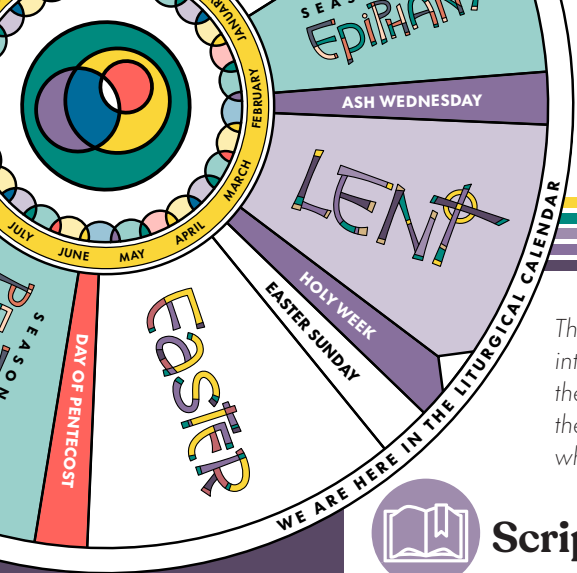


Matthew 21:1-11

Sixth Sunday in Lent



The Season of Lent is a period of 40 days, begins on Ash Wednesday, and is a period of introspection and reflection on the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus. Episcopal author and theologian Barbara Brown Taylor says that Lent is a "springtime for the soul...Forty days to cleanse the system and open the eyes to what remains when all comfort is gone. Forty days to remember what it is like to live by the grace of God alone and not by what we can supply for ourselves."



Scripture

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 fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

"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."



Questions

- Tell participants today is the first day of Holy Week, which means we are near the end of the season of Lent. Can participants identify the special days celebrated during Holy Week on a liturgical calendar?
- Tell a story of when you have seen a parade. What did you hear, see, smell, or feel?
- What might Jesus have heard, seen, smelled, or felt as he and his disciples entered the city?
- The leaders in the government of Jesus' community ruled very harshly, which harmed many people. When the people saw Jesus enter the city, they celebrated and yelled, "Hosanna!" meaning "Save us!" How was Jesus different from the government leaders who ruled over them?
- During Holy Week, congregations offer many creative ways to remember the final week of Jesus' life on earth, when Jesus dies, and when he returns to life on Easter Sunday. Share the ways your church remembers Jesus during Holy Week.

Look it Up!

Palm branches were used on festive occasions.

Look up pictures of the date palm plant. See if you can find information on where it grows, what kind of soil it needs, and name the parts of the leaves.



YEAR A

mini
REVOLUTIONS





Activity

Materials:

Large paper

Writing and coloring utensils

Holy Week is an event-filled time on the church calendar. This week, we remember the final days of Jesus' life in Jerusalem, his death on Good Friday, and his resurrection on Easter Sunday. With so much happening in our Bible stories, it can be helpful to have some plans to celebrate important moments together throughout the week.

We're going to make a Holy Week calendar. Many churches already have some activities or events planned for this time, so feel free to incorporate your church's plans into your group's calendar. Have someone draw two rows of eight boxes on large sheets of paper, one for each participant. In the top row, write the days of the week, starting with today, Palm Sunday, and ending with Easter Sunday. In the bottom row, fill the boxes with stories and activities you can read and do with your church, your friend/family, or yourself. Make sure each day has something engaging and memorable to do, and feel free to decorate as you go, adding doodles and coloring your boxes!

If you're feeling stuck, some examples are listed below:

- Reenact the scripture story from Palm Sunday outside. Color palm branches to wave as you go, and have a parade for Jesus!
- Build the city of Jerusalem out of blocks or other materials to help you visualize Jesus' journey.
- Read John 12:1-8 make a snack together, and discuss who you think you would be in this story.
- Read John 13:1-7, and brainstorm some acts of service you can do for your family, friends, or church community today!
- Use sidewalk chalk to draw some reminders about our Holy Week themes on your home or church sidewalk. How can you inspire others to encounter Jesus?

Alternate Activity

Let's play a game to help us understand our Bible story. Here's how the game works: read through today's scripture, or Bible story booklet, two or three times together. Pay close attention to details like what Jesus is riding, who is there, and how people act during the parade. Then, choose someone to retell the story with some intentional mistakes/fake details.

Everyone else will sit in a circle while the storyteller tells their story. If someone thinks the storyteller has added a false detail, they can raise their hand and interrupt the story with the correct detail. For example, the storyteller could say, "Jesus rode into the city on a camel..." and a listener might interrupt, saying that Jesus actually rode in on a donkey.

Switch storytellers, and tell the story (with mistakes) as many times as you wish. Afterward, discuss this question together: how do you think Jesus' welcome into the city was different from a typical royal king of that time?



Micropractice

On Palm Sunday, Jesus came to Jerusalem, the center of his community and faith. When you wake up and before you go to sleep, imagine Jesus at the center of your work, play, and rest each day this week.



Download a graphic to share with your community and on social media. You can download it here: illustratedministry.com/minirev/Lent6



Prayer

Dear God, how amazing it is that Jesus chose to humbly ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, greeted by those who loved you. Help us love one another with humility, finding moments of celebration in each day. Amen.

BLESSED

WHO COMES IN THE NAME

OF THE LORD!

WHO COMES IN THE

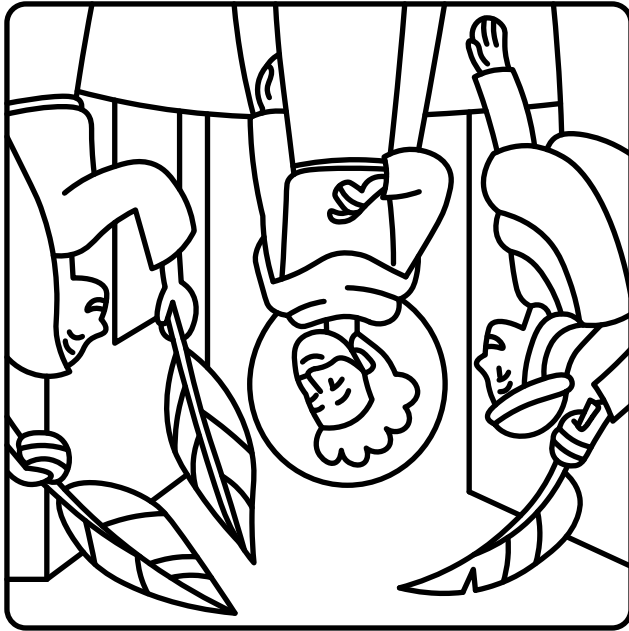
NAME

OF THE LORD!

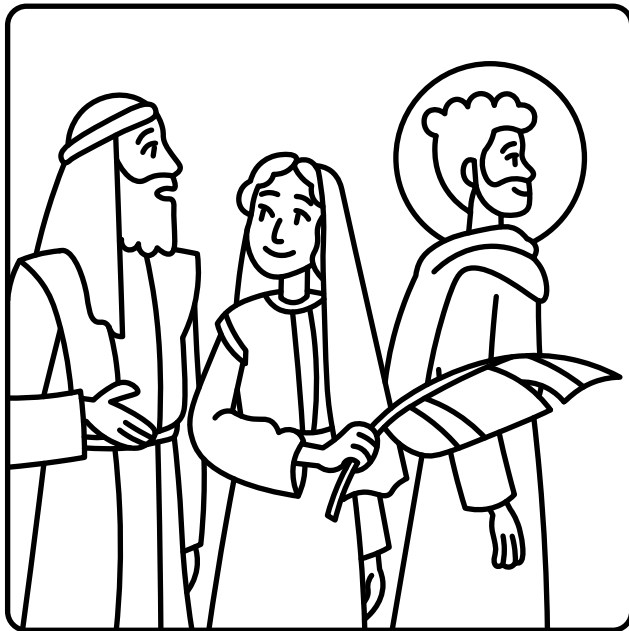
HOSANNA

IN THE HIGHEST

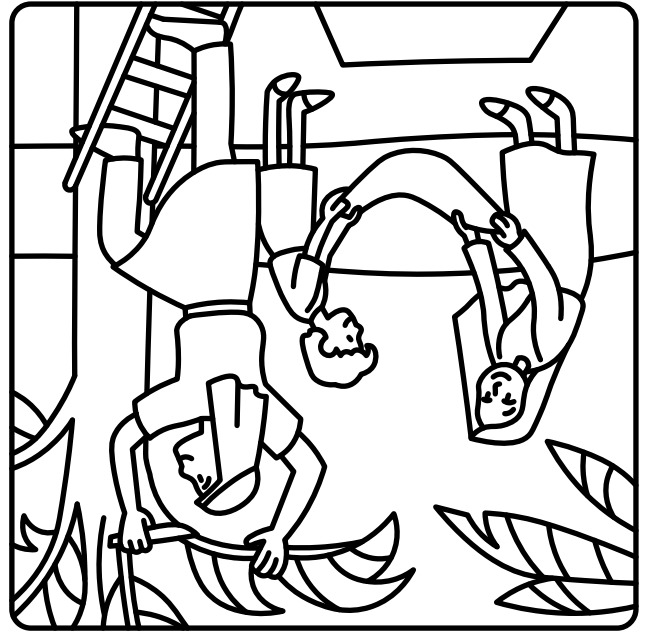
HEAVEN!



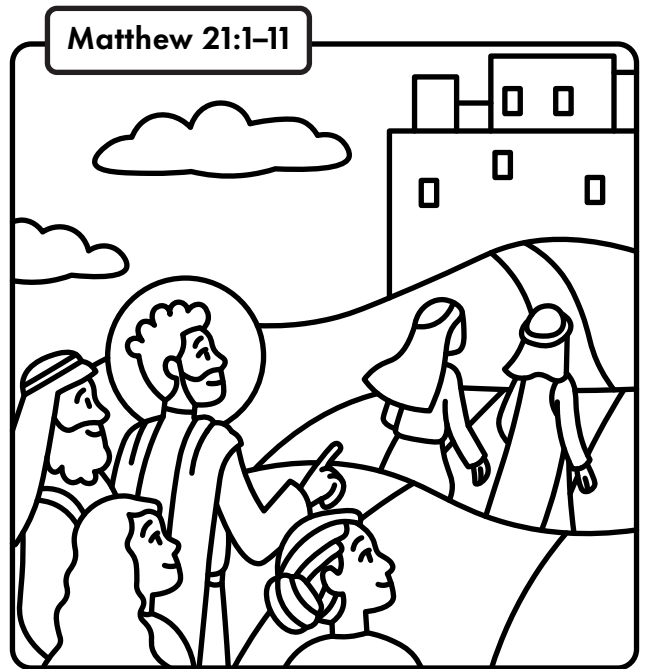
3. As Jesus came into the city, people cheered and waved the branches. It was like a parade! People shouted with joy, "Save us, Son of King David! Jesus comes in the name of God! Hosanna!"



4. Some people didn't know about Jesus. They asked, "Who is this king coming with this big parade?" The people told them, "This is Jesus, a great prophet!"



2. The people in Jerusalem heard Jesus was coming and had been preparing all day. They had cut large leaves, called palm branches, and laid cloaks on the road—like a red carpet.



1. Jesus and his followers were heading to Jerusalem. When they were nearby, Jesus sent two disciples to run ahead and find a donkey for him to ride into the city.