

## Way of the Cross - PALM SUNDAY

### St. Mary' Anglican Church Regina

### Divine Diversions Games Workshop – April 3, 2011

#### PASSAGES

Matthew 21:1-11

Mark 11:1-10

Luke 19:28-44

John 12:12-19

#### MEMORY VERSES

Mark 11:9 - "Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the LORD!" [NRSV]

Psalms 118:26a - "Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the LORD!" [NRSV]

#### PURPOSE

Children will explore the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem relating this to the events of Holy Week and the Old Testament to the New Testament.

#### Objectives

Children will:

Older students will locate the stories in their Bibles; Younger students will learn that the story is in the New Testament in the Gospels.

Know that Jesus came to Jerusalem along with thousands of others to celebrate the Jewish Passover.

Learn that Palm Sunday remembers Jesus' entry into Jerusalem just a few days before his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. This story begins the events of Holy Week.

Know that Jesus' entry on a donkey signified that he was a humble, peaceful Messiah, fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.

Understand the meaning of the word Hosanna; the people expected a king to save them. Yet the crowd misunderstood what sort of Messiah Jesus was.

#### Materials

- Basketball and hoop – Nerf™ (or similar) basketball and hoop OR balls of waste paper and a trash can OR real basketball and hoop
  - Bibles
  - Copy machine
- For the quiz: bells, scoreboard, treats, spinner
- Index cards or blank pieces of scrap paper
  - Paper, 8 ½" x 11"
  - Paper clips or rubber bands

## **Preparation**

Pray for the children and your teaching.

Read the Bible Background and this lesson.

Make a set of “Hosanna” cards for each student. Print each letter of the word “HOSANNA” on a separate index card. Paper clip or rubber band each set.

Duplicate a set of quiz cards (or find the set from the last time this lesson was used).

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Open -- Introduction**

Greet the children. Open in prayer. If you are playing the game with a real basketball and hoop, it is suggested that you move to that area before you start the lesson.

**ASK:** Has anyone ever been to a parade or seen one on TV? What was it for? [Allow time for some brief discussion.]

Do you think everyone at those parades had the same kind of experience? [Again, offer a short time for discussion.]

**SAY:** Well, my guess is that if we had a parade in here today, and I asked all of you about it afterwards, I’d hear about as many different versions of what happened as we have people with us here today. Everyone might talk about the really big things that happened in the same way, but I’d bet there would be at least some small differences about the details. Our story today is kind of like that. It’s one story but we get to hear about it from four different writers! And I bet it’s even one you have your own version about!

**ASK:** How many have heard the story of Palm Sunday? Let’s see what the writers of the Gospels ... who are those again? Right ... Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have to say about this story. You need to really pay attention to all that we’re going to read ... you’ll need the information when we play our game in a few minutes!

### **Dig – Main Content**

Distribute Bibles or ask the children to take out their own Bibles. Have the children find Matthew 21. For younger children, show them where the story is in your Bible. Read, or have the children read verses 1-11. Do the same with Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-44, and John 12:12-19.

**Quiz:** Use the questions at the end of this lesson to play a team quiz. You can use the game spinner to spin for “number of points for this answer” or just award 2 points for a correct answer and 1 point if the answer is given by the opposition. You could also use the bells --- first to ring gets to answer. Hand out treats for winning answers/overall winners.

Discuss, briefly, the similarities and differences in the versions, the meanings of “Hosanna” and the cheer’s link to Psalm 118, and the significance of the donkey from the prophecy in Zechariah. Be sure to explain that Jesus and the disciples were going to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. This took place at the beginning of the time we call Holy Week. [Note that all of this information is in the Bible Background.] Older children should be encouraged to find the

Old Testament Scriptures that relate to the story.

### **H-O-S-A-N-N-A Free Throw Game**

This game can be played either as individuals or teams. If playing teams, members can collaborate on an answer, but only one member can shoot the free throw if the answer is correct. If a free throw is missed, all members of the team still have to give up a letter.

ASK: How many of you have played the game “HORSE”?

SAY: Well, today we’re going to play a game that’s like that, but different. In “HORSE” the object of the game is what? To NOT get any letters or as few as possible by making the ball go through the hoop when you shoot at it. Well, in our game, we start out with letters ... and we want to keep them!

Pass out the letter sets to each child.

SAY: OK ... look at your letters. What do they spell? Right ... the word “Hosanna.” Where have we heard that word today? Right ... in our story, it was what the people were yelling to Jesus as he rode in on the donkey. And what does it mean? Right ... it means “save us now!” As a matter of fact, that whole passage is our memory verse, so let’s practice it together right now!

Go over the memory verse a time or two, then SAY: Great! You all are on your way to some right answers in our game. OK ... here’s how it works. We will roll the die to see who goes first. A question is asked and the winner (or team) gets to answer. If they answer correctly, they get to shoot a free throw. If they make it, they (or their team) get to keep all their letters. If they miss, then they have to give one letter up. Now, you want to keep all you letters, because we’re going to do something with them at the end of the game.

Play the game. As kids lose letters, collect them and hang on to them.

### **Reflect – Closure**

Gather the children in a circle. Allow them to lay out their remaining letters.

SAY: Now the rules in a game like “HORSE” say that once you’re out, you’re out, right? So if we are playing this game like we play “HORSE” we would say that anyone that does not have all their letters will miss out in a minute when we have a chance to gather around and make a whole lot of noise by yelling what the letters say, right? That’s right ... in a few minutes there’s gonna be a chance to yell HOSANNA as loud as you can. So, am I right? If we were playing by the same rules as you do when you play “HORSE” folks without all their letters would miss out, right?

SAY: Well, there’s a problem with that. And the problem is that Jesus didn’t go by the “HORSE” rules. If he had, he would have ridden into Jerusalem on one. Instead, he rode in on what? Right ... a donkey! And why did he do that? Right! Because he was not there to be a warrior king. He was a different kind of Messiah, he did things God’s way. The other problem is with the word “HOSANNA.” What does that mean again? Right ... save us now! Did Jesus come just to save some special people? NO! He came to save us, to be the king of our hearts and our lives. He came for everyone! When we yell “HOSANNA!” we’re yelling “SAVE US NOW!” And we know better than the people did who first yelled “Hosanna” at Jesus. We know the reason he came and what he came to do. So when we yell “HOSANNA!” it needs to be for a different reason than those people did. So, what to do you think I should do?

Allow some time for discussion. Hopefully, the children will come up with the solution on their own. Either way, SAY: I want to play by Jesus' rules. Jesus came to save us from our sins. When we sin it's kind of like missing a free throw ... we miss the mark, don't do something we should do, or do something we shouldn't. I am going to give back all the letters to anyone who lost them, because Jesus wants anyone who wants to know him to be able to yell "HOSANNA! SAVE US NOW!".

Give out the letters. Then invite any and all children who want to cry out to Jesus to join you in a circle and yell out "HOSANNA" three times. Then as a group yell out the memory verse. Close with "Praise Him!" or another praise song or a prayer.

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### GAME QUESTIONS

Name the 4 Gospels

[Matthew, Mark, Luke, John]

What did Jesus use to ride into Jerusalem?

- A) A horse
- B) An Easter parade float
- C) A bicycle
- D) A donkey \*

According to most of the Gospels, who got the donkey for Jesus to ride?

- A) Jesus
- B) 2 of the disciples
- C) Judas
- D) The donkey's owner \*

What did the disciples do once they brought the donkey to Jesus?

- A) Took a nap
- B) The chicken dance
- C) Ate dinner
- D) Put their cloaks on it \*

What did Jesus tell the disciples to say if anyone asked why they were taking the donkey?

- A) "None of your business"
- B) "The Lord needs it" \*
- C) Nothing
- D) "Why? Is it yours?"

Where did Jesus tell the disciples to look for the donkey?

- A) Just inside the village \*
- B) Along the side of the road
- C) At the stable
- D) He didn't say

Why did Jesus ride into Jerusalem on a donkey?

- A) That's all that was available

- B) He was afraid of horses
- C) To fulfill prophecy \*
- D) As a sign of power

Which Old Testament prophet wrote about a king riding on a donkey?

- A) Isaiah
- B) Daniel
- C) Jeremiah
- D) Zechariah \*

What does “Hosanna” mean?

- A) Save us now!
- B) Praises
- C) You the dawg!
- D) Welcome

Why were Jesus and the disciples going to Jerusalem?

- A) To see a man about a horse
- B) For Passover \*
- C) For Easter
- D) To visit Peter’s mother

What did the crowd do when they saw Jesus coming into Jerusalem?

- A) Spread out their cloaks
- B) Cut branches from the trees and put them on the road
- C) Shouted “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”
- D) All of the above \*

Why were there so many people in Jerusalem?

- A) They lived there
- B) To see Jesus
- C) For Passover \*
- D) It was time to harvest the palms

Why did the crowd come out to welcome Jesus?

- A) They thought he was going to save them from the Romans \*
- B) They knew he had come to save them from their sins
- C) They welcomed all visitors
- D) They wanted his donkey

Say the memory verse

This story is the reason we celebrate:

- A) Easter
- B) Palm Sunday \*
- C) Pentecost
- D) Passover

Palm Sunday is the first day of the week we call:

- A) Easter
- B) Holy Week \*
- C) Pentecost
- D) Passover

What do we sometimes use in worship on Palm Sunday to help us remember this story?

- A) Easter eggs
- B) Scarves
- C) Palms \*
- D) Donkeys

Palm Sunday always comes a week before:

- A) Christmas
- B) Passover
- C) Pentecost
- D) Easter \*

What kind of king was Jesus?

- A) A warrior, like King David
- B) One like most of the other kings of Israel
- C) A wise and rich one like King Solomon
- D) A totally different kind, a humble servant \*

A Jesus kind of king would:

- A) Kill lots of people in battle
- B) Wash his friend's dirty feet \*
- C) Make a lot of laws to rule over people
- D) Have a lot of money

If you could be somebody in the story who would you be and why?

Spell HOSANNA

The people in Jesus' day wanted someone to save them from the Romans. Name something people today want to be saved from.

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