



## St. Columba's Parish Church, Stewarton

(SC013595) (CCLI 1095831)

### Easter Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 – Home Service

Prayer: Lord Jesus on the first Palm Sunday you entered the rebellious city where you were to die. Enter our hearts we pray and take them to yourself. As the crowds welcomed you and spread garments and branches in your way make us ready to lay at your feet all that we have and are, that we too may bless your coming in the name of our Lord. Amen

**Hymn CH4 364** All glory, laud, and honour

**Reading** Psalm 118: 19 – 29; Matthew 21: 1 – 11

Our Lenten journey has reached its climax as we enter upon the most sacred time of the Church year Holy Week. Churches celebrate Palm Sunday in different ways. At one church the people meet in a room beneath the sanctuary. When everyone is ready they emerge through a side door to process around the outside of the church. Joining in the procession are people waving palm leaves, others playing musical instruments, including the bagpipes, others shouting and singing, "Hosanna." This celebration has become an important tradition in their church. One year when Dr. Walter Bruggemann was minister, he and the rest of the procession were outside when a young man living in the house across the street threw up the window and shouted, "What's all that noise? You sound like the Salvation Army!" Dr. Bruggemann looked up at him and said, "Son, we are the salvation army!"

What better way to sum up the events of the first Palm Sunday than to call it a salvation army parade? Jesus and his ragtag

army parade outside the city gates. Jesus instructs two of his disciples to go into a nearby village where they will find a colt that has never been ridden. "Untie it," Jesus tells them, "and bring it." If someone asks why they are taking the colt, they are simply to say, "The Lord needs it." With that assurance the two disciples set out in search of a colt. Imagine their surprise and joy when they find the colt just as Jesus said they would. And sure enough as they were taking it, some one questioned them, "What are you doing untying the colt?" they said, "Jesus needs to borrow your car, we'll bring it back later". I wonder if someone broke into house or garden and took away something saying Jesus needs it, would you just say, "Ok."? How much are we willing to give to Jesus? It is one thing to give Him something that wouldn't really matter; but to give Him something that you really needed is a different story. No sooner had the two disciples returned with the colt than a crowd appeared. And the crowd was in the mood for a celebration. There was excitement in the air. Some spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut "leafy branches" placing them on the road. There was singing and shouting. The people were ready for a change. They wanted someone to lead them to a better life. They had high hopes. The problem with their high hopes was that they were short sighted. They could not see the world from God's perspective. God had a greater plan--a grander plan than they could imagine. When the people along the way saw Jesus riding a colt approaching Jerusalem they immediately thought that Jesus would enter the city to smash, shatter and break up the established order. They thought it would be a showdown between Jesus and the Roman officials. This was what they wanted; this was what they were hoping for. "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" rang out everywhere. "Hosanna" could also be translated as "Save us--now." The people were geared up and ready. Yet Jesus' action was a contradiction of what the people hoped for. Jesus was riding a colt, a symbol of peace, not a horse, a symbol of conquering. Jesus approached Jerusalem in peace as a humble servant and not a mighty warrior king. The people were so preoccupied with the notion of political and economic power that they were blind to what was taking place before them. God was at work, but not in a way that they could see. That's a reminder to us—God does not always work in the way we think and He is at work even when we can't

see Him. What the people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem that day did not realize was that God was offering them an opportunity to join Him in doing a new thing.

We are challenged today, as we enter this sacred time in the church year, to reflect upon how we can better imitate those who have lived for others, people who in many ways have become Christ to the world.

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, you entered Jerusalem in quiet humility, taking the form of a servant, even to the point of death on a cross, emptying yourself so that we might be filled. Come again now and establish your kingdom.

As we rejoice this day in the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, may we too be willing to walk the way of the cross.

Forgive us all the ways we fail you, through thought, word and deed. We have followed our own pleasures, we have sought our own ends, we have lived in selfishness. Christ have mercy upon us. Forgive our limited understanding of your greatness and the narrowness of our vision. Forgive our inability to grasp the values of your kingdom, still less to base our lives upon them. Christ have mercy upon us.

Strengthen our sense of mission and service and may your will be done on earth even as it is in heaven. Come afresh to our troubled world, with all its needs, its tensions, its problems, and its evil. Guide the nations into the ways of justice and peace. Guide all leaders and rulers to care for our world. Comfort all who are broken by war and violence. Comfort all who are shattered by the betrayal of loved ones; all who feel scorned and rejected. We pray for all who are ill and we remember today the members of the Royal family who are undergoing treatment and all those we know who are ill at home or in hospital. Lay your healing hands upon them.

Lord Jesus, we remember that you died that we might live. We ask your blessing upon all our loved ones departed, who even now have entered into the joy of your kingdom.

Keep us safe until at last we too are lifted up. All this we ask in Jesus' name.

**Hymn CH4 365** Ride on! ride on in majesty!

Blessing

May the Blessing of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit be with you and all those whom you love this day and always, Amen.

### **Intimations:**

**Notice:** It is with great sadness we record the death of Dr. Peter Howie. Peter's funeral will take place in the Church on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 11am. Our love and prayers are with his family at this very sad time

**Easter Eggs:** – We would like to thank everyone who donated Easter Eggs for EACHa, a total of **141** were received. Many thanks to Margaret and family for arranging and delivering the eggs on our behalf.

**Bible Study/Prayer Group** – There will be **no** Bible Study/Prayer group on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**Soup & Chat** – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 12 noon–2pm in the church hall. Please come along and chat to friends.

### **CONTACT DETAILS:**

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| <b>Interim Moderator:</b>                                     | Very Rev. William Hewitt BD DipPS   |
| <b>Session Clerk:</b>   | Mrs. Mary Mitchell Tel: 01560 482742  |
| <b>Clerk to the Board:</b>                                    | Mrs. Sheila McGill Tel: 01560 483594  |
| <b>Pulpit Supply</b>  | Very Rev. William Hewitt BD DipPS   |
| <b>Organist:</b>  | Mr. Joe Auld  |
| <b>Order of Service:</b>                                      | Mrs. Janice Granger<br><i>e:stewartonstcolumbas@gmail.com</i>                 |
| <b><i>Please send notices to Janice by 6 pm on Monday</i></b> |   |
| <b>Web Site:</b>  | <a href="https://stewartonstcolumbas.org">https://stewartonstcolumbas.org</a> |
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