A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Phil. 2.5-11

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, “The Lord needs them.” And he will send them immediately.’ This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, ‘Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!’ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, ‘Who is this?’ ‘The crowds were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.’

Matthew 21.1-11

Collect

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. Amen.

Post Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant, and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation: give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Green Prayer

God of creation, who loves all he has made and all that has evolved, open the eyes of your people, that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet. Through Jesus Christ, who walked this earth and calls us by name. Amen.

Prayer written by the Bishop of Leeds, the Rt Revd Nicholas Baines.
FOR OUR PRAYERS

Those who are ill or in need:
Michael Green; Jenny Smith; Sarah Pitman; Hilary Brazier; Judith Sanson; Joyce Smith; Sachin Shah.

Pray also for those who have the COVID-19 virus including Ian, Lucy and Ellie Christie. They are recovering and thank you all for your prayers and good wishes.

Those who have died:
CHRISTOPHER de KRETSER.
ALAN COX—we pray for Madeleine Cox, his wife, and for all the family. Alan’s funeral will be held on Monday, 6 April at 3.15pm at Havant Crematorium. They will be singing Lord of all Hopefulness at 3.30pm in case you want to join in.

CYNTHIA WILKES—we pray for Peter and David, her sons, and for all the family. Her funeral is in Kent on Thursday 9 April at 9.30am. It will be live streamed. If anyone would like to view the service and/or see the Order of Service, please contact Hazel Bate for details: hazelbate2@gmail.com

Those whose anniversary of death falls this week: Eric Clark (2001); Valerie Finch (2000)

Link Parish of St Francis of Assisi, Barham Green, Zimbabwe

NEXT SUNDAY 12 APRIL 2020
EASTER DAY

This is the start of Holy Week, the most holy of weeks in the Church’s calendar when Christians the world over begin to walk in real time the events of the last days in the life of Jesus. This year we follow Matthew’s account right the way through from chapter 21 to chapter 27. Today, Palm Sunday, we read of the triumphant procession of Jesus entering Jerusalem, riding on a humble donkey yet welcomed as King by the great crowds which gathered to greet him. Then on the following day Jesus enters the Temple and overturns the tables of the moneychangers, bringing himself into immediate conflict with the Temple authorities who begin to plot how they can get rid of him. On the Tuesday and Wednesday he speaks to the people and teaches them many things – above all, his message is to ‘love God and love your neighbour’. Each night he withdraws from the city to Bethany to spend the night there. Matthew chapter 21 to 25 are long passages which will be well worth reading over these days of this Holy Week. Then on the Thursday, (Matthew 26/17 onwards) we read of the preparations for the Last Supper and the events that followed, with all the characters playing their part – for good or ill. Matthew 27 is the account of the events of Good Friday told in just 66 dramatic verses. And that is where the week finishes – though of course we know what happens next. But that must wait till next Sunday.

This year we are not able to join together in worship in our church building. But we can still join together as we read the account by Matthew during this week. Some of you may have, over the years, heard a Gospel read in one sitting – I will never forget seeing Alec McCowen read Mark’s Gospel in one evening at a clergy conference. In this strange and unsettling time in which we all find ourselves, maybe try to find time – make time – to read Matthew’s account during this Holy Week. Knowing that we are doing this will help to remind us that together “We are the body of Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Let us then pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life”.

May God be with us all as we walk— metaphorically— the Way of the Cross as did Jesus of Nazareth all those centuries ago. Amen.

Eternal Father, look with love on your people of Christ Church and pour upon us the gifts of your Spirit. Although we are apart, draw us to you and to one another, so that by our growing love and unity we may bring healing and life to all. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Dean of Southwark has written the following prayer which you may wish to use:

A prayer in lockdown

The doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked.
(John 20.19)

Ever present God, be with us in our isolation, be close to us in our distancing, be healing in our sickness, be joy in our sadness, be light in our darkness, be wisdom in our confusion, be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar, that when the doors reopen we may with the zeal of Pentecost inhabit our communities and speak of your goodness to an emerging world.

For Jesus’ sake.

Amen