

Caught up in celebration

Mark 11.1-11 Palm Sunday

There was a party atmosphere as Jesus entered Jerusalem and many acts of generosity from the crowd. The cloaks that were laid on the road, where they would be trampled and ruined, had a greater value than the coats we wear today. The branches had value too, having been cut to celebrate the Festival of the Booths. Like the cloaks, they were given up in the excitement of celebrating Jesus.

This week we explore what it means to give extravagantly.

Prepare your children's session

Read Bible notes on [WEB](#).

Think about how you celebrate Jesus in your own life. Do you find it easy to give generously and spontaneously? What happens to you when you give: Does giving alter you in any way?

Children may feel they have less to give than adults, especially in terms of their own money. Help them to explore the idea of giving as a means of celebrating Jesus.

Provide the following play materials for very young children throughout the session: a basket of play people, a toy donkey and small pieces of cloth.

Go to www.rootsontheweb.com for all links, templates and images. Extra ideas can be found on p.20.

Children's session

Gather

Use the song, prayer and activity to gather the group and introduce the theme. (5 mins)

♪ Sing to the tune: *Our God is a great big God*

God gives me a brand new start,
God gives me a brand new start,
God gives me a brand new start,
it's a chance to make my mark.

Stand in a circle. Invite ideas of things or people to thank God for. As each suggestion is shared, pass a 'Mexican wave' around the circle.

Wave and welcome

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You will need: palm branches, coats or 'welcome' banners.

- Either using real palm branches, coats or banners, take it in turns to enter the room while everyone else waves their branches and shouts 'Hosanna!'
- How does it feel to be celebrated in this way? How does it feel to celebrate someone else?

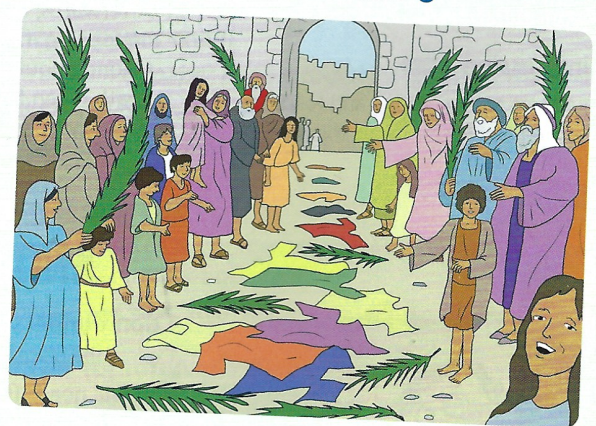
Jesus and his disciples were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives. They were almost near enough to hear the noise of the pilgrim crowds in the city.

Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead, and they went, his surprising words echoing in their minds. He had said, 'Go into the next village, and as soon as you enter it, you will find tied up a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. If anyone asks you what you are doing, just say, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately."' *

So they went off and found a colt in the street, tied up near a door. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' They told them what Jesus had said, and they allowed them to take it. Then the disciples brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks on it and he sat on the animal.

There was a crowd of people and many of them spread their cloaks * out on the road in front of Jesus, while others laid down leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And these pilgrims sang their ancient song:

'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!'



And in these words, they heard the cries of the prophets of old. Then Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. He looked around at everything, and as it was late, he went to spend the night at Bethany with his twelve disciples.

Mark 11.1-11

* See *Share the Word*.