



## Church at Home 3 For Abridge

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020



*Jesus said: Father, if you will take this cup of suffering away from me.*

*Not my will, however, but your will be done. Luke 22:42*

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the third week of church-at-home in Abridge. Today is Palm Sunday, when we think about Jesus riding with great acclaim into Jerusalem. But riding on a donkey of service not a stallion of war.

As we turn our thoughts to Holy Week and Good Friday, we remember all the events that crowded into that time in our history. The Last Supper, the prayers in the garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal and arrest, the trial and denial, and then the crucifixion and burial. If you read the story over the week in any one of the gospels you may be struck by links to happenings around us and around the world.

*Might we suggest that if you're on your own for this act of worship, you might like to arrange to contact a friend and share this time over the phone line?*

**1.** We hope you still have your personal church-at-home space as suggested last week: maybe a cross or another Christian symbol, a candle and a Bible on the table. You may also still have a palm cross left over from last year. Today's Bible story is from **Matthew, Chapter 21:1-11**. You may also like to look at **Psalm 118: 19-24** which was used by the Jews after a victory in war, when the King rode into Jerusalem in triumph.

But before you start, take a moment to remember that the Lord Jesus is with you and with all of us in our various homes by his Spirit.

**2.** Today's story is about the ride of Jesus into Jerusalem. The crowd go wild, breaking down palm branches and shouting hosanna. Here was the possible Messiah, the leader to kick out the Romans, to make life better for ordinary people. The disciples must have been excited. At last the master was coming into his own, being recognised for whom they thought he was. Jesus, however, knew differently. He understood. He knew this was the crisis, the pivotal moment in history, that he feared but moved faithfully towards. It was not easy as is reflected in Jesus' prayer in the garden which is our verse for today. He is someone immersed in the suffering and reality of the world.

**3.** Read the story slowly.

I wonder which part of the story most catches your attention?

I wonder which part puzzles you?

I wonder which is the most important part of this story?

I wonder which part was especially for you this morning?

I wonder how this story might connect to what is happening in our world today?

Think of the doctors, nurses, care workers, ambulance drivers and all front-line staff as they prepare to start another shift.

I wonder how God can use this story to teach us more about how he shares in the reality of our lives and takes upon himself all that entails.

4. To help you explore the story further, there is a further reflection sheet and also all-age activities, that you might like to use, if you have access to the Internet. You can find these resources on the websites of the two churches and here are the links:

[www.lambournechurch.com](http://www.lambournechurch.com)

[www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org](http://www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org)

5. For your prayers:

All those who are suffering with the virus and those anxiously waiting from afar.

All those who are finding the shutdown difficult to manage, and all those with other conditions who are being put on hold

All those who have died and their families and friends who are so limited in what they can do.

all medical staff and the front- line staff in this pandemic.

All farmers, food producers, distributors and shop workers, pharmaceutical manufacturers and delivery drivers and those who volunteer to help the vulnerable.

All those behind the scenes searching for vaccines, working out and implementing government policies and planning strategies.

All those around the world who are suffering, often without the resources that we have got

Finally pray for your own family, and also name before God each member of the church family to which you belong. Here is another prayer you might like to use:-

*O God, our Father, bless and help us in this illness which has come upon us.*

*Give us all courage, endurance and cheerfulness to live with our situation.*

*Give to all who tend the sick, skill on their hands, wisdom in their mind sand gentleness and sympathy in their hearts and may they feel the support of all our prayers.*

*Help us not to worry too much but to leave ourselves in the hands of all who care and held by your ever-loving hands.*

*Lord Jesus, come to us and to our loved ones this day and at this time, bearing us up in your love and hope Amen.*

End with our family prayer, The Lord's Prayer.

6. You might like to try and sing the famous hymn 'When I survey the wondrous cross, which covers the week ahead and its significance.

CLICK on the following link to play hymn. [WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS](#)

End your time of church-at-home by saying out loud the words of The Grace, reaching out your hands to include in your imagination all those you know and love, who live here in the village.

\* And don't forget that there are Church services available on whatever is your radio station of choice, with Songs of Praise on BBC 1 at 1.15pm today. And for those with access to the Internet a number of local churches have made live stream services available whenever you want to tune in.

\* Finally, you might like to continue the habit of placing a candle safely in your window at 7pm tonight in solidarity with Christians everywhere and very importantly as a sign that we are praying for this country at this time.. During the week you might like to make an Easter garden in your garden or indoors. A flowerpot on its side will do for a grave and two sticks bound together for a cross with whatever flowers greenery or other decoration you can find.

\* Don't hesitate to contact the church leaders, if you would like to have a friendly chat or want to pass on some news for us all. **Nick** - 01992 814 426. **Roger** - 01992 815 838. **Keith** - 020 8504 9168



Left is a photo of Beryl's church-at-home space. Maybe you can take a photo of your new place of worship that we can share?