



BALLINA & LENNOX HEAD ANGLICANS

An inclusive Christ-centred community, growing in our
relationship with God and the wider community

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Bundjalung nation,
and pay respects to their elders past and present.

PALM SUNDAY 5 APRIL 2020

Pastoral messages from the Rector and the Associate Priest

Dear friends,

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday, Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that large crowds went ahead of him and followed behind him (Matt. 21:1-11). Wow, this could not happen today could it! The maximum crowd to greet him today would be two people. What a strange and different climate we are living in compared to two thousand years ago when this historic event took place.

I love celebrating Palm Sunday in our church services, and I am really going to miss it this year. I love the energy and the excitement as we hear the story again of Jesus entering through the city gates with people yelling and praising God and waving palm branches. Many strew palm branches, and even their clothes, on the ground to make a makeshift royal carpet. It was like the Oscars only better. Here was the one who 'comes in the name of the Lord!' I love trying to imagine what it must have felt like to be in that crowd that day. It would have been an unforgettable experience.

So how do we celebrate Palm Sunday in isolation? Do we just put it on hold until next year when COVID-19 is over, and we have returned to some degree of normal life? Or do we still try and capture that feeling of Jesus as the 'one who comes in the name of the Lord'?

For me it will be important to try and capture the positive energy that Palm Sunday gives us. I am reminded, daily, that Jesus is in charge of everything. He was certainly in charge of the entry into Jerusalem, after all, he arranged for the donkey and the colt to be loaned to his disciples. So, I believe that he is in charge of, and present with me, in every part my life now, including this time of necessary isolation.

I encourage you to watch the service Cathy and I have recorded and to follow along using the liturgy below. As we spend time with Jesus this Palm Sunday, let's imagine that we are part of the crowd, yelling out cries of praise and welcome. Let's feel his presence, and the presence of each other, spiritually, even if we can't be connected physically.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!

Peace be with you,

Matthew

Dear friends,

With Palm Sunday this Sunday, it will be strange not to celebrate in a church building adorned with palm branches. Here's an idea passed on by a friend:

On Sunday morning, put a branch on the door of your house or in the front window. It could be any green branch you can get. We may be physically isolated, but not separated. We are united as the body of Christ. We are the Church..

This week the impact of the virus on our lives has really started to hit home. I am beginning to understand that I will not be visiting my new grandchild in the UK (due in July) any time soon. That is hard. I wonder what things have started to hit home for you this week?

Be gentle with yourself. We are in a period of grieving, even if we don't recognise it as that. A wise friend shared some good advice this week: "Make ample room to allow for a mental adjustment. It is perfectly normal and appropriate to feel bad and lost during a global disaster. At this stage, focus on food, family, friends, and maybe fitness."

It's also the time to focus on prayer. Here are three wonderful free apps you can download to your phone: ePray, Pray As You Go, and Reimagining the Examen.

Blessings



Cathy

“The church is not a building, the church is the people!”

Here is how we are continuing to be the church, even though we cannot meet face to face:

Couch Church: Each week we will offer “Couch Church” – church you can do at home. This week we offer you a liturgy you can use to worship God on Sunday, or whenever works for you. You'll find it below, just after News and Information.

Regular email: Everyone on our parish roll who has an email address receives this regular mailout. Sadly, because of increased lockdown restrictions, we are no longer able to post out a paper version to those who don't have email.

Regular phone calls: Every parishioner on our parish roll is offered a regular phone call.

Facebook: we are posting encouraging messages, useful links and much more on our Parish Facebook page (Ballina and Lennox Head Anglicans).

Parish Council: your Parish Council and the Executive continue to support the whole parish and each other.

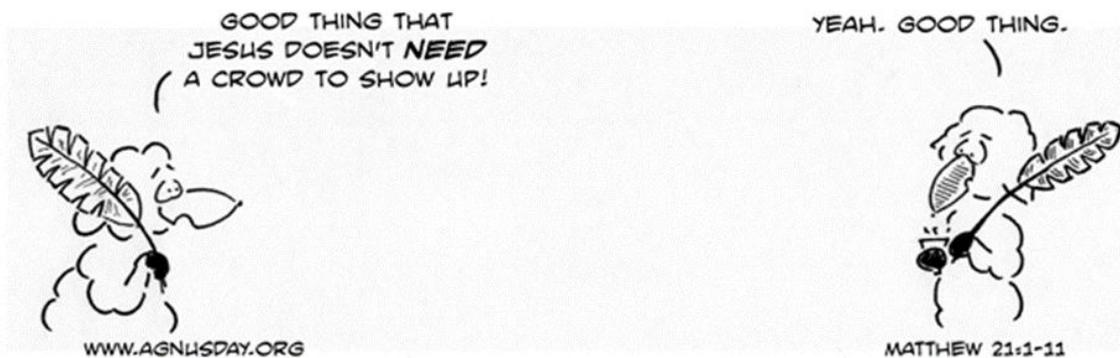
Supporting the needy in our community: We are still giving out food vouchers on Monday mornings from 9-11 am out the front of St Mary's, and posters have been placed on the external doors with Anglicare's contact number 02 6643 4844.

News and information

All services, parish groups, and the Op Shop are suspended until further notice, and our buildings are closed. Office Administrator Cathie Guest is working from home.

Birthdays: Juyne Lee, and Blake McQueen

Anniversaries: Geoff & Nancy Finlay, and Ellen & Carney Goodger



https://www.agnusday.org/strips/Matthew21v01to11_2020.jpg

CONTACT US

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“COUCH CHURCH”: WORSHIPING GOD AT HOME
SUNDAY 5 APRIL 2020
PALM SUNDAY

Don't forget to click on the link in your email to watch this service online.

Gathering Prayer:

As we gather in many places,
we bring our shouts and praise.
Hosanna to the Son of David!
Hosanna to the King of kings!
Let us journey to Jerusalem
to worship the king who came to save us.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day:

Everlasting God,
in your tender love for the human race
you sent your Son to take our nature,
to suffer death upon the cross:
in your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will
and in the glorious victory of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Hymn: My song is love unknown

Readings:

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!
Let Israel say,
“His steadfast love endures forever.”
Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!

O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
The Lord is God,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.
You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.
O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Matthew 21:1-11 (NRSV)

Sermon

Creed:

I BELIEVE in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our
Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose from the dead;

he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions:

The crowd's voices cried out "Hosanna to the Son of David" as you entered into Jerusalem. Sadly, today's pilgrims cannot join together and physically re-enact the triumph, noise, and celebration of Palm Sunday. Enable us, through your Spirit, to enter into this Holy Week through the words of your Gospel, and so spiritually to share your journey into Jerusalem.

Jesus as you entered into Jerusalem, **may your Spirit enable us also to enter with you.**

Unlike the civil powers of your day who sought to destroy you, we give thanks for our governments who have come together to bring in unity for the health and wellbeing of our nation.

We give thanks for all who are working in the health system; for our scientists who are working to develop a vaccine to protect against this virus; we give thanks for the teachers providing for the education of our young people in new ways. We give thanks for all those who provide for our daily needs for our wellbeing.

Jesus as you entered into Jerusalem, **may your Spirit enable us also to enter with you.**

We give thanks for modern technology which brings our loved ones into our living rooms, even when they are far away, and which also allows many of us to worship together from our homes. We seek to continue to reflect on your Word, which will take us through this Holy Week that leads us to Good Friday and beyond. We give thanks for your sacrifice and the victory of Easter Day, which enables us to pray for each other through these uncertain times, knowing that you continue to walk with us.

Jesus as you entered into Jerusalem, **may your Spirit enable us also to enter with you.**

Loving God,
source of healing and comfort,
at this time of fear, fill us with your grace
that the sick may be made whole,
this virus contained and a cure found.
Strengthen those who care for the sick,
calm the anxious
and protect the most vulnerable
in the power of the Spirit and
in the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PACT Prayer-

Heavenly Father,

Help me to remember that you have my life in your hands, so I can trust that you will be walking alongside me at this confusing time

Let me be like Jesus, willing to sacrifice my time and energy for humanity, even though it may cause me anguish and suffering.

Please give me courage to continue to follow the promptings from you my Lord and Saviour.

Amen

EAC Prayer-

We give thanks for the staff at EAC, teachers, administration and maintenance that have been working together to bring the school completely online.

For the students - as they too make the adjustments to working from home.

We pray especially for the Year 12 students who are feeling uncertain about what lies ahead.

We pray for our Principal Robert Tobias, and for his executive team who grapple with hard decisions, that they might know God's presence and wisdom in all their dealings.

We pray for all our school families - for the uncertainty that many feel about work, doing the best and right thing for their children and wider family.

We give thanks for the people who keep on working that we might be safe and well.

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

Ria Mars, Joy Swinbourne, Lucy van Eck, Neil Maclean, Norma Meehan, Malcolm Streher, Josh Stanley, Fran Shepherd, Bonnie Kerkenezov, Lana Kane-Herrera, Anne Marie Troutman, Ellen Goodger, Margaret Leadbeatter, Margaret Waller, Neal Watt, Maureen Colburt, Lynda Garde, Sue Hurford, Rachael Hampton, Alton Rowe, Ros Rowe, and Elaine Frederiksen.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray-

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Confession:

Lord Jesus, you came to change the world.

Forgive us when we become complacent, when change is difficult – and we give up.

Lord Jesus, you came to serve, not to be served.

Forgive us when we put ourselves and our needs before those of our brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, you came to bring peace.

Forgive us when we cause more fights, more trouble, and more wars than peace.

Lord Jesus, you came to set the captives free.

Forgive us when we don't stand up for justice and freedom for our neighbours.

Lord Jesus, you came to meet us where we are.

Forgive us when we don't stand with each other through the pain and struggle.

Help us to change the world by serving one another, working for peace,
standing up for justice, and walking with our fellow pilgrims.

Amen.

Absolution

Hymn: I will sing the wondrous story.

Concluding Prayer:

As we wait on you, Lord God,
renew our strength, our hope, and our vision
to be your arms in this world.

We cannot physically reach out,
but may we reach out and enfold with love
all those we encounter this week.

Amen.

Blessing

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