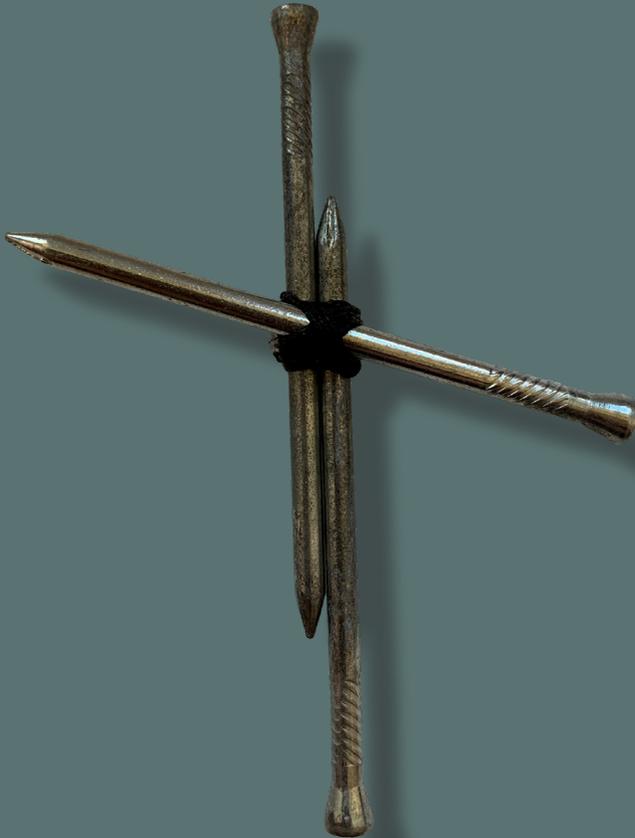




DIOCESE of OXFORD

A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world



Church at Home for Palm Sunday

Before the Service

A warm welcome from Bishop Olivia to all those from around the Diocese and beyond joining her at home today. Our church doors may be locked but as we have been reminded by Canon Vincent Strudwick, when our 'soul prays in any place, our whole being becomes a church'.

Today we keep Palm Sunday, not with processions through the streets but a journey of our hearts and minds. We cannot take palm crosses from our churches, but we make them in our homes – coloured and crocheted, woven from paper or fashioned from nails, found in our cupboards or hanging from our walls. Whatever cross you have made or chosen to help you journey with Jesus this Holy Week, have it ready for Bishop Olivia to bless at the start of the service and do send us a photo afterwards if you would like.

For inspiration and details of how to upload a photo, visit **oxford.anglican.org/palm-sunday**

Our reflection today is led by Bishop Steven and our prayers by Bishop Colin who join us from their homes, along with other Christians taking parts of the service. These ways of being church are still new, so please bear with us if there are any technical problems. This week the livestream is available to view at the following locations:

- Vimeo: vimeo.com/402963043
- Facebook: facebook.com/diocesefoxford
- Website: oxford.anglican.org/livestream

Gathering

Greeting

As we gather together virtually in our homes, you may like to find a cross which you can have ready for Bishop Olivia to bless and which you can place somewhere visible during Holy Week as a reminder to all who see it that Christ calls us to follow him.

Voices Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Behold your king comes to you, O Zion,
meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass.
Set up the waymarks! turn your hearts towards the highway
Turn again, turn again, beloved Israel.
Return now to the Lord.
Hosanna to the Son of David.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

President Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All **And also with you.**

Bishop Olivia welcomes the Congregation from around the diocese.

President We cannot come together in person.
We cannot walk with Christ in our churches
Yet still we are together, united in hearts and minds,
united by Christ, whose broken body makes us one.

Today with the Church throughout the world,
we set our eyes upon the Cross.
We remember Christ entering his own city
obedient to his Father's will:
ready to suffer, die and rise again.

Let us travel with him hopefully.
Let us walk with him gently.
That we may come with him joyfully
to share in his resurrection.

Blessing of Crosses

Bishop Olivia invites us to hold up our cross.

President Lord, bless these crosses
and let them be a sign
that you are ever with us.
Lord bless our homes
and let them be places
where your Spirit of Love abide.
Lord bless our lives
and let them be filled
with your eternal praise.
May we feel your presence very close to us
throughout this Holy Week
as we walk with you the way of the Cross
In the name of the Father and
of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Minister Christ did the Father's will
and fulfilled the hopes long prophesied,
how often do we fall short
of all that God asks and hopes for us.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

A time of silent reflection is kept.

Minister Jesus, son of David, you came to your people in peace,
riding on a donkey,
we bring before you our lack of humility.

Minister Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister Jesus, son of David, you were greeted with Hosannas,
that soon became cries of cruelty and fear,
we bring before you our lack of love.

Minister Christ, have mercy.
All **Christ, have mercy.**

Minister Jesus, son of David, you were ready to walk
the way of the cross, obedient to the end,
we bring before you our lack of faith.

Minister Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

President May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive you your sins
and make you holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All **Amen.**

Collect

President Let us pray for grace to walk the way of the cross.

Silence is kept.

President True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.
All **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word

Sit comfortably to listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

First Reading

Psalm 121 (CW)

read by Katie Tupling

Diocesan Disability Adviser and Chaplain amongst Deaf People

A reading from psalm one hundred and twenty-one.

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not suffer your foot to stumble;
he who watches over you will not sleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord himself watches over you;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
- 6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day,
neither the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord shall keep you from all evil;
it is he who shall keep your soul.
- 8 The Lord shall keep watch over your going out
and your coming in,
from this time forth for evermore.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 21:1–11 (NRSV)

*read by Mark Humphriss
Diocesan Secretary*

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

'Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

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

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Reflection

The Bishop of Oxford

After the sermon we keep silence together for a few moments before affirming our faith together in the words of the Creed.

The Creed

All **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

*Our prayers today are led by the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of
Dorchester. If you have a particular prayer request, please be in touch
with us through the website or email it to subdean@chch.ox.ac.uk at the
Cathedral and the clergy of our Mother Church will pray all your prayers
from their homes over the coming week.*

*You may like to adopt a prayer posture with your hands open or to focus
your gaze on the cross you had blessed at the start of the service.*

Response to the prayers:

Minister Let us pray to the Lord:
All **Lord, have mercy.**

The prayers end with:

Minister Merciful Father,
All **accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President Once we were far off,
but now in union with Christ Jesus
we have been brought near
through the shedding of Christ's blood
for he is our peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

Bishop Olivia signs the peace to us in British Sign Language (BSL), taught to her by our Lead Chaplain amongst Deaf People, the Revd Katie Tupling.

Wherever you are and whoever you're with, with family, on your own or even in shielded household isolation, remember that Christ's peace is more than a handshake or a hug. It is something from the heart and, whether with a warm smile, a nod, a bow or a face on a screen, God's peace in the Spirit moves among us.

Taking of Bread and Wine

President If we may hold your hand in the darkness,
it is enough.
For we know that
through we may stumble in our going
you catch us when we fall.
Lord, take the frailty of our praise
and make it a dwelling place for your glory.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President It is indeed right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Shouts of praise turned to cries of anger,
and still he said only, 'Father, forgive.'

For our pain, his royal body bled.
For our weakness, his precious hands were pierced.
He bore our sins upon the tree
and by his wounds we are forever healed.

And now the Spirit draws us deep into the mystery,
dying to sin to rise again in Christ.

As we walk the path of darkness,
we face the world with honesty and truth.
Our hands reach out, up to the Cross.
Our eyes strain towards the hope that lies beyond.
Our voices long to join angels and archangels
in their unending hymn of praise:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might:
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest.**

President We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

President Jesus Christ is Lord.
All **Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world.**

President So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together until that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

President In times of hope, in times of trouble,
in times of sorrow, in times of praise,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

The President says the Invitation to Communion.

President Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

For most of us watching from home, this will be a very strange experience of being invited to Communion not through the physical bread and wine we can touch but a Spiritual Communion with the God who always comes to meet us wherever we are. There are no special words or prayers for this, all the Church has ever thought necessary is true desire, lively faith and genuine love.

Come honestly before God the way you know how. You may like to listen or sing along with 'Be Still for the Presence of the Lord', recorded specially for the diocese this week.

Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

A time of silent prayer is kept.

All **You have opened to us the Scriptures, O Christ,
and you have made yourself known
in the breaking of the bread.
Abide with us, we pray,
that, blessed by your royal presence,
we may walk with you
all the days of our life,
and at its end behold you
In the glory of the eternal Trinity,
one God for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

Blessing

President Christ as a light,
illumine and guide us.
Christ as a shield protect us
Christ under us
Christ over us
Christ beside us
on our left and our right;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
rest upon you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

President Walking together in the way of his Cross,
let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

After the Service

Palm Sunday services often include a dramatic telling of the Passion story. This year the Precentors' Network has gathered together people from Cathedrals and Minsters all over the country to record the parts at home and make a Cathedral Passion. Our own Cathedral Succentor, the Revd Philippa White, takes the part of Jesus. You may like to listen to this today or later in Holy Week at oxford.anglican.org/livestream

The way of the cross unites us not only in worship but in service and in fellowship. You may like to phone or message someone you would normally go to church with and join them for a virtual coffee.

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Holy Week and Easter Services

Holy Week and Easter this year will be like no other we have experienced. Live-streamed worship will be available for everyone across the Diocese of Oxford, these services complement the prayers, meditations and worship offered by local churches. Visit oxford.anglican.org/livestream and find out how you can join in.

> **Palm Sunday 10 am**

Diocesan Eucharist. Bishop Olivia presiding.

> **Maundy Thursday 11 am**

The Renewal of Vows for Licensed and Ordained Ministry.

> **Maundy Thursday 8.15 pm**

Diocesan Eucharist. Bishop Colin presiding.

> **Good Friday**

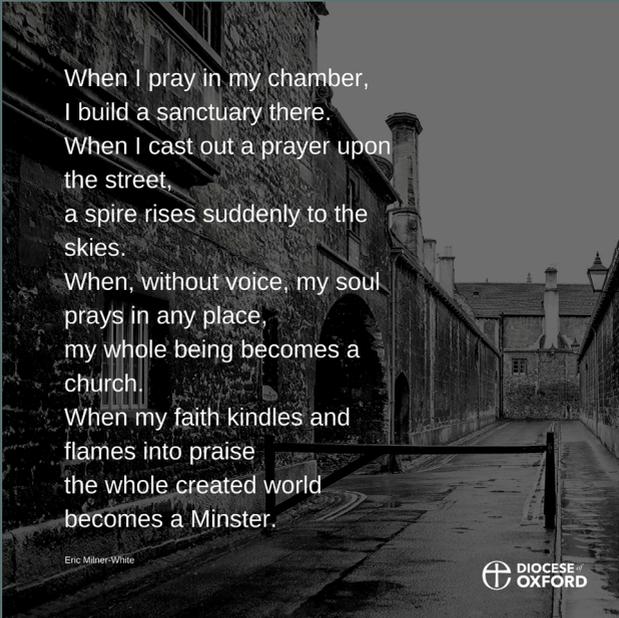
A series of six short addresses from Bishop Steven with hymns and prayers.

> **Easter Eve 11 April 8 pm**

A Vigil for Our Times - see rumoursofhope.co.uk

> **Easter Day 10 am**

Diocesan Eucharist. Bishop Steven presiding.



When I pray in my chamber,
I build a sanctuary there.
When I cast out a prayer upon
the street,
a spire rises suddenly to the
skies.
When, without voice, my soul
prays in any place,
my whole being becomes a
church.
When my faith kindles and
flames into praise
the whole created world
becomes a Minster.

Eric Milner-White



Many helpful resources, inspiring stories and ways to worship, reflect and live as faithful Christians in challenging times are all available on the diocesan website:

www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/



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