

A Joyful Celebration



Theme: Palm Sunday - praising Jesus (6th Sunday in Lent)

Object: Noisemakers such as kazoos, whistles, horns, bells, clickers and some flags or banners.

Scripture: Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Matthew 21:9 (NIV)

I really enjoy a great celebration, don't you? What are some things that people like to celebrate? A birthday party... a holiday... or a sporting event? How do they celebrate? Well, one way people celebrate is by making a lot of noise. Look, I have some noisemakers for some of you this morning. (Pass out noisemakers.) Another way people celebrate is by waving flags or pennants. I have some of those too. (Pass out flags and pennants.) Still another way people celebrate is by shouting and cheering.

This morning, let's have a celebration. Let's celebrate that we are here today to worship and praise Jesus. Let's all give three cheers for Jesus while those of you who have noisemakers make some noise and those of you who have flags wave them high! Are you ready? Here we go! "Hip, Hip, hooray! Hip, hip, hooray! Hip, hip, hooray!"

Wow! That was great and I think this is good day for us to celebrate Jesus, because today is a very special day. Today is Palm Sunday. It is a day when we remember how people celebrated when Jesus entered into Jerusalem on a Sunday some two thousand years ago. You've probably heard the story, but let me tell it again.

Jesus was walking with his disciples toward Jerusalem. As they came near to the city, Jesus told two of his disciples to go on ahead into the town. He told them that they would see a young donkey tied there that had never been ridden. "Untie the donkey and bring it to me. If anyone asks you what you are doing, just tell them, 'The Lord needs it. He will send it back to you soon.'"

The disciples did what Jesus told them to do and it happened just as he had told them. They found the young donkey and they took the rope off of it and started to lead it away. Some men were standing nearby, and they said to the disciples, "Where are you taking that young donkey?" They told them what Jesus had said and the men let them take the donkey.

The disciples brought the young donkey to Jesus and they put their coats on it to make a soft place for Jesus to sit. As they made their way into the city of Jerusalem, people went ahead of Jesus shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Others followed behind and they were also shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Hosanna in the highest!" All the while, people lined the streets cheering and waving palm branches.

It was a wonderful celebration, but it was a bit noisy! Do you think Jesus liked all that noise? I do!

The Bible says "This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Just as those people celebrated two thousand years ago, we have come here today to celebrate Jesus. What better day to do that than on Palm Sunday?

Father, we celebrate today just as those people celebrated in Jerusalem two thousand years ago. This is the day that You have made; we will rejoice and be glad in it! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PRAISE MARCH: Give children flags, balloons and noise makers and praise the LORD with special words that they can repeat after the teacher -- with words from today's lesson and Bible verses!!

PRAISE BALLOONS: Children can run a relay with 2 teams with popping balloons and reading the PRAISE word inside and continuing popping as time allows.

PRAISE MOBILE: Give children supplies to make and trace pictures of balloons, music instruments, etc and hang from a large circle that will say CELEBRATE JESUS in bright colored markers. Children can also write words of PRAISE on their mobile pieces as well. GLITTER on each mobile hanging would be great. Streamers hanging from the mobile is a MUST for the celebration!!

NECKLACE BELL: Provide children with a bell and yarn to hang around their neck or add letter beads to the bell necklace to say JESUS or CELEBRATE JESUS.

BALLOON PRAISING: Give each child a strong balloon and small pebbles or beads to place a few inside the balloon. The children can have a bright colored marker to write CELEBRATE JESUS or words from our lesson on the outside of their balloon. Then blow up the balloon and tie so children can shake the balloon while praising the Lord with song or Bible verse.

DRUM CANS: Each child could be given a tin can and construction paper to roll around the can, after decorating and writing words on the paper. Tape the paper to the can and turn it over to use as a drum during the PRAISE TIME, using craft sticks or small items to tap on the drum.

BOWL PRAISING: Children can be given 2 styrofoam bowls to color and decorate. Place a few pennies or small beads inside and place the bowls together with the top edges touching and staple together. Children will enjoy shaking their noise makers while singing praises to the Lord today.

CELEBRATION STICKS: Each child can be given a tongue depressor or craft stick. Color their sticks and then glue thin pieces of paper or crepe paper to the top end and children can raise their celebration sticks over head while reciting a Bible verse from today's lesson, or to march around the room, using their homemade instruments and their celebration stick.

PRAISE COLLAGE: Magazine pictures and other papers to color or draw on can be given to children to glue onto a piece of construction paper with ideas of praise to the Lord -- praising him for friends, or family, homes, cars, toys, weather, nature, etc. Title the collage as children desire, such as PRAISE THE LORD, or CELEBRATE JESUS.

Lay Your Cloak Before Him



- Theme:** The triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Palm Sunday Year A
- Object:** Palm Branches and a long piece of fabric to be worn like a cloak.
- Scripture:** A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Matthew 21:8 (NIV)

When I was at the age of most of you, I liked to read comic books. My favorites were the ones about superheroes like Superman, Supergirl, Wonder Woman, and Batman. One thing that many of these super heroes had in common was that they wore a cape. I used to enjoy pretending that I was Superman. I would tie a cape around my neck and run around the yard with my arms outstretched, pretending that I was flying through the air. Have you ever done that?

In the day when Jesus lived, many people wore a garment called a cloak. It was a loose outer garment similar to the cape that the super heroes wore. It provided them protection against the harsh winds and blowing sand in the desert. It also provided protection from the hot desert sun. In our Bible lesson today, we will see a very unusual way the people used their cloaks.

Jesus and his disciples were walking toward Jerusalem and had stopped near a small village called Bethphage. Jesus sent two of his disciples to go on ahead into the village. He told them that when they got there, they would find a donkey and her colt which they were to bring back to him. Of course the disciples were a bit concerned because they imagined that these animals might belong to someone who might not appreciate having their animals taken. Jesus simply told them, "Tell them that the Lord needs them and they will let you have them." So the disciples went into town and sure enough, there was a donkey and her colt. They grabbed them and as they were leaving, someone asked why they were taking the animals. They answered, "It is for the Lord." And the people let them take them just as Jesus had said they would. When they arrived back at the camp, the disciples took their cloaks and put them on the donkey to make a nice soft seat for Jesus. Jesus got on the donkey and headed toward Jerusalem.

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, a very large crowd gathered to welcome him. Some of them spread their cloaks on the road for Jesus to ride on, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Why would they do that? They were treating Jesus like a king!

The Bible tells us that the crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

The people greeted Jesus as a King that day. Today, Jesus wants to be your King -- and he will be if you will allow him to come into your heart and rule over your life. Lay down your cloak to greet your King as he comes to you in love.

Jesus, come into our lives and create in us a new heart. May we excitedly welcome you just as those that awaited your arrival in Jerusalem did. Thank you for being here with us. We praise you Lord! Amen

PALM PARADE: Have the children march around a large area with noise blowers, ribbons, palm branches. The excitement will build and then let the children know that they will be doing some excited shouting and waving of palm branches today for our story lesson.

TRIUMPHAL ENTRY RELAY RACE: Divide the children into two teams or more (unless class is very small and then just have children take turns). Place a cape and a palm branch at the other side of the room. Children will run to put on the cape and grab the palm branch and wave it as they come back to give it to the next team player. THAT player will put on the cape and wave the palm branch to the other side of the room. The next player on the team will run down and do the same as the first player did until everyone on the team has taken a turn.

PALM LEAF NAME BRANCHES: Give each child a palm branch to cut out and cut "into" the lines to make it look like a green palm branch. With a marker, have the children write or trace their name in large letters to take home as a reminder of today's lesson.

PAPER BAG DONKEY: Give each child a brown paper lunch bag. The children will create a donkey puppet from their bag. Here is a link to a pattern for this activity. ([Click Here](#)) The teacher could have a simplified summary of today's story for the children to glue onto the back of their puppet so they can tell others today's story. As children are leaving, the teacher could put a couple of candy treats in their Donkey bag!

HOSANNA GAME: Divide class into three teams. Each team will be given one of the following recitations: "Hosanna to the Son of David"; "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" or "Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Each team will say their own verse and then the next will say their verse in order. The teacher might choose to allow the children to get louder and louder each time they say their verse. Each team should raise their hands over head when they say THEIR part!

HEARTS or PALM BRANCHES ART: Give each child 3 hearts or three palm branches (teacher's choice) and a large poster to glue these on. Children can then write or glue on typed words to each one of their hearts or palm branches using these three phrases: 1) HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID; 2) BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; 3) HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN. Encourage children to take this home to tell someone the story!

PALM BRANCH SKIT: Let the children play act out the story. One child will be the donkey, another one will be Jesus and the rest of the children will be the crowd and spread cloth for capes, palm branches in front of Jesus and the donkey as they walk along. ALL the children can say the three phrases - HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN!!!

HOSANNA PUZZLE: Give each child a palm branch picture with "HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST or BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD" written on it. Cut the branch into pieces to create a puzzle. Let each child put their puzzle pieces together and when they have completed putting the pieces together they will SHOUT OUT what their puzzle says!