District – At Home Service – Palm Sunday 29th March, 2026
(Prepared by Prim Skedgell – Tavistock Circuit)

Call to worship – Find your Bible and read – **Zechariah 9 v.9** keep your Bible with you for later – we spend this time rejoicing, worshipping Jesus as the Servant King and Conquering King

Hymn StF 264 – Make way, make way for Christ the King
1. Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendour arrives; fling wide the gates and welcome Him into our lives.

Chorus. Make way (make way), make way (make way), for the King of kings (for the King of kings); make way (make way), make way (make way), and let His kingdom in.

2. He comes the broken hearts to heal, the prisoners to free; the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance, the blind shall see.

Chorus.

3. And those who mourn with heavy hearts, who weep and sigh, with laughter, joy and royal crown He'll beautify.

Chorus.

4. We call you now to worship Him as Lord of all, to have no gods before Him, their thrones must fall!

Chorus.

Prayer – Father we come to You and thank You for Your handiwork in creation. We praise You for the beauty we see around us in grandeur of hills and valleys, streams and seas, the changes in seasons. We thank You too for Your tiny works of creation for the living creatures and organisms that we can't see with the naked eye, and yet there is life! – thank You Lord.

We thank You too Father for Your gift of Jesus who came in such a humble way as a tiny Baby, who lived on earth as one of us. We thank You for His teaching, so precious in Your Word the Bible and for His suffering and death and praise You, for His resurrection too, breaking the power of death and opening the way for us to find forgiveness when we come in penitence to You. He is now at Your right hand interceding for us.

Thank You too Father for Your gift of the Holy Spirit, for His coming in power and equipping us to serve You in our everyday lives. We pray that we may allow Your Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives that we may live for Your honour and glory and at Your prompting and leading.
Minister to us now as we spend a little while looking to You Lord in

this time of worship, speak to us Lord the word that we need to hear. Thank You Lord.

The Lord's Prayer

Please read **Psalm 118 vs. 1,2, 19-29**

We prepare ourselves for our Scripture passage from the New Testament found in Matthew 21 by singing our own Hosannas!

Hymn StF 263 – Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest
1. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Lord, we lift up Your Name, with hearts full of praise; be exalted, O Lord, my God! Hosanna in the highest!

2. Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings! Glory, glory, glory to the King of kings! Lord, we lift up Your Name, with hearts full of praise, be exalted, O Lord, my God! Glory to the King of kings.

Now read the well known passage from **Matthew 21 vs.1-11**

Reflection – We probably look at today's lectionary reading and think – I know the story of Palm Sunday and Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, but let's just think about it, and ask the Lord to show us something new that excites us, and that we can share with others.

As we look at the Scripture reading today, we are reminded that it has been said that if someone was coming as a conquering king, they would come on a large war horse, showing their strength and great power, but I understand, at the time of Jesus, that King's also came on donkeys, and when that happened, it was a reminder that the King was coming in peace, not declaring war.

A conquering King – As Jesus entered Jerusalem to the sound of praise from 'a very large crowd' (v8), their acclamation of Jesus as the 'Son of David' (v9) indicates clearly that they are viewing Him as none other than the Davidic Messiah, the coming King who would deliver God's people from their enemies – the Romans who occupied their land. There is joy and celebration, seen in their royal homage to Jesus as they strew His way with cloaks and branches, but also a sense of expectation. The crowds recognise the He is not merely 'the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee', a despised area of the country, but in Him is One who comes with God's authority (v9), bringing salvation. Many people were looking for someone who would simply make their lives better, and give them independence, saving them materially and physically. But Jesus had not come as a military, conquering king.

A servant King – Jesus came as a King of a different kind. He came as a servant King. He did not come to overthrow the Roman occupying force, but to demonstrate the reign and love of God. He would do this by dying on the cross – within days of this triumphal entry. Matthew 20 v28 reads – 'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many' – this demonstrates that Jesus knew what He was coming to Jerusalem for, and that He was willing to do this.

Although Jesus took the role of a servant, He was actually also a conquering King. Through His death and resurrection, He conquered sin once and for all, and set us free to enter His gates with thankful hearts – Praise the Lord! 'Open for me the gates of righteousness: I will enter and give thanks to the Lord'. (Ps118v19)

Let's just imagine ourselves at the roadside on that day. What would it have been like to welcome Jesus into the city? Would we

have been filled with excitement, hopes of freedom, drawn along by the exuberant atmosphere and shouting of loud 'Hosannas'? I'm sure we would have been on cloud 9 and so sure of Jesus being the 'Son of David', the promised Messiah. BUT…. Just a few days later – would we have been in the crowd shouting 'Crucify!?

Do we stand up for Jesus when the crowd don't see Him as Lord and Saviour? Do we speak out for Him in every situation? Do we give Him the honour and glory in every area of our lives? Are we prepared/able to answer the question 'Who is this?' Is Jesus real in our lives, as the Conquering King and the Servant King?

Spend a few moments thinking about this, and searching your heart praying that we give Jesus the first place in every area of our lives.

God bless you all. Amen

Hymn SoF 265 – Ride on, ride on in majesty

1. Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hark, all the tribes, 'Hosanna!' cry: your humble beast pursues its road with palms and scattered garments strowed.

2. Ride on, ride on it majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die; O Christ, Your triumphs now begin, oe'r captive death and conquered sin.

3. Ride on, ride on in majesty! The winged squadrons of the sky look down with sad and wondering eyes to see the approaching sacrifice.

4. Ride on, ride on in majesty! Your last and fiercest strife is nigh; the Father on His sapphire throne, expects His own anointed Son.

5. Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die; bow Your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, Your power and reign.

Prayer of confession and intercession

Lord Jesus, when You came into Jerusalem, people gathered to welcome You. They shouted 'Hosanna' and hope filled their hearts. A few days later, the same people called for Your death. They shouted, 'Crucify!' and hate filled their hearts. **Forgive us, Lord, for the times when we change our hearts towards You.** When You came into Jerusalem, people treated You as a king. They waved branches in celebration and asked You to save them. When You hung on the cross, people treated You as a criminal. They waved their fists and asked you to save Yourself. **Forgive us, Lord, for the times when our praise of You becomes a protest.** When You came into Jerusalem, people stood as one, shoulder to shoulder in their hopes and dreams. When You were taken down from the cross, people scattered, divided by their fears and failures. **Forgive us, Lord, for the times when our belief in You turns to betrayal.** This week, Lord, and every week, let us know Your compassion, Your understanding, and Your forgiveness. Let us be made new: sure in hope, certain in faith, and strong in love. **Hosanna, Lord! Hosanna! Save Your people. Amen**

Father God we bring to You people in our own locality who are hurting because of health problems, relationship break-down, unemployment, money worries or other daily pressures, we pray that they may know Your peace, love and daily presence, and help us Lord, as we are touched by You, to stand alongside these people and be of practical help.

Father God, we bring to You the situations in the world where there is so much suffering, fear, injustice, and pain. We think of the Ukraine, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, Syria, Iran/Iraq and many of the countries in Africa. We pray for those who have lost families and friends because of war and persecution and ask Father that Your healing touch may be felt by those in need. Touch our pockets to give, keep us on our knees to pray and give us hearts of compassion to respond Lord to the cries of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Amen

Hymn StF 407 – Hear the call of the kingdom

1. Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King; let His song rise within you as a fragrant offering of how God, rich in mercy, came in Christ to redeem all who trust in His unfailing grace.

Chorus. King of heaven, we will answer the call. We will follow, bringing hope to the world, filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim, salvation in Jesus' Name

2. Hear the call of the kingdom to be children of light. With the mercy of heaven, the humility of Christ; walking justly before Him, loving all that is right, that the life of Christ may shine through us.

Chorus.

3. Hear the call of the kingdom to reach out to the lost. With the Father's compassion in the wonder of the cross. Bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope yet to come; let the nations put their trust in Him.

Chorus.

Blessing – Go out into the world in peace. Be brave; keep hold of what is good; never pay back wrong for wrong; encourage the faint-hearted; support the weak and the distressed; give due honour to everyone. Be always joyful; pray continually; give thanks whatever happens; for this is what God in Christ wills for you. Amen.

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