



**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024**



**'Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hear all the tribes hosanna cry;  
O Savior meek, pursue Your road with palms and scattered garments strowed'.**

These words are from the first Stanza of the famous hymn written by Henry H. Milman around 1827. I am not sure when he penned the words, but he knew people would be singing them many years later. Or even if he expected it to be sung in Saint Mary's Oatlands in 2024! The words are appropriate for the event on what we now call Palm Sunday over 2000 years ago.

On this day, Jesus entered Jerusalem, knowing it was a place of danger and his earthly life would end in painful circumstances.

I often wonder what was going through his mind as he rode the donkey. Was he frightened? Dismayed? Disappointed? or even happy knowing that he will soon return to his throne in heaven? We cannot know, but the Bible gives us various indications. Last Sunday, we read from Saint John's gospel (John 12:20-33), where Jesus said how much his soul is troubled. He must have felt the agony of what was about to happen. If there is any doubt that Jesus was fully human and fully God, this passage reminds us that this is the case. Many of us can empathise with this feeling. It is deeply human. Hugh reminded us in his excellent sermon last Sunday, *"Whenever we feel threatened in any way, we have to decide whether to run away or stay and fight. Our body prepares us to determine by diverting the blood's rich oxygen supply to the muscles. Whether we fight or run, our body's muscles are ready to respond immediately. The decision to fight or run is fundamental to the survival of animals and humans alike. It is sometimes impossible to run away, even if we want to. And fighting is not always the right thing to do—sometimes, the issue isn't worth the effort. There is a real art in knowing when to avoid trouble and when to face it head-on"*.

Jesus must have felt the same emotion as a human being, but he decided not to run away, not because he couldn't do a disappearing act, but because he knew the war of the Cross was the way to Resurrection and Eternal life. As someone once said, without the pains of Good Friday, there can be no joys of Easter Sunday. So, whatever the present pains and tribulations, let's "hang in" there, knowing full well that Easter is coming. Please join us on Sunday as we celebrate Palm Sunday. We will meet at 8 and 10 am for Holy Communion and at 6 pm for a Devotional Service to start Holy Week.

Next week is Holy Week, and we will meet on Wednesday at 10.30 am, Thursday for Agape Meal at 19.30, and Holy Communion with Foot Washing at 8 pm. On Good Friday, we will join our brothers and sisters from other journeys in Weybridge for a Walk of Witness that starts at Saint James Church at 10 am. There will be a reading and reflection service here at Saint Mary's from 1 pm, and the children are all invited to the Good Friday Easter Craft from 2 pm. I hope you can attend and worship with us.

May you be filled with the joy of Palm Sunday.

With best wishes. Revd Folli Olokose vicar@oatlandschurch.org.uk / 01932840077

**This Week's Bible Readings:** Liturgy of the Palms: Mark 11: 1-11. Liturgy of the Passion Phil 2: 5-11. Mark 15: 1-39. **From the Diocesan Calendar of Prayer:** Walter Hilton of Thurgarton, Augustinian Canon, Mystic, 1396; Paul Couturier, Priest, Ecumenist, 1953; Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, Martyr, 1980. **Parish:** St Mary's and St John's, Walton-on-Thames. **Incumbent:** Jonny Blair.

**Other clergy:** Dave Bixby, Cathy Blair, Caroline Merrick. **School:** Ashley CofE Primary School, Walton-on-Thames. **Prayer requests:** Our community engagement through the Community Café; our faith and fun through Messy Church; our discipleship through our Life Groups. **From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer:** The Church of the Province of West Africa. **Please remember our Mission Partner:** The Bible Society. **We pray for the sick in our parish:** especially remembering all who suffer from mental ill health and are victims of abuse and discrimination. **From the Memorial Book at their year's mind:** Ivy Lazenby, Joan Jeans, Edward Jones, Catherine Durrant, Colin Willock, Charles Osborne, Sylvia Kirby, Alison Skinner, Allan Kimber, Leslie Kemp, Michael Carter and James Barnett. **We Remember the Recently Departed** David Basham, Alan Ulrick, Vaughan Reading, Douglas Baynes, Paul Richmond and Anne Smith.

**Holy Week and Easter services:** **Palm Sunday** 24th March, 8 am & 10 am Holy Communion & 6 pm Devotional Service. **Maundy Thursday** 28th March: 7.30 pm Agape Supper (please sign up) in the Church Hall. 8 pm Holy Communion service with foot washing. **Good Friday** 29th March: 10 am 'Walk of Witness' (from St James' Church, Weybridge). 1-3 pm Music & Readings for Good Friday. 2.30-4 pm Free Children's Good Friday Craft Afternoon in the Church Octagon room. **Easter Sunday** 31st March 8 am & 10 am Holy Communion. **8.30-9.30 am** Parish Breakfast. Everyone is welcome to have breakfast and fellowship. Please use the sign-up sheet at the back of the Church. **Plant Swap Day** Sat 27th April 9am-12noon on the Church lawn. Browse, swap plants and information. Refreshments will be available. Please contact Rachel Bainbridge if you can help or need more information 07557408085.

**Oatlands Village Fayre Sat 11th May 12.30-4.30pm.** We will be there once again with our Cake and Children's Crafts stalls. If you can help on either stall or pledge a cake for the cake stall, please use the signup sheet at the back of the Church or contact the parish office.

**Kim & Malcolm Groom's Open Garden** Sat 15th June 2-5pm 'West Lodge', 169 Burwood Road, Hersham, Walton-On-Thames, KT12 4AT (near Squires Garden Centre). **Sokkie Night**, Sat 22nd June, 6-10 pm. Join us for a unique experience! We are supporting the work of Leon Chaunga, St Mary Oatlands Pais apprentice, with a Sokkie Night, including a Fish and chip supper and wine in the Church Hall. Sokkie is a style of dance unique to Southern Africa. It is great fun, easy to learn, and fun to participate in. This will be a ticketed event (£15), and profits will go towards Leon's Mini try. Tickets will be available after Easter. We are delighted to have Leon Chaunga with us. As most people will know, he comes to us



from South Africa and is an apprentice under a missionary scheme called PAIS. Although he has only been with us since September, he has already impacted our work with young people. One of the requirements is for Leon to carry out his fundraising since he is not paid directly while he is in the UK. Some Church members have already helped by hosting Leon since he joined us, and we are very grateful indeed to them for doing so, as is Leon. However, he needs to have some money available for his day-to-day expenditures. Members of our Church can help with this by donating to his fundraising site, <https://www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20485929>. Leon will be with us until December, and, as a Church, we aim to support him to the extent of £400 per month. We are, therefore, asking members of our Church to consider supporting Leon with a regular donation. It will only need, say, 40 of us to agree to pay £10 per month each. To coordinate our response, it would be beneficial if donors were to advise me of the amount they are prepared to commit so that we can measure the overall result. Thanks very much. Brian Stickland. Treasurer. **Washed Chinese Luxury Rug (free)** High-quality traditional oriental furnishing (15ft x 22ft). The rug has always been in a pet- and child-free environment. Its pile is virtually unworn, the colours are unfaded. A fringe feature finishes the short (15ft) edge. Collection from Cobham only by three strong persons. Because of its superb quality, it is very heavy!