

Collect: (Page 110)

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. Amen.



**Sunday April 5th 2020
PALM SUNDAY**

**THIS WEEK AT
HOLY CROSS, WOODCHURCH**

*Welcome to Holy Cross Church.
"Growing disciples of Christ"*

Post Communion: (Page 119)

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.

**The church buildings are closed
until further notice, but your
local church is continuing to
worship, pray and care.**

**Please pray especially for all
who are affected by the
coronavirus outbreak,
especially those in isolation
and all who care for them and
for all who work in and for the
National Health Service**

READINGS FOR TODAY:

Liturgy of Palms:

Gospel – Matthew 21. 1-11

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.'

Psalm 118. 19

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever. Let Israel now proclaim, 'His mercy endures for ever. Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD; he who is righteous may enter. I will give thanks to you, for you answered me and have become my salvation. The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. On this day that the LORD has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Liturgy of Passion:**Old Testament – Isaiah 50. 4-9a**

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens— awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Psalm 31. 9-16

Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly. For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed. I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbours, a dismay to those of my acquaintance; when they see me in the street they avoid me. I am forgotten like the dead, out of mind; I am as useless as a broke pot. For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life. But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, 'You are my God. My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Make your face to shine upon your servant, and in your loving-kindness save me'.

New Testament – Philippians 2. 5-11

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.

Gospel – Matthew 27. 11-54

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus^[a] Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus^[a] Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?'^[b] For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?'^[c] All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' ²³ Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!' So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood;^[d] see to it yourselves.' Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters,^[e] and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;^[f] then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided^[g] him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself.^[h] He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son."'" The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. From noon on, darkness came over the whole land^[i] until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'^[j] Then Jesus cried again

with a loud voice and breathed his last.²³ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'

**In your intercessions this week
PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

THOSE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN:

Sunday: Yew Tree Close Monday: Ackers Road
Tuesday: Archers Court Wednesday: Archers Way
Thursday: Arrowe Court Friday: Arrowe Park Cottages
Saturday: Arrowe Park Road



THOSE WHO ARE ILL:

Val, Carol, Pam, Robert, Jean,
Michael, Paul, Chris

YEARS MIND:

Mildred Allison, Elsie McGeorge,
Ailsa Gregory, James Philip Alcock,
Denis Shine, John Eden, Valerie Hall

BIBLE READING FOR THE WEEK:

PALM SUNDAY – Matthew 27. 11-54

The story of the crucifixion.

This week try to find time to sit and read the account of Jesus' sufferings and death in its entirety.

Say what you feel about it to God.



How many times have you washed your hands today?

How many times have you prayed today?


We have been asked by the government to make sure we wash our hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds each time - but how do you know you have washed your hands for long enough?

How about **saying the Lord's Prayer every time you wash your hands**? This should take at least 20 seconds.



Stay safe- and keep in touch with God! God bless you - Christine

NOTICES

Standing Order Appeal for Regular Giving: Due to unforeseen circumstances, we would be grateful if you would consider setting up a standing order with your bank to continue with the support and income of our church. Please contact the Parish Office (677 5352  Sue) to arrange for a form to be sent to you.

Bible Study Group

If anyone would be interested in joining a weekly online Bible Study group, please email Revd Josie at:

Josie.tuplin@holycrosswoodchurch.uk

Sunday Morning Service – 10am on Zoom

Please see notes below regarding the explanation of Spiritual Communion.

John and Carol Foster would like to wish you all good health and hoping that everyone is staying safe.

Where's Rosie?... *there is a small picture of Sue's dog somewhere on this pewsheet – can you find her?*

General Enquiries (including baptisms and marriages) can be made by **TELEPHONE** between **6.30pm and 7.30pm on Wednesday evenings** on 677 5352 or email at parishoffice@holycrosswoodchurch.uk

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR RECTOR

COVID-19

The Church continues to be alive and active, but we have been instructed by the government to close our buildings.

Across the nation we are seeing a huge increase in the number of people falling sick with COVID-19. We must distance ourselves from one another and prevent the spread of infection in order to save lives.

Therefore, as well as public worship being suspended, Holy Cross Church buildings and all church buildings in the Church of England are now closed.

Our worship of God and our care for each other continue but cannot be done in this building.

Please see our website (www.holycrosswoodchurch.uk) and Facebook page (**Holy Cross Church Woodchurch- Approved**) for further information regarding the life of this worshipping community.

The Rector of this church can be contacted in an emergency by telephoning 0151 677 5352 or 07766 031757

or emailing parishoffice@holycrosswoodchurch.uk

Or Christine.broad@holycrosswoodchurch.uk

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind and with all your strength . . . Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”

To protect the vulnerable amongst us, please do not leave your home except for essential trips.

Pastoral Care at Holy Cross: To enable us to initiate and co-ordinate our responses to all pastoral needs as speedily as possible, please get in touch with one of our Pastoral Workers, Paul Jackson (648 4291) or Jan Lupton (07835 063466) or the Parish Office on 0151 677 5352 or email at parishoffice@holycrosswoodchurch.uk

Our verse for the year – “... let the little children come to me and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs” *Matthew 19 v 14*

Spiritual Communion

When Jesus took bread and wine at the supper he shared with his followers prior to his arrest and crucifixion, and blessed the bread and wine and shared them with his followers he commanded that we continue to do this in remembrance of him. (Luke 22:19). Jesus broke the bread told his followers that the bread is his body, and poured the wine and told his followers that the wine is his blood.

(Mark 14:22-24) In John's gospel chapter 6 Jesus tells his followers that **he is** the bread of life which his followers need to eat in order to have life in us. And so since the earliest days of the Christian faith Christians have, in obedience to Jesus' command eaten a symbolic meal of bread and wine- variously described as Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist or the Mass. We do this to remember Jesus and all that he has done for us , to receive Jesus into our lives in a unique and amazing way, to recommit ourselves to following Jesus and to living our lives according to his will and to recommit ourselves to each other- the body of Christ on Earth today.

But sometimes in the history of the world and the church, and in the lives of individual believers the actual receiving of the bread and wine of the Eucharist has not been possible. This may have happened in times of persecution, war, plague or being prevented for some other serious reason from being physically present at the Eucharist to physically receive the bread and wine. The Church of England, and some other churches, use the term "Spiritual communion" to describe "the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ."

(www.churchofengland.org) . In the book of common prayer we can read that if we come before Christ seeking his forgiveness for times we have failed to live as his followers, and give thanks for all that Christ has done for us, even though we may be in a position where we cannot physically receive the bread and wine of the Eucharist we may, by the grace of God, receive Christ into our lives and in so doing we do "eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ" in a spiritual sense. To do so when prevented by circumstances beyond our control from receiving bread and wine at a celebration of the Eucharist fulfils our obligation of receiving Holy Communion regularly.

Spiritual communion is characterised by

- Passionate desire for God
- Reaching out to God in prayer
- Thankfulness for all that God has done
- Seeking God's forgiveness for when we have not lived according to God's commands
- Offering oneself to God and committing oneself to the purposes of God
- By the grace of God, welcoming the presence of God in one's life.

Whilst the present coronavirus pandemic prevents us from meeting together in our buildings, we are still worshipping God - offering our individual thanks and praise in our homes and meeting online to praise God together.

In these acts of worship we may enter into communion with God and one another through participation in the prayers of Spiritual communion. Prayers to help us may be found on the Church of England website. By the grace of God may we continue to grow in faith. God bless you

Christine