful description this is! Children love a parade, and of course they would take the lead in a procession such as this.

Listen to these YouTube videos of the hymn being sung in worship at King's College, Cambridge. The voices of children, adult choristers, and congregation soar in a glorious space.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TTV6-yuCTg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHN8Uak6Yow&t=48s>

While you listen to this hymn remember Theodulf's image of the children welcoming Christ into their city. Let it be an invitation to child-like wonder that God enters our own lives each day!

Music and the Arts

ART

Spent some time meditating on the image below. Begin by listing all the things you notice. Don't rush to interpretation.



Disciples Get Donkey by Sadao Watanabe. Printed with permission

Music and the Arts

Only after you have spent some time listing, begin asking yourself questions like the following:

- Why did the artist decide to make the image this way instead of that way? Why did they include this detail instead of that one? In what ways is the artist telling this story in a new way than I've heard before? Who might all the characters in the image be? Who or what is missing from this image?
- Finally: What might God be inviting me to consider through this image?

On the following page, is an art piece created for our congregation by St. Mark's parishioner Christie Stockstill, titled *Palm Sunday*. This piece is primarily ink and water color, on Mixed Media paper.

Using the same process as the first art piece, take time to study and list your thoughts, and then proceed with the same questions (above).



Music and the Arts



Palm Sunday by Christie Stockstill