

- *Palm Sunday*

## Chat with the Children

- What is the Scouts motto? (slide)
  - be prepared (slide)
- Something on getting things ready
  - clothes before go out in the rain?
  - food not cooked?
  - (what happens if we fail to prepare?)
- How are we getting ready for Easter?
  - some people observe Lent - giving something up, as a spiritual preparation for when the wholeness of life is restored in the resurrection
  - you might come to some of the services through Holy Week, also having the opportunity to display Christian unity... here on Thursday
  - Bible Reading notes will usually concentrate on some of the Easter passages through this week...
  - might reflect on your own life and situation - how does the familiar Easter story, of sins forgiven and of new life in Christ, connect this year with your story....?
- *Lord, help us to be prepared for all that you want to speak to us of yourself this Easter.*

## The Gathering Storm

- What mood do you expect at a Palm Sunday service?
  - joy/celebration of Triumphal Entry? Hallelujah?
- True, but not the whole picture:
  - and all the more remarkable given the wider context!
- Maneuvering before battle
- Who is in control/planning the engagement? Pharisees?
  - is Jesus simply being provocative?
  - confrontation between the powers, between Satan's hold on humanity through sin and God's intervention in Jesus Christ to confront and defeat that grip
- Substitution
  - explain what Caiaphas thought he was saying...
  - explain what deeper significance Christians see in his words...
- Difference of opinion about Jesus
- Tension in the air before a thunderstorm - Palm Sunday as the first crack of thunder, the first drop of rain, a sign that all that is to come has started.
- The Triumphal Entry was an **anticipation** of all of this, in the midst the gathering storm
  - a moment of celebration before the darkness closed in
  - an pointer forward to the joy of Easter day, of resurrection breaking through the gloom
- Who is Jesus?
  - good man? Fine example? David Cameron seems to think so...
  - trouble maker, upsetter of the status quo, threat to the peace?
  - Saviour, substitute, lightning rod for God's wrath
- *Are you ready for Easter?*