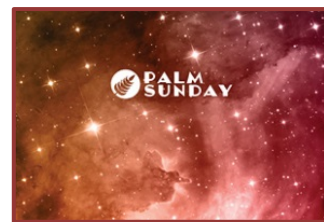


## *Children's Resources Palm Sunday*



### *The Easter Journey*

Palm Sunday is a great opportunity for a family-focused service, building on the feeling of celebration and community associated with Palm Sunday and the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. We have supplied an Interactive Message, three activities that could be used during Kids Church or any children's program that is held at your Corps during the week as well as three 'Home and Beyond' activities.

This year for Psalm Sunday we are focusing on how wonderful Jesus' love for us and others is.

### *Interactive Message*

This interactive message has been designed to be used as a standalone message during a Kid's Program that you may hold during the week or Sunday **OR** it can be used during the Sunday worship service to complement the message that has been provided for the adults.

#### **For this message you will need:**

- A volunteer – preferably a child who lives quite a busy and active week.
- White board or butcher's paper (see instructions)

The idea is to get a picture of what your volunteer's week looks like. Create a time line of their usual week. You may want to write it up on a whiteboard or butcher's paper or ask the AV team to create a slide as you are going through the timeline with the child.

As you chat with the volunteer, go through their timeline for their usual week. Go through each day with them starting from Sunday. Make lots of comments about their week and how busy they are. It might look something like this:

- Sunday:** Attend Church and Kid's Church.
- Monday:** Attend school during the day. After school attend basketball training.
- Tuesday:** Attend school during the day. After school have dinner with Grandparents.
- Wednesday:** Attend school during the day. Rest and play after school.
- Thursday:** Attend school during the day. After school attend Junior Soldiers or a music lesson.
- Friday:** Attend school during the day. After school attend Junior Youth Group or Karate!
- Saturday:** Play basketball game.

Explain that this is their schedule and timeline for the week.

Explain that today is Palm Sunday and this was the beginning of a busy week for Jesus so let's go through some of the events that Jesus faced that week. Let's go through Jesus' timeline.

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*'First of all on the **Sunday** Jesus rode through Jerusalem on a donkey. He made a triumphant entrance and people lined up the streets cheering Him. After this was He spent the night in a town called Bethany.'*

*'On the **Monday** Jesus spent time teaching at the Temple. This was the day that He spoke about the most important commandment to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and to love your neighbour as you love yourself.' He also cried over the city of Jerusalem because He loved the people so much and He could see the sins of the people.'*

*'On **Tuesday** Jesus taught many other parables such as the parable of the Ten Bridesmaids and the parable of the Three Servants. He also spoke words regarding His return to earth one day.'*

*'**Wednesday** was a dark day for Jesus because this was the day that one of His disciples – Judas agrees to betray Jesus.'*

*'On **Thursday**, Jesus attended a Passover meal and He shared a meal with the Disciples whom He loved and He washed the Disciple's feet.' He also stayed up all night.*

*'On the **Friday** very, very early in the morning, Jesus spent time praying and then He faced a trial before Pilate. Now Jesus could have got out of this situation but He knew that this was something that He had to do. Later on that morning Jesus was executed by being crucified on the cross. God allowed His Son Jesus to die this way because of His love for humankind. We will learn more about this next Friday and Sunday – being Easter.'*

*'Jesus spent a lot of time this week spending time with others and loving others. He taught about God's love and He showed others the love of God through His actions such as washing the Disciples feet and dying on the cross for us.'*

*'Well, it's safe to say the Jesus week is a little bit different to (volunteer's name) week. But it does make me wonder:'*

- *Do we spend enough time during our week with others and loving them? There are certain activities during our week that we have to do, such as go to school or work but what about all the time we have after those activities.*
- *Do we make the most of our hours loving others?*

*(Choose an activity that your volunteer does during the week that shows that they spend time and love others. For example, point out how great it is that your volunteer spends time with their Grandparents every week by sharing a meal with them. This is showing them love.)*

*'During this week as we think about the week that Jesus faced before His death, we can have a look at our week and see where there is time and space to spend with someone in our lives loving them.'*

*At this point you might like to get the children to go out to Kid's Church/Sunday School.*

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## Activity Suggestions

These activities can be used in a variety of settings as you explore the theme with your kids, e.g. kid's church, kids club during the week or as the kids go out for Kid's Church.

### Activity One – Pin the Tail on Your Donkey

For this activity you will need:

- A donkey pin the tail kit (available from most party shops or draw a donkey on butchers paper.)
- Donkey tails
- Textas
- Pins
- Blindfolds
- A Bible

**Use this game to show how Jesus works through unlikely people.**

Read aloud Matthew 21:1-5.

Point out that a donkey is a humble animal and it was surprising that Jesus the Messiah rode into town on a donkey instead of a special spectacular animal like a lion or a beautiful horse.

Give each child a donkey tail and ask them to write on the tail some of their most **useless** skills like, 'thumb wrestling champ' or 'winner of many monopoly games' and also some of their **useful** skills such as 'artist', 'dancer' 'can play an instrument' etc. Once the kids have each listed a few skills, play Pin the Tail on the Donkey.

Afterwards, point out that sometimes it feels like God couldn't possible work through us. Sometimes we may feel like **we miss the mark** or we don't have the right tools or skills.

Read aloud Matthew 21:6-11.

Jesus used something that no one thought He would use - a humble donkey. Jesus works through us too, no matter what skills we have. He can use our skills to love other people.

(This game was adapted from the Children's Ministry Magazine – March/April 2018 edition.)

### Activity Two – Personal Timeline

For this activity you will need:

- Paper
- Textas/Pencils
- Highlighters

Encourage the kids to make their own timeline for this week. Go through each day and write or draw the activities that they do. Once this is finished, use a highlighter and highlight any time slots during the week where the kids may wish to spend time focusing on someone else and loving them.

Discuss ways that the kids could show love to someone else. Eg, do a siblings chore for them, make a cup of tea/coffee for a parent, pick flowers and take to a neighbour, play with a child at school who could be alone etc.

Encourage the kids to write a suggestion on their timeline and to actually complete the suggestion this week.

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### Activity Three – You are Invited!

For this activity you will need:

- A4 Paper/Cardstock
- Textas
- Envelopes

We want to share the love of God with our family and friends. We want them to have the love of God in their lives. Discuss why we would like this.

Encourage the kids to design a personal invitation to a family member or a friend inviting them to come to Church next Easter Sunday. Explain that this is a good way for family/friends to hear about the love of God and especially on Easter Sunday as this is an exciting and happy day in the Church.

When they have finished their invitations place them in any envelope and write the person's name on the front ready for the child to hand out or deliver.

Explain that one of the best ways we could show people love is to introduce them to our friend Jesus and if we invite them to Church they will have the opportunity to meet Him.

### *Chat with God*

For the prayer time hand each child back their donkey tail. Encourage each child to read out loud their skills through their prayer, eg, thankyou God for my skill of drawing, help me to use this skill this week to love other people and to show them God's love.

### *Home and Beyond*

It is vitally important, as leaders within our corps that we equip parents with suggestions, activities and language as they help their children to navigate their spiritual journey. A 'Home and Beyond' card given to each child is a great way to take the key message home and continue the conversation in the rhythm of their daily lives.

#### *HOME AND BEYOND*

- Post or deliver your personal invitation to your family member or friend. Make sure you ring them later during the week and remind them about the invitation.
  - Show an adult your time frame and talk to them about the activity you would like to fit in this week to spend time with someone and show them love. Discuss how you plan to do this. What might you need to change/stop to include this?
  - This week with your family, enjoy watching an Easter movie. There are plenty you can hire such as Veggie Tales Easter Carol, Hop or The Dog Who Saved Easter.
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