

# St Edmund Warkton

## News Sheet

5 April 2020 **Palm Sunday**

**Eastertide** - the Church has left the building!

Easter is a natural opportunity to talk to people about Jesus - but no one was expecting that this year we would not be celebrating Jesus' resurrection in our church buildings. Instead, most of us will be at home, joining local church celebrations online.

The size of virtual congregations looking in on live streamed church services over the first two weeks of Lockdown suggests that we can expect thousands of not-yet-Christians to be joining our Easter Sunday celebrations - far more than the numbers who might have attended an Easter service in more normal times.

### **Prayer requests**

We pray for those being affected by the Corona virus.

May we be good neighbours, providing support and sharing God's love by caring for them.

We pray today for all Church Leaders, who have to totally rethink their Easter Services and how they reach out to their neighbours with the good news of the Resurrection.

Please pray for the residents of Warkton parish especially those new to our community; those who are self isolating because of age and underlying medical issues; and those who do not have their children living locally who could give them support at this difficult time.

We would also like to give thanks for the work of teachers and those who work in schools who have worked very hard supporting their pupils this term and hope that the holiday will refresh them, ready for the next term whatever that may bring. We pray for those known to us who work in the essential

services; for those who provided for us, those shops and services which remain open - and for our milkmen/milkmaids and deliverers.

We would like to give thanks for the clergy and families worker within our Benefice who are working so hard to bring us services, thought for the day and blogs to help us all spiritually through this difficult time. We ask God to strengthen them and continue to give them inspiration to support us whilst keeping them safe and well.

### **The Collect for Palm Sunday**

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The LORD looks down from heaven  
and sees the whole human race.  
From his throne he observes  
all who live on the earth.  
He made their hearts,  
so he understands everything they do.  
The best-equipped army cannot save a king,  
nor is great strength enough to save a warrior.  
Don't count on your warhorse to give you victory -  
for all its strength, it cannot save you.

But the LORD watches over those who fear him,  
those who rely on his unfailing love.  
He rescues them from death  
and keeps them alive in times of famine.  
(Psalm 33)

## **The Rector writes** - Church @Home

I do hope that you find the resources we are providing of some use. They are:

A 'Daily Thought' posted every day on our YouTube Channel. These are from a variety of people, team members and others members of the fellowship.

A daily YouTube live broadcast of morning prayer at 8.00am each day lasting about half an hour. If you missed the 8.00am time this can be viewed at any time afterwards, though it is good to be praying together to start each day if possible.

Readings for children from Helen. I've written about these in a previous post.

A sermon every Sunday forming part of the service we supply.

An outline for a Sunday service posted on our website which provides resources for you to use.

It is the last of these I want to write about, and give you some ideas of how best to use them. We are deliberately not live streaming an entire service. This is largely because the present restrictions under which we are living make this very difficult. The bishop has instructed us not to use our church buildings, and a single person 'talking to camera' is not very inspiring, especially for families.

So, every Sunday there will be available a document from the front page of the website (stbots.church).

This will contain:

Some liturgy (ie. confession, creed, collect etc.)  
Intercessions written by a member of the fellowship.

A Bible reading for you to find and read in your own Bible.

Links to suitable songs with words on YouTube.

*Most modern smart TVs can access YouTube and viewing on a TV is preferable to all sitting round a computer or tablet.*

A link to a sermon on our YouTube channel.

Some suggestions for children's activities.

May God bless you. Mark

**Palm Sunday** - is one of the most important days in the Christian calendar after Christmas and Easter.

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week, the week of events leading up to Jesus' death.

In the simplest of terms, Palm Sunday is an occasion for reflection on the final week of Jesus' life. It is a time for Christians to prepare their hearts for the agony of His Passion and the joy of His Resurrection.

### Palms Were a Symbol of Goodness and Victory

God's Word tells us the people cut palm branches and waved them in the air, laid them out on the ground before Jesus rode into the city. The palm branch represented goodness, well-being and victory and was symbolic of the final victory He would soon fulfil over death. 1 Corinthians 15:55 says, 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' Palm branches were often depicted on coins and important buildings. King Solomon had palm branches carved into the walls and doors of the temple (1 Kings 6:29). Again, at the end of the Bible, people of every nation raised palm branches to honour Jesus. Scripture tells us, 'After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing robes and were holding palm branches in their hands' (Revelation 7:9).

### Jesus Fulfilled Old Testament Prophecy

Jesus chose to ride in on a donkey, which directly fulfilled Old Testament prophecy of Zechariah 9:9: 'Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion! Shout, daughter Jerusalem! See your King comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' In biblical times, it was common for kings and important people to arrive by a procession riding on a donkey. The donkey symbolised peace, so those who chose to ride them showed that they came with peaceful intentions. Jesus, even then, reminded us that He is the Prince of Peace. When people shouted 'Hosanna!' they were hailing Christ as King. That word actually means 'save now' and though in their minds they waited for an earthly king, God had a different way in mind of bringing true salvation to all who would trust in Him.

### Palm Sunday is About Peace and Salvation

The then Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, would come into Jerusalem with his soldiers for Passover, showing his strength through the arms his men carried. Jesus, however, came on a donkey with all His disciples unarmed, to demonstrate the Kingdom of God and His peace. It was customary that during a time of peace, a king would ride on a donkey, while a king would come sitting on a white horse after victory in a battle, as suggested in Judges 5:10 and 1 Kings 1:33. So, Jesus came as King but not to judge the people. He came to demonstrate God's grace.

### Jesus Wept For Jerusalem

The Bible says that Jesus wept for Jerusalem. In the midst of the praise of the moment, He knew in His heart that it wouldn't be long that these same people would turn their backs on Him, betray Him, and crucify Him. His heart broke with the reality of how much they needed a Saviour. Luke 19:41-42 says, 'As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it, and said, 'If you, even you had only known on this day what would bring you peace - but now it is hidden from your eyes. Here,

'wept' is the same word used to describe the weeping of Mary and others in John 11:3-35, so we know that Jesus cried aloud in anguish over the future of the city.

### Many Churches Celebrate Palm Sunday With Reenactments

Today, many churches celebrate Palm Sunday with reenactments of the triumphal entry.

Catholic churches often bless palm branches with holy water and then distribute them to congregants. These palm branches are then saved for us following Ash Wednesday.

In regions where palm branches are not readily available, branches of other trees are used.

Some areas have developed other rather interesting traditions related to Palm Sunday.

In Latvia, Palm Sunday is called "Pussy Willow Sunday" because pussy willows, rather than palms are used and children are traditionally awoken with a swipe of a willow.

In the Netherlands, celebrants decorate crosses with candy and bread in the shape of a rooster.

In Poland, competitions for the largest or most beautiful palm branches are common.

