

CHRISTCHURCH WOODLEY 4th July 2021 10:30 Holy Communion

BIBLE MONTH SESSION 5: MARK 11:1 – 16:8

Call to Worship

To make an act of worship, we bring ourselves,
perhaps a little tired; perhaps a little preoccupied;
expecting much, expecting little.

And we bring our thoughts: some happy and thankful;
some worried and anxious;
some trivial and some deep.

And we bring our words: the ordinary language of everyday;
the difficult language of belief;
expressions of faith and fear, of doubt and hope.

All the ordinariness of our daily lives we bring to this act of worship;
so that with and through our Lord Jesus Christ we may meet God
and find our human offerings transformed by the glory of God's love.

Hymn StF 264 Make way, make way, for Christ the King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C33rtm8wmdc>

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| <p>1 Make way, make way, for Christ the King
in splendour arrives;
fling wide the gates and welcome him
into your lives.
<i>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.</i></p> <p>2 He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free;
the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,
the blind shall see.</p> | <p>3 And those who mourn with heavy hearts,
who weep and sigh,
with laughter, joy and royal crown
he'll beautify.</p> <p>4 We call you now to worship him
as Lord of all,
to have no gods before him,
their thrones must fall!</p> |
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Graham Kendrick (b.1950)

All Age Introduction to the Story of Jesus' Passion

What do the following have in common? Perfume; tree branch; cup of wine; square white 'handkerchief'; donkey; length of purple material; wooden cross.

Answer: they all appear in Mark's story of the last week of Jesus' earthly life.

Prayer of Adoration

Creator God, you are almighty, powerful,
the Maker of heaven and earth, the sovereign Lord of all – yet
you love us more tenderly than a mother or father,
more wholeheartedly than a partner or a friend.
The immensity of your love astounds us.
Creator God, we worship you.

Son of God, you are the eternal Word,
the majestic Messiah, Christ the King – yet
emptying yourself of all but love,
you gave yourself up to humankind,
you made of yourself a precious gift which could be rejected, mocked, even destroyed.
The immensity of your love astounds us.
Son of God, we worship you.

Holy Spirit, you are the creative breath of God,
roaring wind, flames and fire, the mighty Lord of Life – yet
you enter our lives with gentleness,
you fill us with peace and hope, with courage, faith and joy.
The immensity of your love astounds us.
Son of God, we worship you.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious and loving God,
when we think of all that you have done for us;
giving your Son to be our teacher, healer and friend, our crucified Saviour,
we realise with great sorrow how poor are the gifts we offer to you.
Our praise is short-lived and distracted.
So often our lives are obsessed by things of little importance.
Our loving is limited and tainted by mixed motives.

In Jesus Christ you have shown us that yours is a love that knows no limits,
even to dying for our sins.
Forgive us, we pray,
strengthen and enrich us with your Holy Spirit,
so that we may truly live for you in the name of Jesus Christ our Crucified Saviour-King.

Amen

Junior Church Hymn Introduction and Prayer

Junior Church Hymn: StF 447 Jesus be the centre <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kq1AJxftCk>

1 Jesus, be the centre,
be my source, be my light,
Jesus.

2 Jesus, be the centre,
be my hope, be my song,
Jesus.

*Be the fire in my heart,
be the wind in these sails;
be the reason that I live,
Jesus, Jesus.*

3 Jesus, be my vision,
be my path, be my guide,
Jesus.

*Be the fire in my heart,
be the wind in these sails;
be the reason that I live,
Jesus, Jesus.*

4 Jesus, be the centre,
be my source, be my light,
Jesus.

Michael Frye

Reading Mark 11:1 – 16:8 Selected verses

11 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. *****

⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

¹⁰ "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹² The next day ***** ¹⁵ on reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. ¹⁷ And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

¹² On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, ¹⁷ when evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. *****

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

²³ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

²⁵ "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. *****

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. *****

³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. *****

⁴³ Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. *****

⁴⁸ "Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not

arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled.

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. *****

⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶ Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. *****

⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" ⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶³ The high priest tore his clothes, "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard his blasphemy!" *****

15 Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

² "Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"You have said so," Jesus replied.

³ The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

⁵ But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested.

⁷ A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸ The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹ "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, ¹⁰ knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

¹² "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them.

¹³ "Crucify him!" they shouted.

¹⁴ "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. *****

²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull").

²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ^[28] ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! ³² Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. ⁴¹ In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

⁴² It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. *****⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Sermon

Jesus' first recorded words in Mark's Gospel are an announcement of the immanent establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Mark's portrayal of Jesus emphasizes that he is the Son of God, (i.e. the heir to the Kingdom of God). His Sonship is recognised by God's own word at Jesus' baptism and confirmed at his Transfiguration. As Son and heir, Jesus' ministry reflects his heavenly authority, and he exercises it to free those who are oppressed by the forces opposed to God's will. In the first part of the Gospel, Jesus is the wonder-working conquering hero, powerful and authoritative in word and deed, but after the Transfiguration there is a definite shift in emphasis and tone.

From this point on Jesus repeatedly predicts his suffering and death, and approaches Jerusalem with solemn determination, certain of the path of suffering to which God has called him. Greeted with enthusiastic Messianic chanting on Sunday, Jesus seems hell-bent on provoking head-on confrontation and escalating conflict with his opposers. (He may have dramatically turned the traders out of the Temple on Monday, but we can be fairly certain that they would have been back at their business on Tuesday with a heightened presence of Temple authorities and their enforcers!)

To earthly minds it might seem that, Jesus' messianic ambitions had been inflamed by Sunday's procession into Jerusalem, but that he had over-estimated the protection afforded by his popularity with the pilgrim crowds, and thus played into the hands of the authorities. His 'attempted coup', as some might have interpreted, it had failed, and his reckless endangerment of his people's security had resulted in execution as the misguided leader of a rebellion against Rome. From Pontius Pilate's words at Jesus' Roman trial, and the notice Pilate authorised for display on Jesus' cross, it is reasonable to assume that this was the picture painted, however unconvincingly, by the Sanhedrin when they handed Jesus over. For Pilate's benefit, they had translated the Jewish title 'Messiah' as 'King of the Jews', with all its treasonous anti-Roman connotations.

But Mark's narrative does not depict Jesus as the leader of a failed coup, overtaken by events and overpowered by his enemies. Even in the hands of his enemies, Jesus has a calm dignity which cannot be shaken. He is not a helpless victim: he has deliberately chosen to allow these events to take their allotted course. Rather than desperately seeking to save himself by arguing his innocence of the charges (he was a very persuasive speaker!), he mostly refuses to say anything when questioned. When he does choose to speak to the Sanhedrin, his words are a confident declaration of his Christhood and his future Messianic role. Whatever the Sanhedrin do at this point, they cannot stop him from fulfilling his God-given purpose. If he is wrong in his assertion then he is indeed guilty of blasphemy, but if he speaks the truth, and Mark's readers know that he does, those who pass judgment and condemn him now will be in his power and dependent on his mercy on their Day of Judgment!

Like so many others, the Jewish hierarchy of first century Jerusalem could never accept Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah: he did not fulfil their cherished hopes; he didn't conform to their expectations, and his regime would not be one under which they could comfortably serve. Jesus' understanding of his Messiahship was alien to all their human expectation and experience.

This is a 'King of the Jews' whose dignity is manifested in humility and close association with the poor and the marginalized, rather than with the rich and influential.

This is a King who does not need to seize power through military might and hold onto it by political intrigue and fear – God has given him the power, and what God has given cannot be taken away.

This is the David-like king who is the true shepherd of his people, sacrificing himself for their sake.

This is the king who has sovereign power over the lives of his subjects, but exercises it through love and mercy for the sake of justice, because that is the pattern of God's own sovereignty.

In him God has given us the ultimate example: of godly leadership; of the proper exercise of power and influence; and of how we should relate to one another.

Thanks be to God for such a wonderful gift!

Prayers of Intercession

Sovereign God, we come in awe before you,
lost in wonder that, in Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself to share in human life.

We humbly ask that you continue to share in our lives
and in the lives of those for whom we are concerned.

Be with us now, we pray, as we bring our prayers for others,
naming them before you in the silence:

Silence

We place these, who need your special care,
before the eternity of your love, Lord Jesus Christ.

Hold your hands beneath them and around them, O God.

Give us glimpses of the justice which is part of your eternal kingdom,
give us images of the breadth of your compassion,
give us touches of your power to transform all life, Lord God,
and help us to see signs of the healing which lies deep within your heart.

We place ourselves, who need your care,
before the eternity of your love, Lord Jesus Christ.

Hold your hands beneath them and around them, O God.

Then we will see anew the great hope to which we are called
and the faithfulness which encircles us
as we tread the life-path to which you have called us.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ

Amen.

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.**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Hymn StF 287 When I survey the wondrous cross <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyHkkmL-KWo>

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 When I survey the wondrous cross,
on which the Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride. | or thorns compose so rich a crown ? |
| 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ my God ;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood. | 4 His dying crimson, like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the tree ;
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me. |
| 3 See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down ;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet, | 5 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small ;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all. |

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

Communion

God, who clothes the earth with rich and beautiful garments;
we adore you in the austere nakedness of the man on the cross.

God, who acts with passion and love in the history of the world;
we adore you in the waiting stillness of the man on the cross.

God who claims all in heaven and on earth for your commonwealth;
we adore you in the self-abandonment of the man on the cross.

God our Father,
We gather today in praise and gratitude that you come to us in love,
and that in your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have shown us how your love must be shared by honouring and serving others.

With angels and archangels and all who have tried to respond to you in humble service,
we worship you, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, suffering God,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Come to us now in your vulnerable strength,
as we remember Jesus,
who brought wholeness and life through his death and resurrection.

On the night he died, he took bread and wine,
blessed them and gave them to his friends, saying,
'This is my body, given for you
This is my blood, shed for you.
Do this to remember me.'

Pour out your Spirit on us now, Lord God,
as we offer before you this bread and wine,
and remember Christ's sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Nourish us with his life that we may live and grow in him.
Give us his spirit of service that we may love as he loves us.
Take from us all fear that the cost will be too great.
Keep us faithful and joyful in his service;
for you are the God who delights us,
and in Christ has called us his holy people.
To you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be praise and glory, world without end.

Amen

Breaking of the Bread

Consumption of the Elements

Prayer of Dismissal

Every time we eat a meal, remind us of your presence.
Every time we drink, remind us of your blessings.
Every time we see a need, give us the sense of sharing.
Every time we enjoy your creation, fill us with thanks and praise.

Hymn StF 185 Sing we the king who is coming to reign

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvaoxZkDlcY>

- 1 Sing we the King who is coming to reign ;
glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain !
Life and salvation his empire shall bring,
joy to the nations when Jesus is King :
*Come let us sing: praise to our King,
Jesus our King, Jesus our King :
this is our song, who to Jesus belong :
glory to Jesus, to Jesus our King.*
- 2 All shall be well in his kingdom of peace ;
freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase ;
justice and truth from his sceptre shall spring ;
wrong shall be ended when Jesus is King :
- 3 Souls shall be saved from the burden of sin ;
doubt shall not darken his witness within ;
hell has no terrors, and death has no sting ;
love is victorious when Jesus is King :
- 4 Kingdom of Christ, for your coming we pray ;
hasten, O Father, the dawn of the day
when this new song your creation shall sing ;
Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King :

Charles Silvester Horne (1865–1914)

Closing Responses

For the Father-love which raised Jesus from the dead,

Thanks be to God.

For the Christ-love which took Jesus to his death – and beyond- in faithful obedience,

Thanks be to God.

For the Spirit-love which makes us one with Jesus in his suffering, dying and rising again,

Thanks be to God.

For the communion of love – Father, Son and Holy Spirit –

One and Three in wisdom, generosity and glory.

Thanks be to God. Amen