

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

## What's on

**Monday** 14th April: Mentoring training

**Wednesday** 16 April, 8 PM - "Seed to Harvest" - outreach equipping series fifth Zoom session

**Sunday** 20 April: 10:30 AM. Easter Sunday. Danny speaking.

**Monday** 26th May: Mentoring training

**Sunday** 08 June: 10:30 AM. International Service

**Sunday** 06 July: Outdoor service hosted by the Thames Valley churches of Christ

**Monday** 7th July: Mentoring training

**Sunday** 20 July: 10:30 AM. Dr Rolan Monje is our visiting speaker from the Manila ICOC.

**Monday** 1st September: Mentoring training

3-5 October: Young Professional's retreat



## Palm Sunday

We celebrate Palm Sunday today. It is one of only a few incidents recorded in all four gospels (Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19 and John 12).

*"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you." (Luke 19:38-44)*

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## Comment

What do we learning from Jesus? What do we learn about prayer?

1. Jesus is not overly impressed with the praise of the crowd. It is appropriate that he is honoured, but it does not puff up his ego. He is still capable of feeling compassion for the people who would soon suffer.

2. Even though Jesus is experiencing some deeply troubling feelings about the fate of Jerusalem, he does not dismiss the praise. He allows the crowd to rejoice and he participates in it.

3. Jesus can see what is coming, and does not argue against God's judgement, but he takes no pleasure in that judgement.

4. Jesus does not care how he looks to others. He is authentic. He is not embarrassed to weep in front of his followers, the crowd or his opponents. Others have wept in the gospel (widow of Nain, Jairus' family & others), now it is his turn.

## Perspective

Sadness is temporary. *"For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning."* (Psalm 30:5 NIV11). The length of the 'temporary' time might be longer than we would like, but, at some point, it will end. This is why we are able to *"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV11). Not because the cause of the sorrow is over, but because it will, one day, by faith, be over.

Ultimately, it is the cross and the resurrection which convince us that it is possible to praise *and*

to weep. Let me offer you two quotes from the book, 'Evoking Lament' by Harasta and Brock.

*'The cross reveals that lament has been included into God's relational reality; the resurrection reveals that praise has been included in God's relational reality, and that it is included not as a triumph over lament, but as its equal counterpart....Any notion of prayer that excludes praise ignores the glory of God and the possibilities for happiness in the world; a notion of prayer that excludes lament disregards the unredeemed state of the world, the judgement of God, and his despair about the world. A triumph of praise over lament obscures God's capacity to suffer and his acts of judgment. A triumph of lament over praise turns lament into embittered blasphemy.'*

### Applications

- Pray with empathy and compassion
- Intercede in prayer
- Hold praise and lament together in prayer

### Conclusion

The incident of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem can inspire us to pray with greater empathy, compassion and intercession. It reminds us of the power of prayer and the importance of seeking God's heart for the needs of others.

Two final questions for this week:

1. What comes more easily? Praise or lament?
2. What value is there for you in lamenting in prayer?
3. What will help you connect with the conviction and compassion of Jesus for those who opposed him?

God bless, Malcolm

## Outreach equipping class with special guest speaker James Thomas

For those who do not know him, James has been a friend of mine since the mid-90s. I greatly respect his devotion to learning and teaching Biblical truth. He took Douglas Jacoby's Apologetics unit at the Rocky Mountain School

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of Ministry and taught an outreach class on Worldviews in Glasgow last year. Apologetics is something of a specialism of his.



James, Paul Smith with me in Perga last year (Acts 13.13-14)

He lives in South London, is an accomplished athlete (recently completing the Tokyo marathon in around 3 1/2 hours), and an architect with one of the most significant practices in the country. He has designed buildings as diverse as nuclear power stations and opera houses.

I'm sure we will find his presentation valuable in equipping us for outreach in today's world. Feel free to invite any of your friends.

**Details:** 8 PM 16 April. <https://zoom.us/j/96127609552?pwd=5vV4SZw2aMhccTxzedJEYvavjIH7GX.1>

Meeting ID: 961 2760 9552. Passcode: 159028

## Good News! God Cares!

Last Sunday, we explored ways God might be leading us to express God's love and power to the people near us. Have you heard from God? Has he stirred your spirit? If so, please share it.

## Watford Contribution Details

**Church bank account:** Three Counties churches of Christ HSBC

**Sort Code:** 401915

**Account Number:** 04759613

## Watford Media



The Three Counties Churches of Christ