

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

Those in front of him and those following were shouting, “*Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*” (Mark 11:9)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Holy Week
Jesus Rides a Donkey
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

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

3. Respond

Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
“What Would You Say?” Banner
Palm Waving Freeze Dance
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Clear tape | Stickers | Markers | Crayons | Pencils | Glue | Paper | Scissors | Glue Sticks

Gather: No additional supplies needed

Explore: No additional supplies needed

Respond: Posterboard or large piece of paper | Scarves (1 per child)

Bless: No additional supplies needed

Before You Teach

Today’s Bible story is a familiar one — the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We celebrate it 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” on the road. Regardless of whether or not palm branches actually were used, 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 his 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 to 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 the Attendance Chart (Class Kit—pp. 15–18) at eye level. Put together the model of the zoo and the figures of Benjie, Cinnamon, and the baby elephant (Class Kit—p. 9).

- Play, “Part of the Story” (Annual Music CD or Adventure DVD and Leader Guide—p. 92) as you welcome each child.
 - Show the children where to place their offerings, and help each child mark the Attendance Chart with a sticker or permanent marker.
 - Place the Deep Blue Shores Map (Class Kit—p. 11) and the zoo and Benjie, Cinnamon, and the baby elephant figures (Class Kit—p. 9) on a table or on the floor for the children to play with and explore. If available, add the Deep Blue Shores Maps, buildings, and figures from previous quarters.
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A—Holy Week (Art)

Before class: Make a copy of “Holy Week” (p. 42) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Holy Week” (p. 42).

SAY: Today is the first day of a very important week for our faith community. We call it *Holy Week*. This week we remember the last days of Jesus’ life before he went to the cross, died, and was resurrected.

- Name each day of the week and talk about the symbol for each day.
- Encourage the children to color the symbol for Palm Sunday.
- Invite the children to take their calendars home and continue to color the symbols throughout the week.

OR

B—Jesus Rides a Donkey (Activity Sheets)

- Give each child a copy of Activity Sheets—Session 6.
- Invite the children to put together the Jesus, donkey, and blanket pieces according to the instructions.
- Encourage the children to use their Jesus and donkey figures to retell the Bible story.

TIP: A video for putting this craft together can be found at www.deepbluekids.com/this-Sunday.

Transition to Explore

- Have the children help you clean up and then move to the Bible story circle. Encourage them to shout, “*Jesus is coming!*” as they move.

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

SAY: Today is a special Sunday for our faith community. Every year we celebrate Jesus entering the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. I wonder what we can learn about Jesus and his faith community today.

ASK: I wonder:

- How many friends are here with us today? Who is missing?
 - How do you feel today?
 - What's one thing that happened in your community this week that you really liked?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

SAY: Today our Bible story is about when Jesus entered Jerusalem.

- Tell the children the story, “People Welcome Jesus” (*Deep Blue Bible Storybook*—p. 285).
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure for Session 6 (Adventure DVD) with the children.

ASK: How does your church celebrate Palm Sunday?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Give each child a copy of “Palm Sunday” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 6).
- Read the story with the children, encouraging them to read the words in blue.

TIP: Printable “Word Cards” for the words in blue are available each quarter to download and print at www.deepbluekids.com/This-Sunday.

Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Post the Bible Verse Poster—Unit 2 (Class Kit—p. 5) on a wall or bulletin board.

- Point to the Bible Verse Poster. Say the Bible verse for the children, and then repeat it together.
 - Teach the children signs from American Sign Language for some of the words in the Bible verse (Leader Guide—p. 95 and www.deepbluekids.com/This-Sunday).
 - Watch the Unit 2 Bible Verse video (Adventure DVD) with the children.
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Transition to Respond

- Have the children move to the next activity. Encourage them to shout, “*Hosanna!*” as they move.

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RESPOND

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Post “All Are Welcome” (Class Kit—p. 27) on a wall or bulletin board.

- Play, “All Are Welcome” (Annual Music CD or Adventure DVD). Sing along and dance to the music.

SAY: In our Bible story today, Jesus asked two of his disciples to get him a donkey. What a strange thing for their leader to ask! When have you been asked to do something you thought was strange?

The disciples trusted Jesus so they did what he asked them to do. They followed his instructions. Who do you trust? Whose instructions do you follow?

A—“What Would You Say?” Banner (Group Activity)

Before class: Place posterboard or a large piece of paper on a table. Write the word “Hosanna” in the center.

SAY: When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people shouted, “Hosanna!” If Jesus was coming to our town today, what would you shout when you saw him coming?

- Have the children use markers to write their answers on the banner. Help as needed.
 - Place the banner where the rest of the congregation can enjoy it.
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OR

B—Palm Waving Freeze Dance (Movement)

- Give each child a scarf to use as a palm branch.
 - Play “Part of the Story” from the Deep Blue Annual Music CD, or play another selection of music.
 - Encourage the children to dance and wave their palm branch scarves.
 - Stop the music periodically and have the children freeze until you begin the music again.
 - Play and dance as long as interest and time allow.
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Transition to Bless

- Have the children help you clean up and then move to the Bible story circle. Encourage them to shout, “*Hosanna!*” as they move.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Cut out the Walking with Jesus Mural Pieces (Class Kit—p. 19) and place them in an envelope or zip-top bag. Post the Walking with Jesus Mural (Class Kit—pp. 2 & 31) on a wall or bulletin board. Find and prepare one or two pictures of people in your church, family, or community to add to the mural.

- Gather the children around the mural. Invite a child to tape the image of the children waving palm branches **(G)** somewhere on the mural.

ASK: What do you remember about the Bible story we heard today? What do you think we can learn about community from this story?

SAY: In the coming weeks, we will be adding more pictures of people from the Bible who knew Jesus. Some of them knew Jesus before Easter, and some didn't know Jesus until after Easter. We know Jesus too! I wonder who you can think of who is “Walking with Jesus” like the people in our Bible stories.

- Tell the children about the pictures you prepared before class, and then tape the pictures to the mural. Invite the children who brought in their own pictures to tell about them and add them to the mural. Remind the children they are invited to bring their own pictures of people who are “Walking with Jesus” to add to the mural next week.
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Praising

Before class: Display “Singing Together” (Class Kit—p. 25) on a wall or bulletin board.

- Sing together, “Sing Hosanna” (Class Kit—p. 25).

TIP: If time permits, invite the children to choose more songs to sing.

Blessing

- Invite the children to sit in a circle. Encourage them to sing with you the song, “Jesus Loves Me.”

PRAY: Thank you, Jesus, for loving us! Amen.

At Home with God

ASK: What's one thing about our time today that you can tell your family?

- Give each child a copy of Bible Story Sheets—Session 6. Look at “Family Faith Activities” together.

ASK: Which of these activities are you most excited to try this week?

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

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Holy Week

