

Bulletin for Sunday 5th April 2020

Dear Friends

A warm welcome to our Bulletin of worship for Palm Sunday.

I suggest we begin our worship by reading Psalm 118, verses 1-2 and 19-29

Hymn: All glory, laud and honour (208 in Rejoice and Sing)

Reading: Matthew 21: 1-11

Reflection: “Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey...”

The leaders that history remembers as ‘great’ tend to be warriors, not peacemakers; people possessed of loud voices and high opinions of themselves; definitely not humble. They are the people we learn about in history lessons, or see statues of in prominent places. We can imagine them at the head of a procession. But not sat on a donkey. Jesus was not a great leader in that mould at all, and in this, the final week before his death, the people of Jerusalem realised it. Many were looking for a great warrior to defeat the Romans - but Jesus humbly rode a donkey into the city to show that he was a different sort of leader: a healer and teacher who carried no sword; a servant king. Imagine yourself following, waving palms and shouting. Would you rather he was riding a tall and splendid horse, wearing an impressive uniform, carrying a well-polished and sharpened sword? Jesus came to show true leadership, involving humble service and integrity. As the song says, ‘we have a king who rides a donkey... and his name is Jesus’.

Hymn: Ride on! Ride on in majesty! (RS 209)

Prayer (adapted from Roots)

Loving God, as we enter this week which is so full of meaning and emotion, help us to remember that the church is not closed –
for your church is people not buildings.

We pray this morning for all with whom we normally worship Sunday by Sunday, and for our neighbours and our communities.

Loving God, as we hear and see the news,
we pray for those in authority as they grapple with the unexpected -
give wisdom and courage to all in leadership.

And help us all to remember those less fortunate than ourselves,
among them those who are lonely, or angry, or distressed, or at their wits end...

Loving God, we remember all those who are working to keep things going:
those working in, or working to support, the NHS,
those harvesting, delivering and selling the food in our shops,
those keeping us secure and our utilities functioning,
those looking after the children of key workers,
those caring for the elderly and the vulnerable....

Loving God, we remember those who have died,
whether from Covid-19 or from other causes.
We pray for their families and friends
especially as they arrange funerals so different from what they expected.
We pray that they and we may come at the last to find peace in your presence.
God in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
Amen

Hymn: My song is love unknown (RS 207)

May the blessing of God
whose love is way beyond our understanding
be with us and with all those we love
this week and always
Amen

Before our buildings had to be closed, Colin planned a service for Good Friday at Billingshurst. This will hopefully be put up on the billingshursturc.co.uk website.

News of our church family this week -

Most seem to be doing well, discovering new walks in the Spring sunshine near their homes, enjoying their gardens, and keeping in touch with friends and family as far as possible with a bit of technology to help.

We think of those in residential care where they can now receive no visitors, which is hard both for them and for their families.

Thanks to all those who have been in touch by phone or email. It is good to share news with each other, to think of each other, and to hold each other in prayer.

Blessings