
“Jesus on Palm Sunday”

Home Sunday School Lesson on John 12:12-19

Jesus Christ is Coming to Town...Riding on a Donkey!

“In Home” Sunday School Suggestions to Study and Celebrate Palm Sunday

It’s that time...almost Easter! The final countdown...Holy Week is (or at least, should be) a joyous and also a contemplative time in our church year. In fact, Easter should really be the key holiday, as the Resurrection is so pivotal and essential to our faith. Unfortunately, modern commercial hype sometimes breezes by Easter with a few marshmallow bunnies and a nod at some colorful eggs. This year, get ready for the Paschal celebration by thinking about the week leading up to it. This lesson kicks off Holy Week with a look at Palm Sunday.

Lesson focus: Jesus came to save people who were needy and hurting. There were many people who recognized that He was special, and wanted Him to save them. Others did not understand who Jesus was, and wanted to hurt Him. The way that Christ lived and died did not meet anyone’s expectations; but He did the will of God.

Passage: John 12:12-19

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (or whoever you might have at home!)

Materials Needed: Green construction paper, scissors, paper towel tubes or popsicle sticks, glue or tape, noisemakers, coats, branches.



Game and Lesson Introduction

Lesson Opening: Palm Sunday is a great time to have fun with some creative and energetic activities! Many options are possible, especially in the comfort of your own home. Select from one of the following openers, or make up one of your own!

- Have your own parade! Grab a branch from outside, or make one of the paper palm branch crafts shown. Wave the branches and walk around, shouting or singing.
- Re-enact the story and get everyone involved! Line a hallway with coats and stuffed animals. Have an adult play “donkey” and give rides to younger kids. Use noisemakers or instruments to make a joyful noise!
- Have a donkey relay: if you have enough participants, group children up in two lines and have them take turns “donkey walking” on all fours across a room, picking up a branch or coat, and bringing it back to the start line. See who finishes first!
- Fun fact exploration: what did the palm branches symbolize? Do some research on palms, branches, and why this was significant. While you’re in a researching mood, check out the differences between horses and donkeys, and see what historical and modern ramifications come along with those!
- Find and watch a video clip of a motorcade, political parade, or red carpet celebration.

After a couple of fun activities, find out what kids already know or remember about the week before Easter. What is coming up? What are we excited about on Palm Sunday? What does it all mean? Explain that today we’ll find out what was going on with Jesus and the donkey parade...

Ask: What do people do to honor celebrities today? Who do you think is important or worthy of a parade?



Palm Sunday Bible Study for Kids

How you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). For younger children, you may wish to use a children's or storybook version of the Bible, and explain details as you go.

Older kids can take turns helping to read the story. You can also make this interactive, and encourage everyone to get in on the action. You might find a short video version to reinforce it. Or even have students draw as you go...it's all up to the kids and their learning styles.

**Note: the story of the Palm Sunday processional appears in all four of the Gospels. This one is from John, but feel free to explore the other versions, as well.*

The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" -John 12:12-

13

Talk about what is happening here. Right before this, Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead. He brought a dead guy back to life, so it certainly makes sense that people would crowd around to see what He might do next!

They wanted to make Jesus a king, to have Him save them from political oppression. They waved palm branches to welcome Him into town and celebrate Him. It was sort of like waving pom-poms at a game or rally. The word "Hosanna" means "Save us." The people wanted Jesus to save them and be their king. Well, He already was their king, but not exactly in the ways they expected...

***Ask:** Can you think of some ways that Jesus did not always do what was expected of Him?



Continue with the method in which Jesus came:

And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

*¹⁵ “Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!”*

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. -John 12:14-16

Okay, so what's the big deal with riding a baby donkey? Well, a couple of significant things were taking place here. For one thing, riding a donkey was an indication of peace. Jesus was not storming in on a grand war-horse, ready to swoop in and raise riots. He was coming gently, indicating that His kingdom was one of peace.

He was also fulfilling a prophecy. Do you know what a prophecy is or what it means? People long before Jesus lived spoke things about what was going to happen. One of those prophets had spoken about this:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey. -Zechariah 9:9*

The disciples didn't quite put the pieces together at the time, but later they realized that Jesus was exactly carrying out the words of that prophet.



***Ask:** has there ever been a time when you didn't understand something right away, and realized later how significant it was?

The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹ So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him." -John 12:17-19

So why was the crowd so excited about Jesus? As we read here, they were impressed by His miracles, and had seen Him raise Lazarus. They wanted to celebrate Him. This is a joyous and festive occasion, and the people almost realized how important Jesus was...but not quite. They didn't quite comprehend the kind of King that Jesus was. Not a king who would conquer enemies with swords and rule over others. He was a leader who came to serve, and who lived to die. The enemies He came to conquer were not flesh and blood, but sin, death, and the devil. Of course, the Pharisees were not too pleased to see Jesus so praised and lifted up.

All along, they had wanted to find a way to get rid of Him. They watch from the sidelines, disgusted at the celebration. And within a few days of this happy welcome parade, they would have Jesus arrested, beaten, and killed. The Messiah had the power to stop them. He could have wiped them out with a glance, or changed what they were doing. He could have escaped. But that would not have fulfilled His mission.

That's not the kind of king He came to be.

So as we celebrate Palm Sunday and get ready for Holy Week, we rejoice in who Christ was, and who He IS in our lives today. Hosanna!



“Holy Week with Jesus”

Children’s Sermon Object about Holy Week



Children’s Message: From Palms to Thorns

Preparing for Holy Week

Main Objective: The days leading up to Easter Sunday are (or at least should be) some of the most celebrated and commemorated ones on the church calendar. We honor the triumphal entry into Jerusalem with Palm Sunday, and then walk through the week with Christ as we remember His Last Supper with disciples, the Passion of Good Friday, and finally prepare for the blessed Resurrection of Easter. This message prepares for Holy Week and focuses on the ways in which Jesus was different from typical rulers and celebrities. He did not come to be famous, but to serve humbly and lay down His life.

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus did not always do what the legal authorities expected or wished. He defied social expectations and the law, and lived differently from what many might have anticipated. Christ lived as a servant, and gave up His life to die for us. This is the best news we could imagine. Through His death, we are given life! This should inspire us to live as He did, with love and in humble service to others.

Optional Materials: Pictures or props representing various things, such as: celebrities, fancy cars, expensive clothes, money, bodyguards, crowns, servants, red carpet, donkeys, palm branches, cross, wash cloths.

Bible Passage: Matthew 21:1-11; John 13:1-17

Children’s Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.



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Palm Sunday Children's Sermon / Jesus Holy Week Object Lesson

Greet the children with joyful enthusiasm, and perhaps even a palm branch...

Hello, children of God! Hosanna!

Do you know what today is? This is called "Palm Sunday." We are entering "Holy Week", which is the special time on our church calendar that comes right before Easter. We have a lot of "Holy Days" (holidays) in the calendar, but this gives us a whole week of special things to remember! During Holy Week, we celebrate the final days in the life of Jesus. So why don't we think about the kind of life that Jesus lived...what things did He do that were so special? He was a little bit different from your typical celebrity.

Now, think about some famous people you know of. Can you tell me a celebrity or well-known figure you have seen in the news? Who are some celebrities you can name? What kinds of things would you expect a famous person to have? *(Allow children to name some items, and then suggest a few yourself, holding up the pictures or props as you go.)*

Maybe they have a lot of money...probably fancy cars, or maybe even a helicopter! And famous people usually wear nice fancy clothes, right? And maybe eat fancy foods...sometimes they have bodyguards to protect them and keep them safe. Or they might have servants to do their work for them, like the cooking or cleaning around the house...you know, we tend to treat famous people differently than others, or we have special expectations of what we think they should do or be like. That's nothing new. People throughout history have given special treatment to those who were well-known, or who were leaders or rulers in society. Military leaders or government officials have often received a lot of attention.

What about Jesus? What kind of leader was He? People had waited for His coming to Earth. They knew God had promised a king and a savior, and they probably had ideas about what kind of king He would be. They wanted someone to rescue them and make their lives better. At the time of His birth, the people of God were being bossed and bullied by Roman leaders, and they may have wanted Jesus to rescue them from the Romans. Perhaps they hoped that He would come galloping in on horseback and wipe out the oppressors. Maybe they expected Him to come with might and force. They wanted to make Him famous. That wasn't quite how Jesus lived, though. He wasn't born in a palace, but in a barn. He didn't come swooping in on a horse



and waving a sword. He came gently, riding on a little baby donkey! He came with peace and humility. When we talk about Palm Sunday, we celebrate that occasion, when Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem and crowds honored Him. The story doesn't end there, though. Jesus had a special dinner with His friends, right before He died. Before they sat down to eat, He did something that might have been considered odd: He washed His disciples' feet. That was normally a job for servants, because feet would get pretty smelly and dirty. But Jesus wanted to demonstrate that He came to serve others. He didn't have servants, He **was** the servant.

After this supper, Jesus prepared to be arrested and crucified. He didn't have bodyguards; He gave Himself up to be killed. He knew it would hurt. He also knew it was the only way to pay the price for sin—not sins He had committed, but the sins of the world. He was taking care of a problem that went all the way back to the Garden of Eden. So Jesus went to the cross, and He died.

That likely went against expectations, too. What kind of ruler lets Himself be executed? Jesus laid down His life and allowed Himself to be crucified. But that is good news for us! With His death, He conquered death. He gave up His life so that we could have eternal life. He died...but that's not the end of the story! Oh, but that would be getting ahead of things. We'll rejoice in the next event a little later. But hopefully you already know what's coming!

So for now, we get our hearts ready to remember the life and the last days of Jesus. We think about all that He did for us, and gratefully dwell in His love and sacrifice. And we should also be mindful of His attitude. He didn't come to be celebrated or pampered. He lived to serve others, and He wants us to do the same. Shall we pray and ask God for opportunities to live for Him and for one another? Let's thank Him for His son:

Children's Prayer Moment:

Dear God,
Thank you for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus
Help us to remember to serve one another
Just as He served us
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
In Jesus name, Amen!



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Palm Sunday Craft Ideas for Holy Week

A Different Approach: Donkeys, Palms, Dirty Feet, and a Cross
Craft Ideas for Holy Week

Holy Week is (or should be) the most celebrated time in a church season. From Palm Sunday through Good Friday, we honor the last days of Jesus, and eagerly anticipate His resurrection on Easter. As we prepare for Holy Week, consider activities and discussions that will make children appreciate Christ's sacrifice. Of course, fun crafts can accomplish the task, too!

Don't miss our featured [Palm Sunday for Kids lessons & activities](#)

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*"Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!" -John 12:15*

So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" -John 12:13

And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! -Mark 11:9

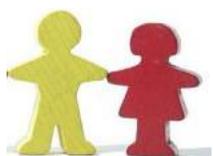
For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. -Mark 10:25

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. -John 13:14-15

Jesus calls us to love and serve one another.

Jesus did not fill expectations...He went far beyond them!

Jesus lived to die, and died so that we may live.



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Craft one: "Palm Palm Stick"

You will need:

- Scissors
- Construction paper (green)
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue or tape
- Toilet Paper tube or popsicle stick
- Pipe cleaners (optional decoration)



Procedure:

1. Trace hand prints onto green paper.
2. Carefully cut the hands out of the paper.
3. Decorate the hands with words, phrases, or verses.
4. Glue the hand prints onto the sides of the stick or tube.
5. Wave, shout "Hosanna," and enjoy!
6. Alternate: create a simple "palm branch" by cutting a large leaf shape out of green paper, trimming slits down the side, and adding a pipe cleaner handle.



Craft Two: “Jerusalem-Bound Donkey”

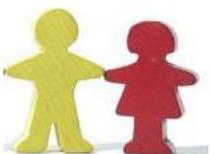
You will need:

- Paper plates
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Clothespins
- Paper or felt
- String or ribbon



Procedure:

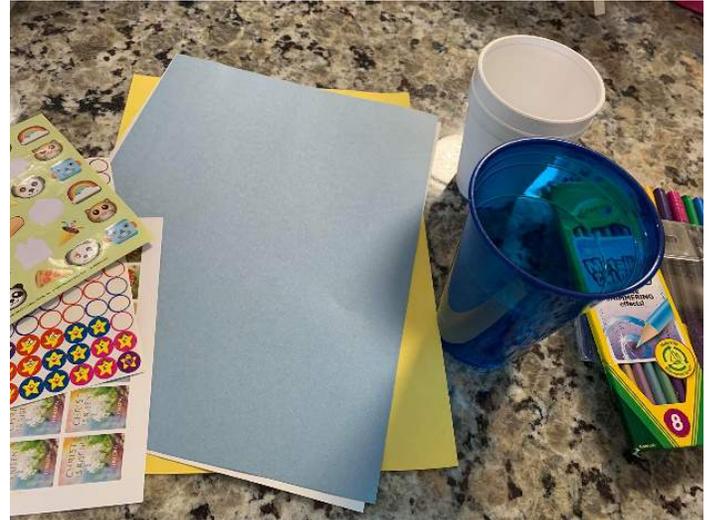
1. Fold the paper plate in half, in the shape of a taco
2. Decorate the plate in “donkey” colors (gray, brown, etc.)
3. Cut a paper, cardstock, or felt piece into the shape of a donkey head
4. Add extra decoration, saddle, hair and “tail”, if desired.
5. Place clothespins on the underside of the plate to serve as the donkey’s legs.



Craft Three: “Last Supper Cup”

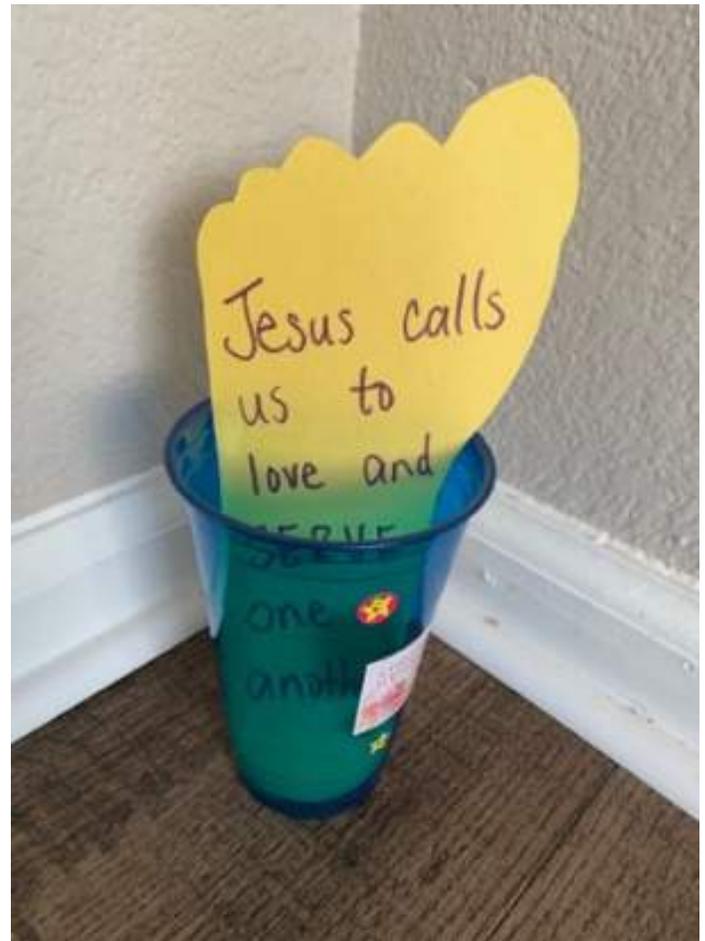
You will need:

- Paper or Styrofoam cups
- Stickers (optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Construction paper



Procedure:

1. Decorate the cup with notes, stickers, or markers.
2. Trace a foot shape onto the construction paper.
3. Cut the foot out, and add a caption or verse to it.
4. Place the “foot” into the cup. Use as a reminder decoration, or miniature coin collector!





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May

2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

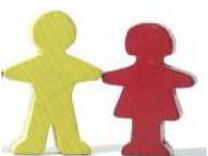
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Mandy Groce '12

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Triumphal Entry: Palm Sunday Skit

 ministry-to-children.com/triumphal-entry-palm-sunday-skit

Written by Felicia Mollohan Last updated March 28, 2019 Leave a Comment Filed Under: Bible Skits for Kids , Easter Ideas

March 11, 2014

Here is a simple skit that presents Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. This would be wonderful to have the children in your class act out on Palm Sunday so they know the story of what happened on on the Palm Sunday. This can be done as simply as having the children read the script while acting or as elaborately with costumes and memorized lines.

Triumphal Entry: Luke 19:28-38

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Owner, Disciples (at least 2), the rest of the class can be the crowds

Props: donkey (picture or cut out) and coats or cloth to put on donkey

(Jesus and disciples walk to the front of the room)

Narrator: He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, saying,

Jesus: (pointing to where the donkey is) Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'"

Narrator: So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them,

Owner: Why are you untying the colt?

Disciple: The Lord has need of it.

(owner nods head in agreement)

Narrator: They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road.

(Jesus walks around with the donkey while crowd is praising Him)

Narrator: As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, shouting:

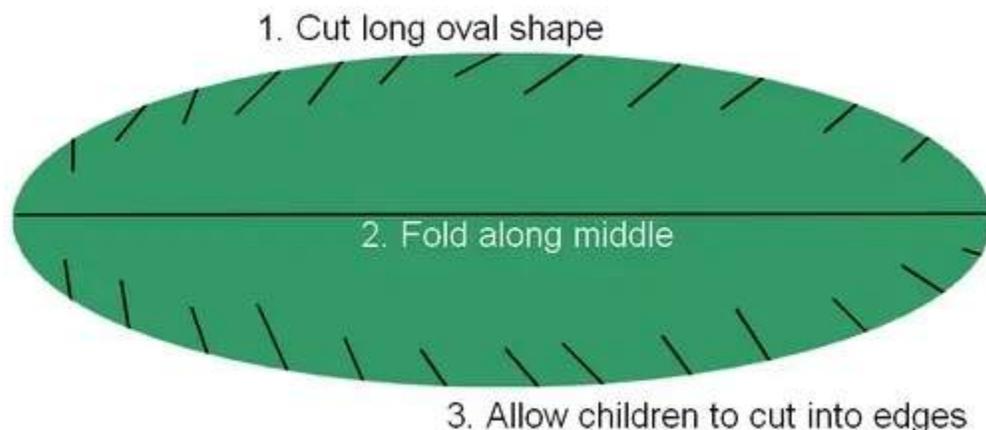
Crowd: Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!

Paper Leaf Craft for Palm Sunday

 ministry-to-children.com/palm-sunday-leaf-craft

Written by Mimi Bullock Last updated March 28, 2019 1 Comment Filed Under: Crafts , Easter Ideas

April 4, 2011



Easter is more than a holiday—it is the reason for the hope of Christians. Jesus’ death and resurrection is terrible and glorious to those that love him. For kids, Easter is full of conflicting images. Chocolate bunnies, Easter eggs and the cross get jumbled up in the Christian child’s spirit. Teach your holiday lesson with clarity by providing crafts to reinforce this important lesson.

Palm Sunday Leaf Craft

The Easter story is panoramic and includes many people and special places. Sometimes we forget to include Jesus’ entrance into the city on a donkey. The children sang, “Hosanna!” and greeted him with palm leaves. This palm leaf craft is an excellent way to reintroduce children to the kingship of Jesus.

Supplies: Large sheets of **green construction paper**. Child-safe scissors.

Directions: Before class cut out as many large leaf shapes as you need. Buy the large size construction paper if needed. Make the leaves long and oval shaped. Fold the leaves in half to make the leaf look like a tropical palm. When children arrive, give them safety scissors. Kids use the scissors to cut the edges making the paper look like fronds. Give kids crayons to write “Hosanna” on the leaves.

Smaller children might find it fun to wave the palms at a volunteer pretending to be Jesus. Play the song, “Hosanna” and allow kids to worship by waving their crafts in the area.