**New Kilpatrick**

Palm Sunday

YouTube

**News**

Hello! I’m Roddy Hamilton, the minister of New Kilpatrick Parish and thank you for the invitation to travel with you on this Palm Sunday.

We enter Holy Week today, and as the week changes and we share a creative communion service on Maundy Thursday with Bearsden Cross church at 7.30 in New Kilpatrick. Then on Good Friday we meet in the Cross Church for a shared service there, again at 7.30. Easter Day we have a family service in the sanctuary at 10.30 and an ABC songs of praise service at 7pm on Easter evening in Westerton church.

There will be a YouTube and podcast and phone line service as normal for Easter Day. All the details are in the bulletin you can download from [nkchruch.org.uk](http://nkchruch.org.uk) or have emailed or posted to you .

While begin with Palm Sunday but we do not remain there and today, we travel far into Holy Week and the events that changed everything.

Part of our faith, indeed, central to our faith, is the story we tell. Not because we cling to the things that happen, but because, through story, we witness who we are. Our faith story is many layered. It is full of insights and truths, and emotions we cannot explain in any other way other than through story. This is how it feels, this is what it is like. This is how we encounter truth, not as fact but as event.

Our faith is alive in story and the greatest of these, this the one that takes up this whole week called Holy. Thus today, we simply tell it, wonder at it, and allow ourselves to feel what it was like, because in that emotion, we find out what rely on: not a cerebral truth but an aching hope.

**Reading Luke 19:28-40**

**Reflection**

The roadway hardly matters

Other than you travel it this week,

And travel it long and hard,

With shadows deepening on either side.

The cobbles, covered with palms;

Old rags strewn across them,

Offering some act of humanity or humility.

Both are in short supply this week.

It is a long way to heaven from here,

On this roadway that echo with hosannas.

And the storyteller no longer tells his story.

Today he performs his topsy-turvy tale,

Where heaven takes on empire,

And donkeys carry mistaken messiahs.

And the hopes of the people

Are filling with hot air, soon to burst.

The roadway hardly matters,

Other than you travel it this week.

And on this politically charged path,

The authorities demand silence,

But silence is not a gift

The stones will give this week.

**Prayer**

Dare us, O Saviour

That we might be these very stones

Where the roadway cobbles proclaim your truth

The temple stone proclaims your justice

The rocks and mountains proclaim your vision

Where nothing can be kept silent

And even the silence speaks loud

On the roadways of Bucha and Borodyanka

For the universe is with you

Ready to react to the conspiracy

Stirred in the shadows of religion and politics

Dare us, O Saviour

That we might find our voice

And shout with hurt and hope

On the roadways of the world

For the arrival of the kingdom

Amen

**Reading Luke 19:45-48**

**Reflection**

Standing on this pavement

Within the temple,

Is a roadway of sorts, to heaven,

But it feels a long way from here.

There is silence now,

But only after the shouting,

Only after the doves have been set free

And the coins have jarred and tables crashed.

Only after the echo has waned.

The ancient walls have never seen the like…

Silence:

Enough to hear the crack shattering the institution.

You walked in here this morning,

Brandishing the intent of heaven.

But will you be allowed to walk out

Having made your protest?

For you have crossed the line.

You have given them an excuse.

This event will close in around you.

Your holy purpose will be used against you.

Your words may convict them

In the ears of heaven,

But in the ears of the world

Your words convict you.

This roadway has only one direction now,

And it is a long way to get to heaven from here.

**Prayer**

O, Dear Lord,

Your temple moment!

May we know such indignation and outrage

Against what religion corrupts

And uses to bind the least

May we be angry beside you

When the kingdom is replaced by the church

And the gospel by government

And love is broken

And compassion eroded

And vision is gone

And status quo remains

May we stand in this moment with you

And look around at what our faith has become

And choose

The side we will take

Amen

**Reading Luke 22:1-6**

**Reflection**

The dream you dream in the dark,

Of a warrior messiah

Holds nothing but faint traces

Of a bygone hope:

Some weak, zealot-like, longing

You cannot find in the messiah you have among you.

And so you force his hand;

Back him into a corner,

His only escape to call on the angel armies

To charge down on their regime-change anger.

But what if you’ve got it wrong?

What if you’ve miscalculated?

What if the road to heaven

Goes round another way,

And you’ve gone and backed him into an alley

From which there is no escape?

What if this road you are on

Turns out to be the wrong one?

**Prayer**

Did you see that, heaven?
Did you see what he did?
Did you feel the punch, the slap across your face

The moment he betrayed you?

May we be offended

May we feel your pain

And may we know each time

The words and acts and silences we have used

To betray what is right

And just

And loving

Betray the son of heaven

For our own desires and wants

May we be offended

And ask your forgiveness

Amen

**Reading Luke 22:7-13**

**Reflection**

Here is where the words run out

For there is nothing left to say.

Hope is found in a ritual echo,

Of an ancient meal, reimagined:

Passover and freedom,

Communion and hope,

Broken bread: a symbol of a broken God.

Spilled wine: the choice this broken God makes.

But let us not waste breath on an explanation.

There is none.

Let us simply taste

What we cannot yet see.

**Prayer**

The breathing space, O God

The pause

The place

The sacrifice

The decision

The meal

Loving Jesus

The feast of so little

Yet so much

A table where refugees are gathered

Where the trapped of Mariupol sit

Where Yemeni and Syrian and Afghani are not ignored

Where lies are defeated and truth broken open

Where everyone receives and not just the wealthy

May we taste the promise

Taste the hope

Taste the future

Amen

**Reading Luke 22:39-48**

**Reflection**

And so comes the hour

When the road finally ends.

The light has run out,

And there is no curve in the path.

The finish line

Is close.

Yet there is still more road to walk,

Even if it is a ‘dead’ end.

A road scratched with lines

We thought you would not cross.

Yet you will,

And you do.

There is no line drawn on this final road

That you do not cross for us.

No limit to the love you have.

No ‘thus-far-and-no-further’ in the ethics of the kingdom.

No act, or deceit, or lie, or hatred where you cry ‘enough’.

Nothing so bad you cannot still love.

And it is all borne under the weight of a cross.

And everything hurts.

Even heaven hurts,

and begins to change shape,

Contracting, angry,

Broken, sad.

As the light shrinks

And the shadows grow,

There is no more.

Surely the way to heaven

Is impossible from here?

**Prayer**

In this collapse of hope

When love is crushed

In the kiss of a friend

May you drink of this cup, O Jesus

It’s twisted truth

And bitter grace

That we might yet believe

This way to heaven

Still is the right way

There is still a journey to take

Beyond what the world offers

In betrayal

In fake news

In weapons

In fear

May we still believe

For the sake of the world

Amen

**Benediction**