

*Christ Church New  
Southgate & Friern Barnet*

*Palm Sunday  
10 April 2022*

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*Welcome*

Song: Praise is rising,

*Psalm 118*

<sup>26</sup> May God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

**From the Temple of the Lord we bless you.**

<sup>27</sup> The Lord is God; he has been good to us.

**With branches in your hands, start the festival**

**and march around the altar.**

<sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I give you thanks;

**I will proclaim your greatness.**

<sup>29</sup> Give thanks to the Lord,

**because he is good  
and his love is eternal.**

Give thanks to the Lord,  
**because he is good  
and his love is eternal.**

Song: I see the King of glory

*Reading: Luke 19.28-40 read by Evonne Williams*

<sup>28</sup> After Jesus said this, he went on in front of them toward Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup> As he came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead <sup>30</sup> with these instructions: "Go to the village there ahead of you; as you go in, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If someone asks

you why you are untying it, tell him that the Master<sup>al</sup> needs it."

<sup>32</sup> They went on their way and found everything just as Jesus had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying it?"

<sup>34</sup> "The Master needs it," they answered, <sup>35</sup> and they took the colt to Jesus. Then they threw their cloaks over the animal and helped Jesus get on. <sup>36</sup> As he rode on, people spread their cloaks on the road.

<sup>37</sup> When he came near Jerusalem, at the place where the road went down the Mount of Olives, the large crowd of his disciples began to thank God and praise him in loud voices for all the great things that they had seen: <sup>38</sup> "God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory to God!"

<sup>39</sup> Then some of the Pharisees in the crowd spoke to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "command your disciples to be quiet!"

<sup>40</sup> Jesus answered, "I tell you that if they keep quiet, the stones themselves will start shouting."

Song: We have a king who rides a donkey,

*Activity: Write a prayer or poem*

Reading Psalm 126, explore what makes you thankful and how does that feel?

A framework for writing a poem or prayer of thanksgiving

In this lifetime, I am thankful for...

In the last year, I am thankful for...

In this week, I am thankful for...

On this day, I am thankful for...

In this hour, I am thankful for...

Why I should be thankful...

## *Sermon: Making noise for Jesus*

Last week Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anoosheh Ashoori were released from prison in Iran. Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe had spent six years in detention on spying charges which she has always denied. We're delighted that she is back with her family. But speaking at a recent press conference, Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe rejected the credit given to current Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, she said: "I have seen five foreign secretaries change over the course of six years. How many foreign secretaries does it take for someone to come home?" Ms Zaghari-Ratcliffe was criticised on social media, where commentators suggested she should be more grateful. How often are women, and especially black and brown women told to be quiet, peaceable and grateful? How often are women criticised for being too noisy, too brash, too angry? How often are women told calm down dear. How often are women's questions rejected for challenging the status quo, for trying to change the way things work ?

We join Jesus and his crowd of disciples today walking down the Mount of Olives, into the little valley before climbing up the steep hill to the city of Jerusalem and this crowd is being too noisy. Command your disciples to be quiet, Jesus is told by a Pharisee. Only Luke brings this detail out in his gospel. They are making too much noise according to the Pharisee, too much noise about Jesus being the King who comes in the name of the Lord, too much about peace and too much about the glory of God in Christ.

Why does the Pharisee get grumpy about the noise? The crowd are declaring that Jesus is King. They're doing things like laying down their cloaks, just like the people did for King Jehu in 2 Kings 9, Jesus is riding a donkey like the prophet Zechariah 9.9 predicted the Messiah would and they are shouting – God bless the king, who comes in the name of the

Lord. But there is another king in Jerusalem, the Roman Empire is in charge in the city, Pilate is the governor for Tiberius the emperor. As a way of managing this foreign land, Herod is a regional ruler for the Jewish population and none of these are Jesus.

So when the crowd say – Jesus is the King, they are arguing against Herod and the Roman Empire. They are upsetting the power structures of their day and risking the stability of the region. So the Pharisee says keep quiet, or tell your tribe to shut up. Walter Bruggeman says this: Silence is a strategy for keeping the status quo with its unbearable distribution of power and wealth. Those who make noise instead challenge and disrupt power so it must be changed.

In Czech republic, Norway and Finland you might hear the phrase – walk around in hot porridge, it's an idiom that is similar to the English – don't beat about the bush. Jesus likewise is happy to use similar phrases. If the people are quiet, the stones will cry out is also found in Habakkuk 2.11, meaning this is too important to ignore. The true identity of Jesus is not going away. Right at the beginning of the gospels we learn that Jesus isn't just a nice guy, but the son of God. Jesus is sent from heaven to earth. Jesus, son of God is at one with God, was part of the creation of the world. Jesus is part of the divine plan of salvation and justice to the world. Jesus isn't a flash in the pan was present at the creation of the world. In other words

All life is from God, all the world is from God. The waters parted for the Israelites, the star shone for Jesus birth, and the earthquake and darkness are about to come for his crucifixion and death. The stones will cry out as Jesus is released from a stone tomb and the whole earth will declare Jesus Christ has died and risen from the dead, and is alive and lives and reigns forever. This is the Jesus that the crowds knew, they saw his miracles, they

heard his teaching, they've just seen him give sight to the blind and they can keep it in no longer. The crowd are noisy about the goodness of Christ, his power, his healing and his authority. It is good to make noise about God. How can we not shout and sing for joy at the goodness that Jesus brings to our lives? For he is our healer, our salvation and our hope.

If you look carefully at the stones around our church, you'll see two things. One they are very beautiful and decorative. Who would make an air vent that looks like this? Someone who thinks creation glorifies the Lord. And second there are memorial stones or foundation stones. These are laid at the start of a building project to 'the glory of God'. In Joshua 24.27 a stone is used as a visual marker, as a witness to the love of God by the Israelites. All these stones are permanent signs of belief in God, reminders of the greatness of God and devotion and faith in him.

What would the stones of Jerusalem cry out? They would say: Jesus is Lord of all, King of Kings, majesty.

Jesus refuses to tell the crowd to be quiet for they are declaring he is King. A King for every person on the margin, for every person outside the city, outside power and outside of institutional religion. For every person making a noise about justice or injustice, we glimpse God's presence. For in every situation where freedom, hope and justice is achieved we are one step closer to seeing the world changed and renewed. The events of this journey into Jerusalem might have seemed quite local to the Pharisee, but really the noise about Jesus being king is one that has changed the world, and will change the world totally as his kingdom comes. In Romans 8.21, Paul calls this hope in future glory.

For every person who speaks for justice

For every person who refuses to be silenced about Jesus, for every voice that disrupts power and lifts the oppressed, for every action that offers the hope of Christ ...

May we happily make this noise for Christ the King, less the stones cry out instead.

*Activity: Paint a stone*

What would the stones shout out?

On the road to Jerusalem, some tried to silence the crowd, but Jesus said that if they were silenced, the stones would shout out. Suspending disbelief about talking stones, what words do you think the stones would have called out? Choose one or two words and write them on your stone.

Song: Meekness and majesty,

Prayers for the world

Song: All glory, laud, and honor

Blessing