#### GISBORNE PRESBYTERIAN PARISH ***Matawhero Church – Church Lane***

#### ***St Andrew’s Church and Community Centre:***

#### ***176 Cobden Street, Gisborne***

#### ***24th March, 2024 Palm Sunday***

#### ***Harvest Festival***

#### ***A piece of bread on a newspaper Description automatically generated***

#### 

**We can no more**

**catch a hurricane**

**in a shrimp net,**

**or Sutherland Falls**

**in a coffee cup,**

**than we can grasp**

**the infinity**

**of God’s reality.**

***We welcome all other visitors to our service this morning.***

***Please sign the Visitors’ Book and make yourself known to the Hosts who stand at the back of the church.***

***In our worship we use inclusive language as much as possible. Sometimes, especially in the hymns, this is not possible. Feel free to insert the language with which you are most comfortable.***

***BOLDED WORDS are for congregational response.***

***Where there is an asterisk \* please stand.***

Greeting **Barbara**

Announcements/Concerns of the Church

Quiet time

##### We gather in Worship

Autumn…a time of reflection and thanksgiving, as we look at the fruit of our lives and the harvest of our actions. Palm Sunday – a day of remembering the great welcome Jesus received when he reached Jerusalem. Passion Sunday – a day of remembering how quickly the shouts of hosanna turned to crucify. This Sunday we celebrate the gifts of the good earth and the gifts of a good God; and we remember the greatest gift given us in Jesus Christ.

**\***Hymn *CH4 231*

**For the fruits of all creation**

**thanks be to God:**

**for these gifts to every nation,**

**thanks be to God;**

**for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,**

**silent growth while we are sleeping**

**future needs in earth’s safe-keeping,**

**thanks be to God.**

**In the just reward of labour,**

**God’s will be done;**

**in the help we give our neighbour,**

**God’s will is done;**

**in our world-wide task of caring**

**for the hungry and despairing**

**in the harvests we are sharing,**

**God’s will is done.**

**For the harvests of the Spirit,**

**thanks be to God;**

**for the good we all inherit,**

**thanks be to God;**

**for the wonders that astound us,**

**for the truths that still confound us,**

**most of all, that love has found us,**

**thanks be to God.**

Call to Worship: **Barbara**

This is a time for giving thanks;

a time to be mindful of the good that encircles us.

**Thank you, God, for all you have given us!**

Friends and family encourage and care,

and brothers and sisters in Christ show us God’s loving ways.

**Thank you, God, for all you have given us!**

We find a home in God’s creation

and the earth gives us good food to make us grow.

**Thank you, God, for all you have given us!**

The seasons change, sunshine comes and goes,

yet your loving care for us is eternal.

**Thank you, God, for all you have given us!**

Presentation of harvest thanksgiving symbols

Choir Take a Grape vv1,2 *HS127*

When done, hum as the following happens.

Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,

**for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

**Reader 1 (Jan)** God’s provision is ever with us. We bring this flour and these grains remembering that we who are many have been formed into one body in Christ Jesus.

**Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,**

**for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

**Reader 2 (Wendy)** Jesus said: “the Bread of God is the one… who gives life to the world. We bring this bread, remembering the Bread of Life, given for us.

**Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,**

**for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

**Reader 3 (Bev)** Jesus said: If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. We bring this fruit remembering that apart from Christ we can do nothing.

**Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,**

**for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

**Reader 4 (Marie)** Jesus says “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me. We bring this water remembering the One who gives us living water to drink.

**Give thanks to the Lord of Lords,**

**for God's steadfast love endures forever.**

Choir Take a Grape v3 *HS127*

The Story of the Seeds **Wendy**

**1**That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. **2**Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. **3**Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4**As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5**Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6**But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7**Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. **8**Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. **9**He who has ears, let him hear."

Reflection; Nothing but a seed. . **Jan**

Palm trees. I’m told its not hard to grow palm trees. Just a few basic requirements necessary. Like some good seed – fresh, not off colour in the centre, or mushy. It helps to clean it up around its kernel, so I’m told – lavish a little TLC on it. Immerse it, soak it well to soften it and then carefully carefully clean off all that growth inhibiting pulp. Watch out for those pesky little insects, though. They love to bore into the heart of the seed and destroy the very centre of its life. Find the very besa position for it – fertile soil conditions to root it well, just the right moisture, a warm spot in which to bask – and then you will see growth, rapid growth. And soon, very soon.you will behold the fruit of your labour. A long, rapidly growing frond reaching to the heavens. And in a surprisingly short time, you too can have a whole tree of palms fronds to wave and strew along the Highway of our God. But beware! I am told, even with the greatest of care shown, even with the most abundant love being lavished upon it, even with the healthiest of specimans, waving and welcoming palm fronds held in careless hands, have been known, at the drop of a hat, to turn into symbols of rejection and objects of persecution. Those who have ears, let them hear.

God you speak to us all the time. You shower great handfuls of the seed of your word upon us. At times the ground may be stony, poorly prepared, to dry or too wet, or lacking fertiliser. Yet you declare your love. Help us to cultivate our understanding so that the very ground of our lives open to receive the rain of your goodness. Grow within us the fruit of your making so that we become sowers of seeds of new life in others.

Song*HS63 Langley/Colin Gibson*

**How much am I worth? What’s the value in me?**

**do I count if I stand or I fall?**

**If I’m weak or I’m strong, if I win or I lose,**

**am I someone, or no one at all?**

***I am worth everything, everything, everything,***

***I am worth everything in the eyes of God:***

***you are worth everything, everything, everything,***

***we are worth everything in the eyes of God.***

**I am that bird that dropped to the ground,**

**the tiniest bird of them all,**

**and nobody knew, and nobody cared,**

**but our Father, who cares for us all.**

**I am that child who felt lost and afraid,**

**when she saw just how far she had roamed;**

**but they scoured the hills till they found her again,**

**and rejoicing, they brought her safe home.**

**How much am I worth? Do I matter at all?**

**When I’m thinking it through I may see**

**that I’m worth all the love of the Son of God,**

**who laid down his life just for me.**

Candle Liturgy for Palm Sunday **Pat**

We have gathered here, week after week, sharing a common quest for a deeper faith and a deeper experience of the divine. I invite you now to close your eyes and let go of the things that distract and concern you. Listen! The time is drawing near. Jesus is preparing to enter Jerusalem. How will we greet him? Will we follow him all the way to the Cross? The power of Jesus is that he lived what he taught, even when it led to his death. He lived with an abiding awareness of God, radiating the light of God in all he said and did. But that light was too much for the world. There are forces today, as there were in ancient Judea, that conspire to put it out. Where are we in this drama? What are we willing to risk to follow Jesus?

*(Silent time.)*

As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of illness and disease in the world.

*(A candle is extinguished.)*

Let us pray.

**Loving God, there are so many choices before us every day. Choices offered by our friends, our families, our culture, our own past. Some of them encourage the well-being of the earth, ourselves and our neighbors; others are destructive. Help us to distinguish between them. May we learn from the choices of Jesus and embody compassion, justice, and inclusion in all we say and do. Amen.**

The Story of the Entry. **Lynnor**

Jesus and his friends were almost there. They could see the big gates of the city just in front of them. “I hear the people calling out,” said Jesus. **HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HE COMES, HE COMES, (WAVE YOUR FRONDS)**

Then Jesus turned to two friends and said, “Please go ahead. You will find a young donkey which has never given anyone a ride before. **(EEHAW, EEHAW, EEHAW)** Please bring it to me. I want to ride it into Jerusalem.” The two friends ran ahead to a little village. There they found a young donkey tied to a post. **EEHAW, EEHAW, EEHAW)** Quickly they untied the donkey and began to lead it back to Jesus. ***Clip-clop, clippity-clop.*** But the owner of the donkey called out, **“That’s my donkey! Where are you going?”**

Jesus’ friends said, “**We need this donkey for Jesus.”**

The owner wondered if something important was happening. So he let them take the donkey. **(EEHAW, EEHAW, EEHAW.** Soon Jesus was riding on the donkey. ***Clip-clop, clippity-clop.*** More and more people came out to welcome Jesus. **HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HE COMES, HE COMES, (WAVE YOUR FRONDS)** The voices of the children grew louder and louder. “Praise God for Jesus!” the children shouted. **Praise God for Jesus!** The donkey’s footsteps came closer and closer. “Listen,” the children said. ***Clip-clop, clippity-clop.****.* The children heard the donkey’s hooves on the road. Then they saw Jesus! The children called out again,  **Praise God for Jesus!** The children waved their hands and jumped up and down, **Praise God for Jesus!!** Some children helped the grown-ups spread clothes on the dusty road. Everyone watched as Jesus

rode the donkey **(EEHAW, EEHAW, EEHAW**  along the road ***Clip-clop, clippity-clop.****.* and over the people’s coats! **OH YES!! GO, JESUS GO!** The people cheered again. “**HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HE COMES, HE COMES, (WAVE YOUR FRONDS),** Jesus shows us the

way to God **Praise God for Jesus!** ! **OH YES!! GO, JESUS GO!**

. Praise God for Jesus!

Some of the city leaders saw Jesus coming on the donkey. ARMS FOLDED**. GRUMBLE GRUMBLE GRUMBLE!** They heard the excited crowd shouting. “**HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HE COMES, HE COMES, (WAVE YOUR FRONDS),**  “Tell the people to be quiet!” the leaders said to Jesus. **GRUMBLE GRUMBLE GRUMBLE!** But Jesus shook his head. “There’s so much happiness here. If the people were quiet, the stones on the road would jump up and shout for joy,” he said. **OH YES!! GO, JESUS GO!** Then, on Jesus travelled to the big city, ***Clip-clop, clippity-clop*** riding on a little donkey **(EEHAW, EEHAW, EEHAW**  that no one had ever ridden before.

Song *CH4 367*

**Hosanna, loud hosanna,**

**the little children sang;**

**through city street and temple**

**their joyful welcome rang.**

**They shouted out their praises**

**to Christ, the children’s friend,**

**who welcomes all with blessing,**

**whose love will never end.**

**From Olivet they followed,**

**a large exultant crowd,**

**the victor palm branch waving,**

**and chanting clear and loud;**

**bright angels joined the chorus,**

**beyond the cloudless sky,**

**‘Hosanna in the highest! Glory to God on high!’**

**‘Hosanna in the highest!’**

**That ancient song we sing,**

**for Christ is our Redeemer,**

**the Lord of heaven our King.**

**Oh, may we ever praise him**

**with heart and life and voice,**

**and in his living presence**

**Choir voices**

**One voice:** Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!

**Two voices:** Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!

**Three voices:** Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God!

Poem The Arrival  *Bruce Prewer* **Marie**

On the day when Jesus the prophet arrived in our town,

Joe Farmer was very busy choosing a new car.

He heard the distant cheering: “Hosanna! Blessed is he

who comes in the name of the Lord.”

Mentally he made a note and promised himself

to hear the prophet; some day, not now.

Joe was far too occupied with trade-in price, fuel consumption,

and the virtues of the compact or the standard model,

and whether either car was better than his neighbour’s.

At coffee break 22-year-old Esther Romantic

also heard the uproar coming from High Street.

She felt an impulse to go and join the crowd

with those who welcomed the prophet,

for stories about him had strangely shaken and encouraged her.

But Esther’s wedding day was only seven weeks off

and she still had thinking to do about the flowers,

the shade of eye shadow, or whether on the tables

she wanted with every place card a fancy bow.

For Jim Smiley the real estate agent it was infuriating:

Time was money! Here he was stuck in a traffic jam

in the middle of town, thanks to these idiots

with grins, slogans and palm branches, supporting this new fool Jesus

who had said some rotten things about real estate.

Jim was due in four minutes at Wainui to meet with a wealthy client.

Jim yelled at a policeman patrolling the edge of the procession:

“How about some law and order!”

Some did not even hear the cheering nor cared.

Beth Goldsmith with fingers covered with rings

was watching “Survivors” when the prophet

walked within one block of her residence.

They interrupted the programme for an eyewitness report

on the progress of the street demo. Beth took the opportunity

to fetch another pot of tea and two aspirin.

Professor Nicodemus was lecturing at the polytech.

He noted the small number who had turned up today,

and even they were restless. He asked the reason.

They gave him the news that the prophet Jesus

was leading a demo to the Cathedral.

On an impulse Nicodemus dismissed the surprised students

and hurried off down High Street where, somewhat embarrassed,

he joined the crowd and found himself shouting “Hosanna!”

At the sound of his own voice, the Prof felt his own soul

leap for joy within as if a birth was about to take place!

And it seemed as if all things were becoming new.

Opportunity knocks. Sometimes.

A Poetic Prayer: Growth *(Come and See)* *Joy Cowley* p56 **Pat**

Invitation to Thanksgiving Psalm 118: 1-4 **Jan**

RS O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good;

his steadfast love endures forever!

**LS Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”**

RS Let the house of Aaron say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”

**LS Let those who fear the Lord say,**

**“His steadfast love endures forever.”**

Presentation of our tithes, offering, and self **Jan**

\*Doxology CH4 229

**We plough the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,**

**but it is fed and watered by God’s almighty hand;**

**he sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,**

**the breezes and the sunshine and soft refreshing rain.**

*Refrain* **All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;**

**then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all his love.**

**We thank thee then, Creator, for all things bright and good,**

**the seed-time and the harvest, our life, our health, our food.**

**Accept the gifts we offer for all thy love imparts,**

**and, what thou most desirest, our humble, thankful hearts.**

*Refrain*

Dedication **\* Jan**

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

**Hosanna!**

Blessed be these gifts and our lives, O God,

**for we offer them in the name of Jesus, our Lord.**

He emptied himself that we might be filled.

**He humbled himself that we might be lifted up.**

Receive these gifts to be used to proclaim the gospel

**which fills lives that are empty**

**and lifts up those who need help.**

In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen**

**Val**

All too soon, the cries of Hosanna turned to shouts of Crucify, crucify. Our Journey through this holy week begins on an exuberant high at the end of the Jerusalem road. A wonderful day, a joyous celebration, to be savoured and remembered. But our faces are turned towards Jerusalem, and our leader Jesus invites us not to linger in the emotional highs of a strange welcome, for there is a far greater purpose afoot, and a hard road to travel between this Sunday and the next. Watch and pray, watch and pray

Prayers of the People **Val**

Loving God, we join this day in glad and joyful praise. Come to us again as we remember the story of Jesus welcome, and jesus sacrifice. Help us to grasp afresh that it was not only in the welcome of Palm Sunday but in the rejection which followed that Jesus revealed your glory. In the good times and the bad may we too offer him our service, our allegiance and our hearts.Hosanna to the Son of David,

**Glory in the highest heaven, now and forever more.**

Jesus our friend, we welcome and praise you this day. Yet, we know in our hearts, even as we greet you with all sincerity, still we make the same mistake that the crowds made that first day of welcome. We profess to follow you but our own whims and ways lead us to follow our own inclinations. We can be self-centred in our discipleship, preoccupied with appearance, ready to serve when life is good, but reluctant when it involves the way of sacrifice. Jesus, Son of David,

**Have mercy upon us.**

Jesus, you knew as you entered Jerusalem that the welcome would turn to rejection and yet still you came and still you died. We thank you that you still come to us, inviting us to respond and share in your realm, inviting us to bring to you the plea of our hearts and the burdens that weigh upon us. We bring our prayers for those we know who need you in a special way.... ***Silence for private prayer….***

Jesus, Son of God, Son of Man,

**Hear our prayer and let our cry come to you.**

Come to your Church, filling it with love, harmony, humility, and faith. Grant peace between us and among us, for the sake of yourself.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,

**Grant us peace beyond understanding. Amen**

Hymn *Nun Danket CH4 182*

**Now thank we all our God,**

**with heart and hands and voices,**

**who wondrous things has done,**

**in whom this world rejoices, -**

**who, from our mothers’ arms,**

**has blessed us on our way**

**with countless gifts of love,**

**and still is ours today.**

**May you, O bounteous God**

**through all our life be near us,**

**with ever-joyful hearts**

**and blessed peace to cheer us,**

**and keep us in your grace,**

**and guide us when perplexed,**

**and free us from all ills**

**in this world and the next.**

**All praise and thanks to God**

**our Maker now be given,**

**to Christ, and Spirit too,**

**our help in highest heaven, -**

**the one, eternal God,**

**whom earth and heaven adore,**

**for thus it was, is now,**

**and shall be evermore.**

Commissioning and Benediction **Barbara**

Sung blessing

**May the Christ who walks on wounded feet**

**walk with you on the road.**

**May the Christ who serves with wounded hands**

**stretch out your hands to serve.**

**May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart**

**open your hearts to love.**

**May you see the face of Christ**

**in everyone you meet,**

**and may everyone you meet**

**see the face of Christ in you.**

**Ministers*: All the people* Organist*: David Russell***

**Worship Leaders** In order of appearance**:**  *Barbara Larsen, Jan Ewart, Wendy Johnston, Bev Kirkpatrick, Marie Burgess, Pat Flockhart, Lynnor Cooke, members of the choir, Val Hall*

**Note:** The offering is now received at the door as we enter. If you miss noticing this, you may place a retiring offering in the offering boxes at the door as you leave.

**Mindful Prayer topics:** March 24th & 31st 2024 – Remembering Christ's suffering and sacrifice for us. Global tensions; the Homeless; the Bereft. GPP and Parish Council. Ourselves. “Lord, give us the strength to do what is right - may others see you through us”

.Mindful Prayer contact Margaret Graham ph. 021 026 03990 or email [m.n.e.gra@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.n.e.gra@xtra.co.nz)

Christian Blind Mission accepts used stamps. Send directly to them or Val Hall. (Leprosy Mission no longer accepts stamps)

**Please remember** donations for the Love basket when shopping. All offerings gratefully received.

Val Hall and Pat Flockhart are offering Home Communion, and they need an Elder to be present. Any Elders willing to assist, please phone or email Val Hall.

The Pastoral Care Committee would like to thank all who helped make our Over 90's morning tea a success. We did appreciate all the support given.

Those who were able to attend all enjoyed their morning and our lavish AM Tea.

Thank you to members of the Parish Council and the convenors of our committees that attended and shared their time with us.

This was a way the Pastoral Care team could acknowledge and thank you all for the work you do for the parish.

With our love and blessings to you all.

Barbara

For all Pastoral care needs please contact one of the committee members:

Jenny Lawton  868 4268; Ruth McLennan 021 02704867; Jan Gordon 0211836008 Annette Ormiston 0275535028 Barbara Larsen 863-9009

With blessings from the Pastoral Committee

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Reader | Door & Team | Morning Tea | Sound Visual |
| 24 March Lent 6  Palm Sunday and Harvest Festival Matawhero | **Matawhero**  Various readers  **St Andrew’s**  No service | **Matawhero**  Team | Matawhero team | N/A |
| 31 March  Easter Day  Music service  Communion Flowering of Cross | **Matawhero**  No service  **St Andrew’s**  Various readers | **Don McC** Sarah McC, ~~Cathy Porter~~ | tbc | S: Hans  V: Linda  C: Hans |

**DIARY**

**SUNDAY 24 PALM SUNDAY & harvest festival LENT 6**

**10.00am Matawhero**

**St Andrew’s No service**

3.00pm Sea of Faith

Monday 259.00am Walking Group

Tuesday 26 10.00am Open Door **All welcome**

Wednesday 279.45am mainly music

**Thursday 28 Maundy Thursday (No service this year)**

**2,30pm Parish Council**

2.30pm Leighton House Service tbc

**Friday 29 10am Good Friday service of Readings,**

**Prayer and Meditation**

**SUNDAY 31 EASTER DAY Music Service and Communion**

**10.00am St Andrew’s**

**Matawhero - No service**

**Coming up at St Andrew’s:**

**Friday 29 March 10am Good Friday service of Readings Prayer & Meditation**

**Sunday 31 March 10am Easter Day Music service with Communion and Flowering of the Cross. Please bring a contribution from your garden.**

**Please join us on Easter Sunday**

**at St Andrew’s for our**

**10.00 am Communion Service & Floral Transforming of the Cross**

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***Gisborne Presbyterian Parish***

***St Andrew’s Church and Matawhero Historic Church:***

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