

6. Palm Sunday (Mark 11:1-11)

“Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Mark 11:9)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Palm Sunday
Palm Branch
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversation
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Palm Parade
Follow My Instructions
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: CD player | DVD player | Projector or screen | Television | Craft glue | Crayons | Markers | Offering basket | Paper | Pencils | Scissors | Tape | Yarn (Green)

Gather: Bell | Carpet squares | Paper punch

Explore: Bell

Respond: Bell | Candle | Carpet squares | Multipurpose lighter | Musical instruments | Palm branches made earlier

Bless: Envelope

Before You Teach

Today's Bible story is a familiar one—the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem that we celebrate each year on Palm Sunday. Although we associate palm branches with this story, not all of the Gospel accounts mention palm branches. Mark's account says the people spread, “branches cut from the fields” (Mark 11:8). Regardless of whether it actually involved palm branches, it is clear that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was a time of celebration. The people needed a new leader—a savior—and they looked to Jesus to fill that role.

Mark's account of this story begins with Jesus sending two of his disciples into a town to borrow a colt. This instruction seems strange to our modern sensibilities. However, at the time of Roman rule, it was not uncommon for Roman soldiers to requisition animal and human labor. The thing that distinguished Jesus' borrowing of the colt from the requisitioning the Roman soldiers did was Jesus' promise to return it. Even in the borrowing of the donkey, Jesus set himself up as a different kind of leader.

The celebration that occurred when Jesus entered Jerusalem was similar to the reception of military leaders returning victorious from battle. It is probable that some in the crowd expected Jesus to be a military ruler who would free them from the Roman emperor. Because we know the rest of the story, we are aware that Jesus is the leader of a very different kind of kingdom. Jesus came as a peaceful leader to teach people to love and serve one another.

Just as the crowd celebrated Jesus on that day long ago, we continue to celebrate Jesus today. As you teach this lesson, let today be a celebration. Jesus came to give us new life. He is our leader! Hosanna in the highest!

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display your choice of an attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16-17 or pp. 18 & 15).

- Play “All Are Welcome” and “Part of the Story” (Annual Music CD).
 - Welcome and greet each child as they enter the room.
 - Indicate the location of the offering basket.
 - Help children mark their attendance inside the building on the Community Attendance Chart (opt.).
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A—Palm Sunday (Activity Sheet)

Before class: Obtain Activity Sheets (Session 6).

- Distribute “Coming to Town”/“Instructions” (pp. 13-14).
- Encourage the children to follow the journaling prompt and complete the activities.

OR

B—Palm Branch (Art)

Before class: Photocopy “Palm Branch” (Leader Guide—p. 42), one per child. Obtain paper punches. Cut 6” yarn lengths, 15 per child.

- Distribute photocopies of “Palm Branch.” Let the children color them.
 - After they have finished, let them cut out the branch, then punch holes at the dots. They will insert a yarn strip into each hole and tie it to create fringe. Continue around the branch.
 - Let the children use their palm branches in the Palm Parade later in the session.
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Transition to Explore

Before class: Obtain bell and carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to acknowledge that it is time to transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares (or equivalent items), then sit in a circle on the floor.

TIP: Use Transitions as tools to help children easily move from one activity to the next.

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversation

- Ask a few wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- What made you laugh this week?
 - How did you help someone this week?
 - What are you grateful for?
 - Was there a difficult part of your week, and what made it better?
 - Where did you see God this week?
-

Hear and See the Bible Story

Before class: Prepare television and DVD player.

- Read the Bible story (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible—Mark 11:1-11*).
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure DVD Session 6.

SAY: I wonder how your church celebrates Palm Sunday.

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets (Session 6).

- Distribute the Bible Story Sheets and draw attention to Bible Story Retelling (p. 1).
 - Assign the two Narrator roles, then present “Palm Sunday.”
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display Poster: Unit 2 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 12 & 21). Review Unit 2 sign language (Leader Guide—p. 95).

- Recite the Bible verse: “Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Mark 11:9).
 - Invite the children to say and sign the Bible verse with you.
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Transition to Respond

Before class: Obtain bell.

- Ring the bell, then invite the children to put away their carpet squares.

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RESPOND

A—Palm Parade (Movement/Worship)

Before class: Obtain musical instruments and palm branches made earlier.

- Distribute instruments and palm branches.
- Allow the children to walk around the church space saying “Hosanna!” Let them invite other Sunday school classes or church members to join their parade.

OR

B—Follow My Instructions (Game)

- Direct the children to form a line facing you. Use the following directions to play the game. The slowest person to follow the direction is out.
 - o Pretend to ride a donkey
 - o Wave a palm branch
 - o Walk in place
 - o Say “Hosanna!”
 - o Create your own direction
 - Play the game as long as time allows.
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Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Obtain Map 7: Deep Blue Shores (Class Kit—p. 8) and the cut out Figures/Pieces: Deep Blue Shores Map 7 (Class Kit—p. 25). Display Poster: Lent (Class Kit—p. 31).

- Display the Deep Blue Shores Map 7 on the floor or table. While the children interact with the map and figures, talk about Holy Week.

SAY: Today’s Bible story is a part of what we call Holy Week. Holy Week is a time when we remember the life of Jesus before Easter.

ASK: What do you remember about Jesus from today’s Bible story? What makes Jesus special?

- Read together the prayer on the Lent poster (Class Kit—p. 31).
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Transition to Bless

Before class: Obtain bell, candle, multipurpose lighter (or battery-operated candle), carpet squares.

- Ring the bell to signal transition.
- Direct the children to choose carpet squares, then sit in a circle on the floor.
- Light a candle to symbolize that this is a special time together (*optional*).

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Continue to display Poster: Unit 2 Bible Verse (Class Kit—pp. 12 & 21) where it is easily accessible for children. Obtain Poster Pieces (Class Kit—p. 29); cut out pieces and store in envelope.

- Gather the children around the Bible-verse poster.
- Display the poster pieces.
- Invite a child to attach to the poster the “Palm Sunday” poster piece.

PRAY: Dear God, help us to always welcome Jesus into our hearts and lives. Amen.

Praising

Before class: Obtain CD player and Deep Blue Song Sheets (new, located in Bible Story Sheets).

- Distribute the song sheets for “Part of the Story” (Annual Music CD).
 - Sing the song “Part of the Story” (Annual Music CD).
 - Collect the song sheets and store until the next session.
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Blessing

SAY: Let’s say an affirmation of our faith together. This is a reminder of who we are called to be as Christians.

- Invite the children to repeat each phrase after you.

I believe in God, who loves me and wants me to love others.

God is the Creator of all things.

I believe in Jesus, who shows me God’s love.

He hoped for a world where everyone could live in peace.

I believe in the Holy Spirit—a Spirit that we cannot see but feel.

The Holy Spirit helps me know God is everywhere.

God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit teach me that I can be the Church,
reminding everyone of God’s power and grace. Amen.

At Home with God

Before class: Obtain Bible Story Sheets leaflets.

ASK: What is one thing that you learned today? Can you share with your family what you learned?

- Send home with each child Bible Story Sheets—Session 6 leaflet.

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Palm Branch

