

## Welcome to written worship for the fourth week of Bible Month



As you **prepare for worship**, find a comfortable, still place and pause;  
recognising God's presence with us.

**Hymn:** Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! StF 263, MP 242 or All glory,  
Laud and honour StF 262, H&P 160, MP 9

And so we **pray**...<sup>1</sup>

Loving, caring God, we don't deserve you.  
You sent your Son to live alongside people like us,  
to empathise with them, and us,  
to forgive our sins,  
to make that painful journey to Jerusalem  
and the cross; to rise again  
and to send your Holy Spirit  
so that you can be with us today.  
You never force your presence upon us,  
yet you are there when we need you,  
and even when we have forgotten you, you are there.  
Loving, caring God, travel with us today.

**Amen.**

God said: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.'  
For the times when we have not loved you with all our heart, mind, soul and  
strength.

Lord, we are sorry.

For the times when we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves:

Lord, we are sorry.

For the times of apathy, indolence and indifference:

Lord, we are sorry.

Jesus came that we might become holy;  
let us rejoice in his goodness and grace.

**Amen**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
we listen to the story of your last week on earth,  
the story we call the passion story.  
And we ponder all that you did and said  
and all that you chose not to do and not to say.  
We reflect on the meaning of the events for us today,  
for we know that it is by your cross and your passion  
that humankind is freed from guilt and sin  
and set right with God, your Father and our Father.

<sup>1</sup> These prayers © ROOTS for Churches Ltd ([www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com))  
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You, who were sinless, were content to live our life  
and to die not just any human death, but an awful form of capital punishment.  
Help us to understand more of this great mystery -  
that God incarnate should lay down his life for us and for all people.  
Give us also a care for all those who suffer in today's world  
from cruelty, from vicious political regimes and from neglect.  
Help us to understand how we should respond to the challenge of this story as we  
seek to be faithful to you this week.

**Amen.**

*Into the city I'd follow the children's band,  
Waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;  
One of his heralds, yes, I would sing  
Loudest hosannas, "Jesus is King!"*

*Show me that scene in the garden, of bitter pain;  
And of the cross where my Saviour for me was slain;  
And, through the sadness, help me to see  
How Jesus suffered for love of me.*

Each week during June we suggest a slightly different way of approaching the passage of scripture, hoping that this will both enrich our worship and maybe also offer us new ways of reading going forward.

This week we invite you to intentionally approach the passage ready to listen to what God is saying to you through it. As we are reading a long passage of scripture this week, we invite you to do this in two stages.

First, pause and pray, asking God to speak to you through the passage that you are about to read. Now read the whole passage, noticing which parts of Mark's account seem most important to you today.

**Read:** Mark 11:1-16:8

Once you have read the whole passage through, pray again, asking God where you should focus your attention now.

It may be that just a few words, a phrase or an idea stand out for you, or you may be drawn to return to a particular part of the story. Return now to your word, phrase or passage. Take time to appreciate it, as if you are relishing the flavour of a delicious piece of fruit, or a very high-class boiled sweet. Draw out all the goodness you can - some historical writers even liken this to 'chewing the cud' ...

When you are ready, pray again – asking God 'what now?'

Finally, you may choose to spend some time in silence, or with your journal or notebook.

<sup>2</sup> Reflections are offered to us by Moira Hunt, prayers by Erica Hartley

Each week we are pointed towards a theme which emerges from the set passage, and we offer a **reflection** based on that theme<sup>2</sup>. This week that theme is *Passion Week...*

Here we are then, at the climax of the journey  
No turning back from challenges ahead  
Here comes Jesus to Jerusalem, the crowds are going wild  
While Pharisees now plot to see him dead.

Here we are then, at the climax of a lifetime  
Three years to demonstrate the power of love  
While He healed, fed crowds and cast out all the demons  
He showed 'God with us', not God far up above.

Here we are then, at the climax of a mission  
The message has been preached and taught and shared  
The people clamoured to receive the touch of healing power  
But his followers are not sure, not quite prepared.

Here we are then, at the climax of incarnation  
Jesus, sharing that He is the 'Son of Man'  
The one who came to suffer, came to die upon the cross  
Telling how it would turn out, in God's great plan!

Here we are then, at the climax of resurrection  
The disciples still confused to see "He lives"  
But rebuked, they then receive the great commission  
To go out and share the new life, Jesus gives.

Here we are then, at the climax of our purpose  
We receive the same commission as did they,  
To share what we have seen, heard and experienced  
As we read Mark's final stories, here today.

**Hymn:** When I survey the wondrous cross StF 287, H&P 180, MP 755

Our prayers of intercession<sup>2</sup> this month pick out verses from our long bible reading to lead us into our prayers for others.

Let us **pray**:

*He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." Mark 11:17*

<sup>2</sup> Reflections are offered to us by Moira Hunt, prayers by Erica Hartley

Lord, we ask in hope that our places of worship and our own homes may be places of prayer, places where we can meet with you with honesty and devotion. We pray for those places where public worship is not possible and Christians risk persecution or death if they worship you.

*For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs. Mark 13:8*

Lord, we ask in hope that even though you have said these things will happen that your peace may also be present in the midst of trauma. We pray that communities will learn how to build bridges between each other and the global community can support each other when natural disasters occur.

*Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him. Mark 12:17*

Lord, we ask in hope that governments will use taxes wisely to give a fair sharing of resources and to support those who struggle to support themselves. We pray for all those who are going through unemployment or illness and need that support today.

*He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." Mark 14:6*

Lord, we ask in hope that you will be with all those who are suffering today and all who are having to make difficult decisions. We pray that even if you can not take away the suffering that you will bless them with understanding of why.

We ask all these prayers and the prayers in our heart through your son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We pray the Lord's Prayer, in whatever language and version comes most naturally to us.

Our Father...

**Hymn:** At the name of Jesus StF 317, H&P 74, MP 41 or Thine be the Glory StF 313, H&P 212, MP 689

***The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all, evermore  
Amen***