



Processional

You may wish to consider some kind of procession with fanfare/palm branches to begin worship. This could be done to a fun 'processional' song such as TiS 279.

Another good processional song is 'Jesus is coming, pave the way with branches' see tinyurl.com/FTWRps

See also the intergen resource for Palm Sunday and Easter.
intergen.org.au/product/yearbholyweek

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Open the gates!

Let us come in **and give thanks to God.**

All of us are welcome, **for this day is the day that God has made for us to rejoice and celebrate.**

We are loved and cherished. **God's faithful love lasts forever.**

As we light the candle, **we remember that this Light shines on us and from us and we give thanks.**

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging

As we gather, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these unceded land and waters. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress



Singing: The King of glory comes TiS 279

OR: Trotting through Jerusalem TiS 244

OR: All glory Laud and Honour TiS 333

OR: Ride on in majesty TiS 348

Prayer

When the light shines, it reveals to us that we are not always our best selves. There are things we wish we had done differently. As we look back over our week, we can see times when it was not grace and kindness that motivated our thoughts and actions.

(Leave some silence for reflection).

We look around at our world and lament the things we see which hurt people. And then we remember our own small part in the world and long for it all to be different. We long to reflect the depths of your love.

We want the good parts we see in the world, the smiles, the gentleness and faithfulness and the love, to be shared. We yearn to see the earth's resources spread fairly and used responsibly.

Our hearts desire the good of all people, and for all those who feel rejected to find their place of belonging at the table.

Our hearts sing when we remember that the rejected becomes the cornerstone. What an amazing thing that is! Astounding in our sight!

When we approach, you forgive all the times of falling short and offer us life and love, because your faithful love is eternal.

Thanks be to God.





Passing the peace

Pass the Peace by nodding to people and saying, "God's faithful love lasts forever!" with the response: "Let us give thanks".

Listening

Read: Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29 & John 12:12-16

For these words of faith
and for Jesus the Word
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting

Rev. Arnie Wierenga

And so it begins – this dangerous ride into Jerusalem.

No matter how much we love Jesus, no matter how much hope he inspires, no matter how deeply we are restored through God's love in him, it's clearly hard for us to stay the course. But for a moment we celebrate and cheer and adore the one in whom we invest our future, our hope, our life, our longings for salvation.

Have you ever been caught up in an excited crowd? Sporting event, famous person passing by, a large act of worship, being wowed by the Matildas, circus performers or formation flyers... Sociologists call this collective effervescence, the sparkle, the bubbles that tingle where we find ourselves together as a mob and carried away in the moment.

Every Palm Sunday we celebrate this extraordinary account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. There is already a festival atmosphere. The crowds

are building up to celebrate Passover, recalling the story of God where the people of Israel are freed from lives of slavery in Egypt. Freedom is worth celebrating, and often Passover begins with great pomp. The crowds are primed and ready.

In John's account of the story, festival goers hear that Jesus is about to arrive. They meet him with palm branches and claim him as Messiah. *Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*

If they were ready for a celebration, add the longing for Messianic hope and things just take off. Who knows what people wanted in their Messiah. Naming Jesus the King of the Jews publicly is a dangerous thing. Perhaps it's difficult to control a rowdy crowd, but we can see trouble here for Jesus. The quickest way to quell a mob is to dispose of its leader. That's always been the way ...

Whatever hopes and dreams are captured by the crowd, they likely don't expect or want what comes after. If Jesus is to be Messiah, some things don't match the hype. A donkey? Hardly triumphal transport. A crown of thorns? A great way to mock a failed revolutionary who wants to be king.

Throughout the season of Lent we have grappled with the identity of Jesus. The great disciple Peter has named him as Messiah, but almost in the next breath has gotten in the way of Jesus' path towards the cross. There is frequent misunderstanding and mystery, such as happens with the transfiguration of Jesus. As John writes, it's only on the other side of Jesus' glory that the disciples find understanding.

I enjoy a great crowd celebration. There is something about it that can lift us beyond the everyday and find hope and joy that is hard to realise on our own.

Reflecting continues



Weekly Worship. Palm Sunday 2024. A Worship Resource from Friends of the Fig Tree.



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Weekly Worship



Reflecting continues

Maybe we need to celebrate today to help with the journey this coming week. It's not an easy one. It provokes us with abuses of power and injustice; it reminds us we are fragile and fickle when put to the test; it invites us to face the reality of death; it draws us into a strange upside-down narrative that breaks apart life as we know it.

So, amidst this high day of our calendar, we prepare for one coming that is even greater in exposing God's love for the world. While we travel towards an open tomb and even as we soon celebrate our risen Lord, we still have work to do. For the one that God raises from the dead is no superhero or great fighter. The one that God raises is no great King of Israel fighting against Rome. The one that God raises from the dead comes riding on a donkey, wears a crown of thorns, dies, and is buried. And in his rising again, exposes and diminishes those other powers and breaks apart life as we know it.

Let's take a deep breath. There is so much more to come. *Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*

Singing: There's a light upon the mountains **TiS 276**

OR: Make me a channel of your peace TiS 607

OR: You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord TiS 48



Offering

Bless these gifts offered in your name for your service, God of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Bless us, and all who wonder or wander this Holy Week. May your story of life over death renew all who struggle. We pray in your name. Amen.

Notices

March 29 is Good Friday.

March 31 is Easter Sunday.

Responding: Prayers for World & Community

Ancient of Days, Faithful God, Companion and Friend:

This is the day you have made and this day we open our hearts before you. Our hearts are sore as we look around us and see the ones who are hurting and rejected.

"God's faithful love lasts forever!"

We bring before you those we know who are sick or sad. We name them in our hearts. Some of them from our faith community, from our family and our wider community of friends.

"God's faithful love lasts forever!"

And we think of those who are struggling with broken relationships, tough family situations, addictions, and mental stress. Those courageous ones who face each day through the strains and stresses and isolation and loneliness.

"God's faithful love lasts forever!"

We think of those with no strength for the day. Those who are facing end-of-life, their own or their loved ones. We pray for the carers in our communities. We pray for those with financial stress and those who are facing homelessness.

Prayer continues

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Prayer continues

We pray for those whose spirits are tired and those in the wilderness.

"God's faithful love lasts forever!"

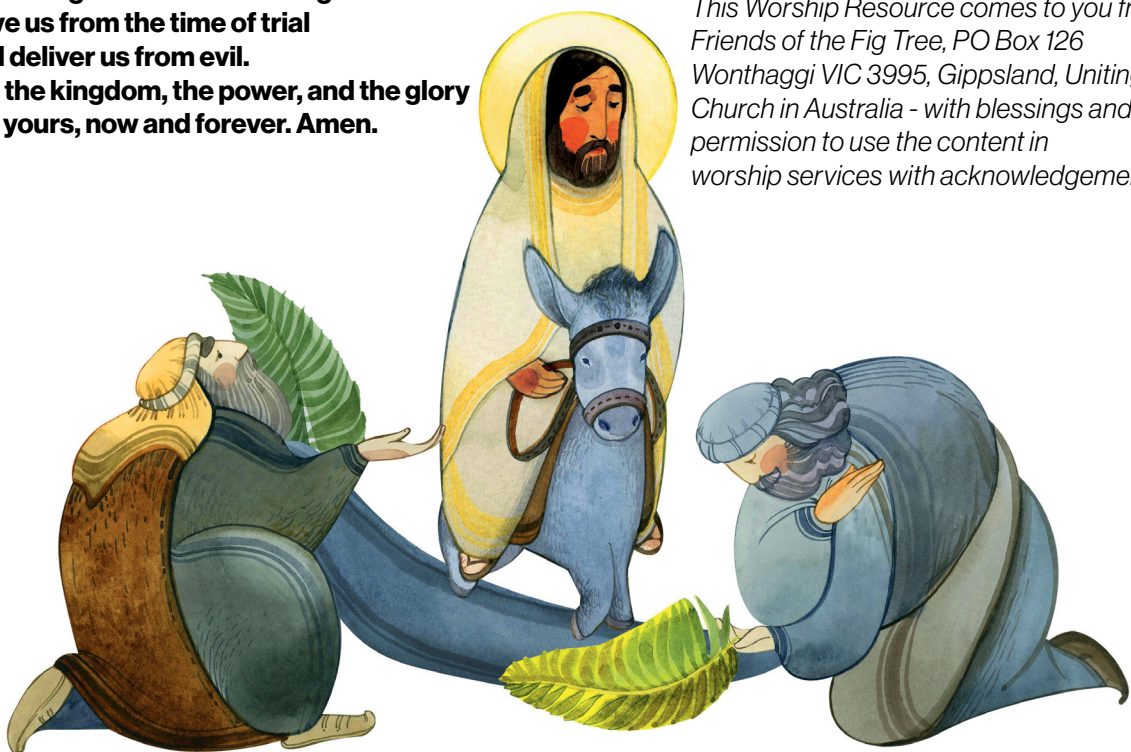
And we think of those who are suffering beyond our wildest experience, through war and extreme hunger and unimaginable loss. When it is hard to think beyond these things to your faithful love.

And we remember that it is those who know rejection who become the cornerstone. This is the pattern on which your Kingdom is built. And we give thanks because "God's faithful love lasts forever!"

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

**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 forever. Amen.**



Singing: Father in heaven TiS 465

OR: Lord of all hopefulness TiS 613

OR: The great love of God TiS 164

Blessing

Go out to love and to serve Christ by loving the rejected and being love itself.

And know yourselves blessed.

May God's love shine on and through you this day that the Lord has made, and all days. "God's faithful love lasts forever!"

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