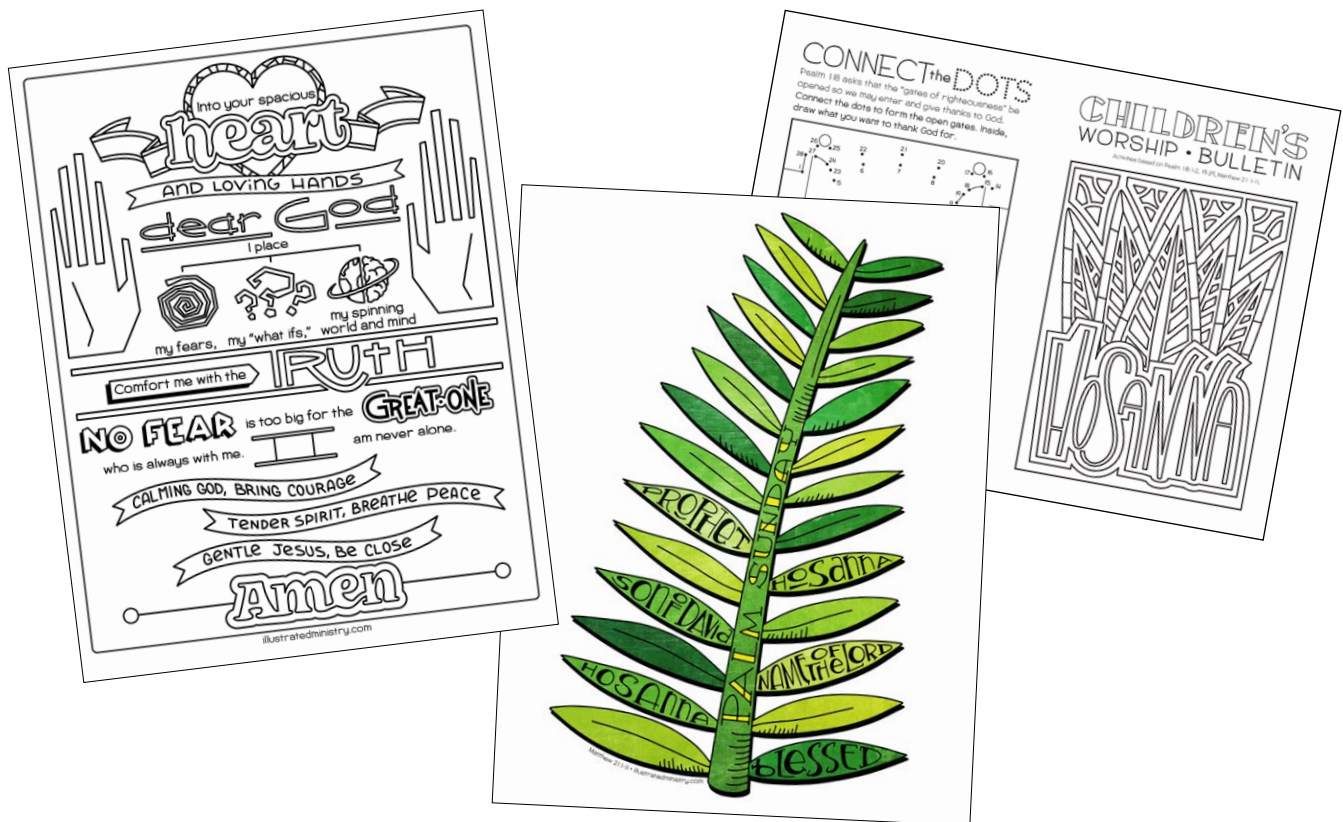


# Faith Formation Resources for Palm Sunday





Resources provided by Illustrated Ministry, LLC. [illustratedministry.com](http://illustratedministry.com)

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Unless otherwise noted, scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

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## RESOURCES FROM ILLUSTRATED MINISTRY

As the world struggles to adjust to life amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, necessary disruptions are affecting all aspects of our lives. Schools are closing, places of worship are canceling services, sports seasons are being suspended, and we are all adjusting to this new way of life. Illustrated Ministry hopes that these faith formation resources are meaningful and helpful to you.

We will be sending a weekly email during the COVID-19 pandemic which will include faith formation resources for all ages. We will be following the Revised Common Lectionary, and most of the resources will line up with the appropriate texts for each of the Sundays. If this resource was forwarded to you, and you would like to sign up to receive the weekly email in your inbox, you can sign up at: **[illustratedministry.com/flattenthecurve](https://illustratedministry.com/flattenthecurve)**

The weekly resource consists of a variety of resources, including children's worship bulletins, devotionals, and coloring pages. There are a variety of different ways you could use these resources at home:

- As a family, put together an order of worship. You can use this as an interactive piece to the scripture reading and message/sermon.
- Use this as an individual or family devotional to reflect on throughout the week.
- Get a group of friends together, virtually, and color the coloring page and reflect on the scripture passage.
- While you watch your church's virtual worship service, your children can color the coloring page or do the activities in the children's worship bulletin.

We hope you enjoy this resource, and if you have any questions about it, you can always reach us at [info@illustratedministry.com](mailto:info@illustratedministry.com). If you want to connect with others and see how they are using our resources, you can also follow us on social media:

Facebook: **[fb.com/illustratedmin](https://fb.com/illustratedmin)**  
Instagram: **[instagram.com/illustratedmin](https://instagram.com/illustratedmin)**  
Twitter: **[twitter.com/illustratedmin](https://twitter.com/illustratedmin)**  
Pinterest: **[pinterest.com/illustratedmin](https://pinterest.com/illustratedmin)**

Our Facebook Group is a growing community. If you're looking for ideas and suggestions for using this resource, you can request to join here:  
**[fb.com/groups/illustratedmin](https://fb.com/groups/illustratedmin)**

Peace,

The Illustrated Ministry Team

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# PALM SUNDAY - APRIL 5

**Describe an event, holiday, or day you remember or commemorate (have a ceremony for) and why it's meaningful for you to acknowledge/celebrate/honor it every year.**

*Note: If you are with a group, have each person take a turn sharing.*

## **Scripture Reading: Matthew 21:1-11**

*When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,*

*"Tell the daughter of Zion,  
Look, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

*The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,*

*"Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"*

*When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."*

## **Reflection**

On Palm Sunday, we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. His teachings have spread, and his following has grown. As he rides into the city, people greet him with cheers and fanfare. There is a sense of joy, relief, and hope among the people. Jesus brings good news for the hurting, sick, impoverished, outcasts, and all who are oppressed by people in power. All along his path, the people wave palm fronds and shout, "Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!" in celebration of his arrival.

This parade is also an act of rebellion. Jesus has already frustrated the people in power. His procession only angers them more. After this day of rejoicing, things change quickly. Jesus' message about God's kingdom uplifting the powerless made people who held lots of power feel threatened. Jesus knows hard things lie ahead during Holy Week, but for his followers, it was a sudden and unsettling shift. In a matter of days, Jesus' world and that of his followers turned completely upside down. He went from being cheered to jeered at by the people, from being supported to betrayed.

Jesus tried to prepare his friends for what was coming while they had one last meal together, and he washed their feet; it was very hard for them to believe it. Jesus was abandoned by his closest friends, perhaps because they were terrified of what would happen to them for their connection to Jesus. Joy, relief, and hope were replaced by fear, loneliness, isolation, worry, and uncertainty about the future.

We know something about the world suddenly changing right now because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are experiencing a significant shift - a shift from joy and community to fear and uncertainty and loneliness. As we go through Holy Week, we remember how Jesus and all who loved him experienced fear, loneliness, pain, and even death. Maybe it feels a little overwhelming to enter into the heaviness of Holy Week when there are already so many hard things happening all around us.

**But there is also good news in Holy Week.**

It reminds us Jesus has felt what we feel, and he is with us even when we feel scared and alone. In Jesus, we see the promise that no matter how hard things get, even in the face of death itself, there is still the promise of resurrection, of new life. Every year we celebrate Holy Week to remember that in ordinary times and in the most challenging times, God is present with us and at work creating new life.

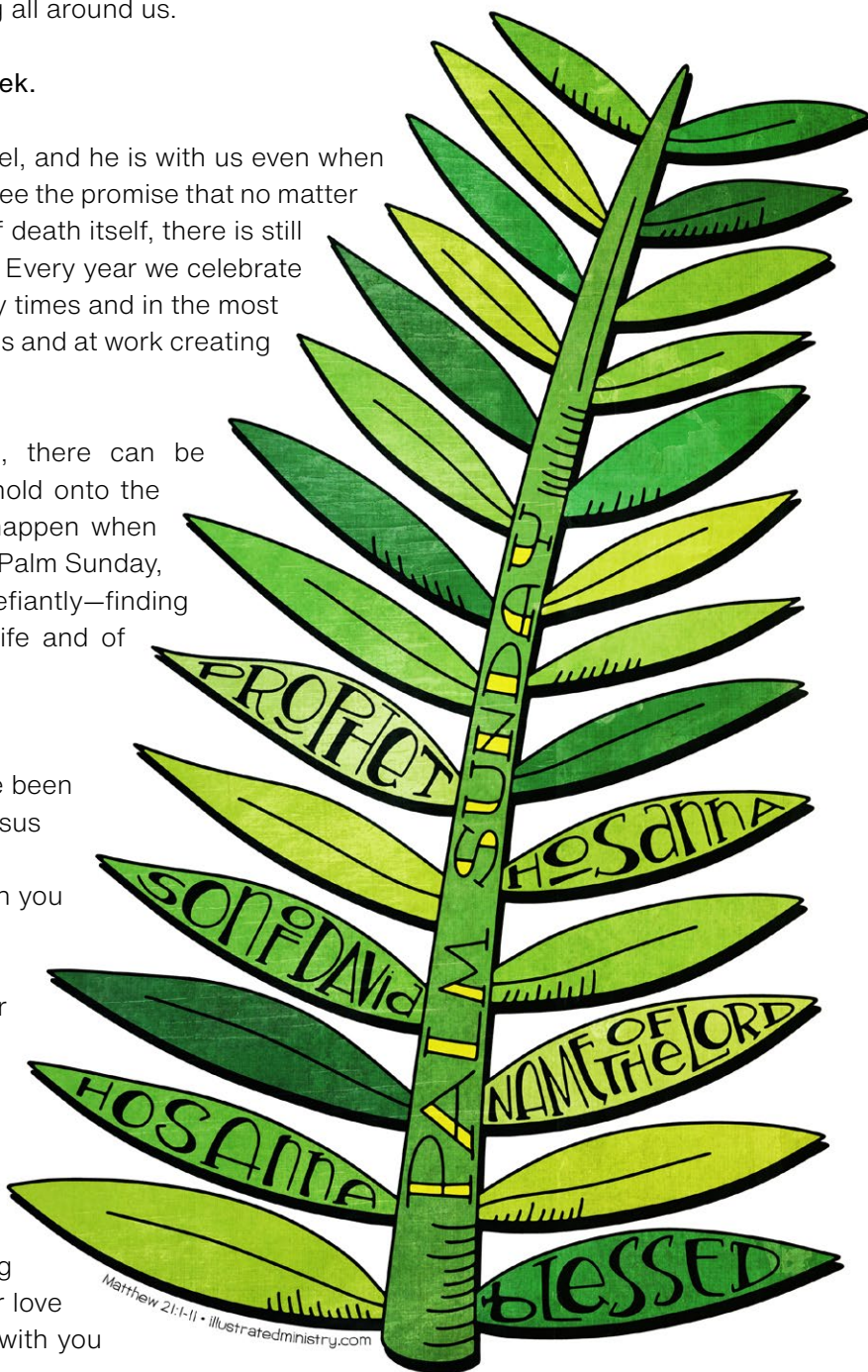
Things may look different afterward, there can be real loss, grief, and hardship, but we hold onto the promise of resurrection: new life will happen when the hard times have passed. So on this Palm Sunday, wherever we are, we wave our palms defiantly—finding joy and hope in the promise of new life and of Jesus with us.

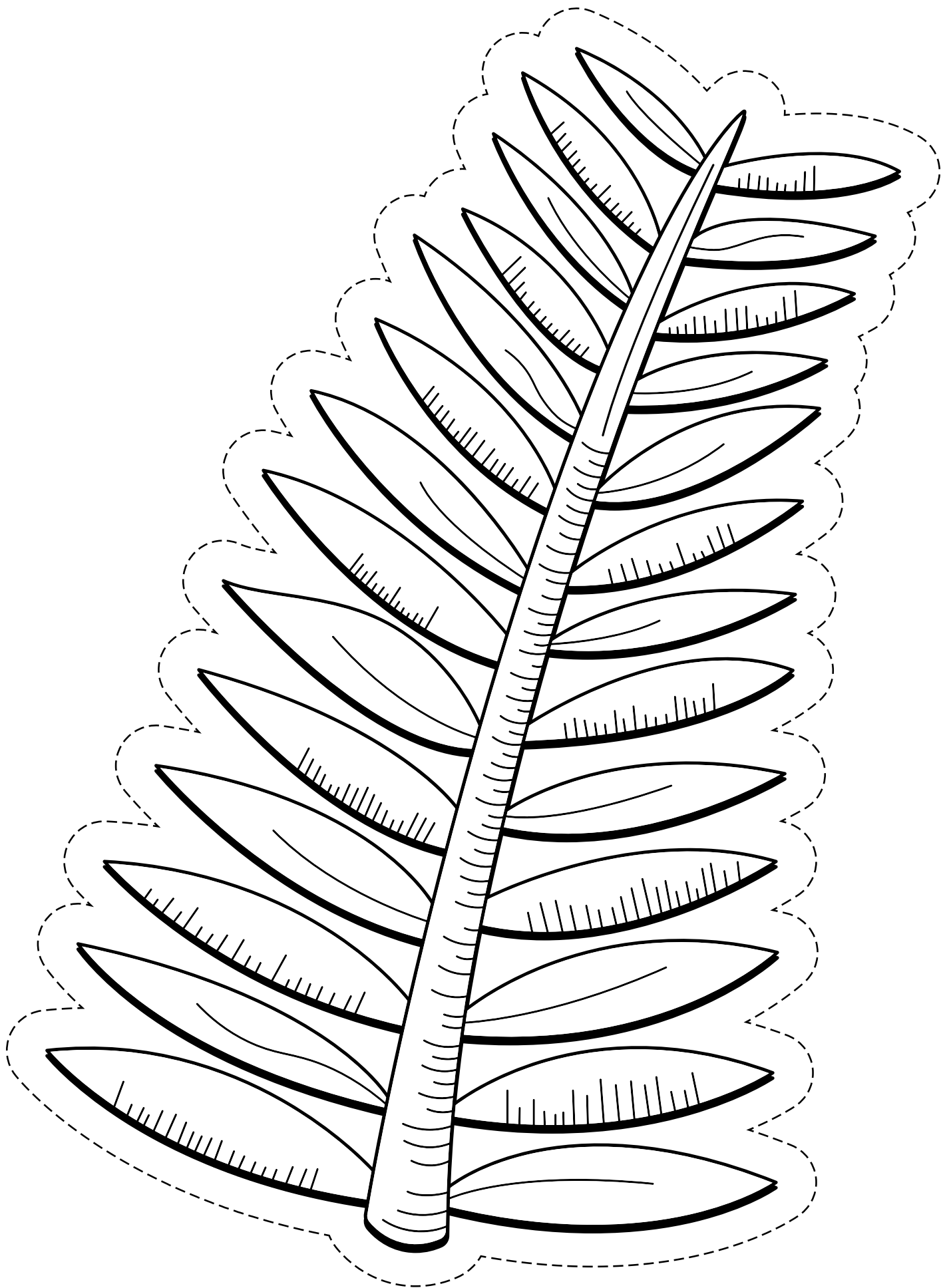
### Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it would have been like to be in Jerusalem when Jesus came into the city?
2. What helps you have hope when you face a difficult situation?
3. What stories do you remember when you feel worried, afraid, or uncertainty about the future?
4. What good news do you see right now?

### Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us so much and for coming to live among us in the world. Help us remember your love and the hope you bring as we journey with you during Holy Week. **Amen.**





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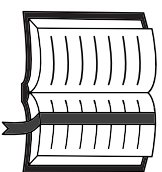
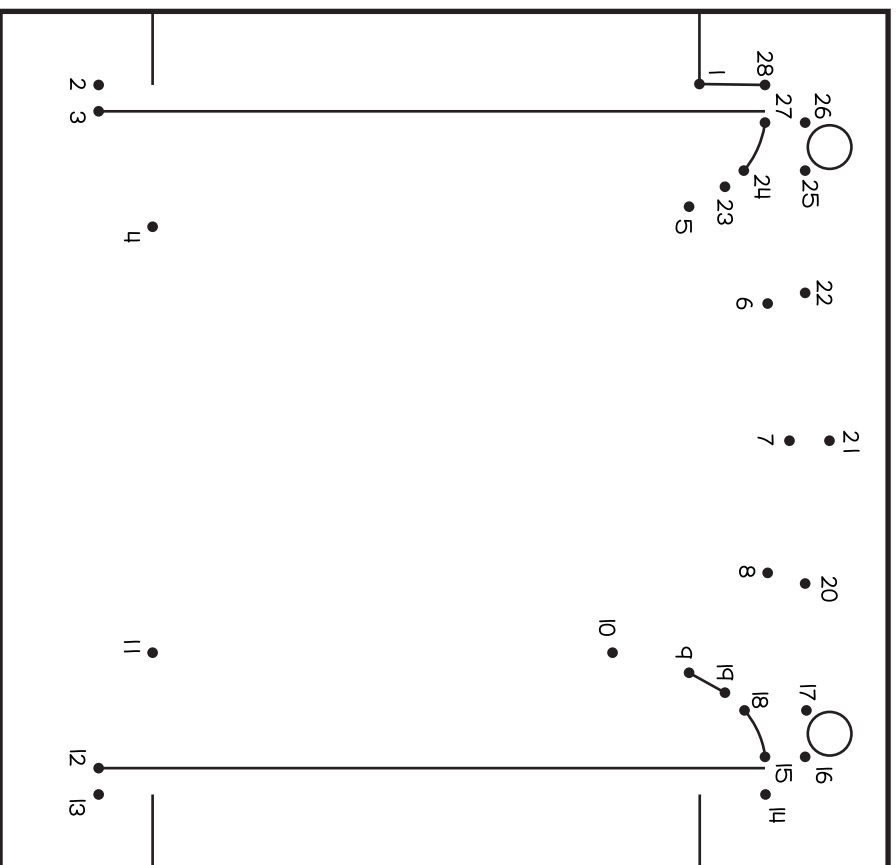
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# CONNECT the DOTS

Psalm 118 asks that the “gates of righteousness” be opened so we may enter and give thanks to God.

Connect the dots to form the open gates. Inside, draw what you want to thank God for.



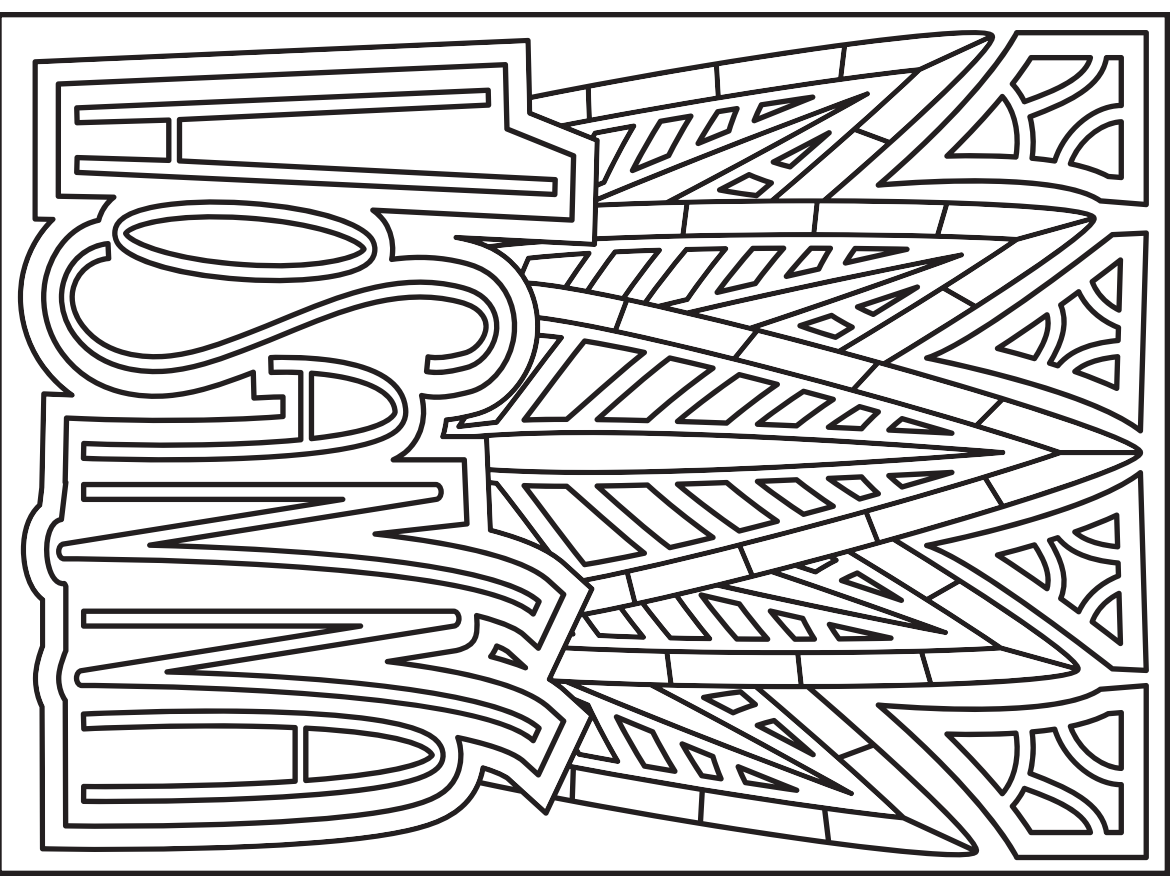
illustrated  
—MINISTRY—

Suggested for use on Psalm Sunday based on the RCL.

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# CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, Matthew 21:1-11.



# WORD SEARCH

Try to find the words from Matthew 21 in the word search below. Words may go diagonal, up OR down and forward OR backward.

R G H Y N O H I N T U D L K Z  
W V W W H C T C N N L W R S N  
J E S U S K L U N R G O C C E B  
M A C S M W O O M A P R W L M  
R Q O H O M F E T D R C C P L  
E T L O C S L F I H B B H I A  
T H A U D A P V P L E O V C P  
N P S T S G A R E Y S S G S K  
E B Z U E D D S O A D O R I D  
L C R I H T S R N P Z B Q D R  
V E T Q E I X N Z I H X N O O  
J N A W N I A D R C V E P S L  
U V D G W G J Q L B G I T O V  
D Y E Y O R M T V A C D Y V G  
S I D O N K E Y W X N H R T S

JERUSALEM	LORD	PALM
MOUNT	PROPHET	BRANCH
ENTER	DISCIPLES	HOSANNA
UNTIE	COLT	BLESSING
DONKEY	CLOTHES	SHOUT
JESUS	CROWD	DAVID



# DRAW IT

Imagine you are with the crowds as Jesus rides into town on a donkey. What does Jesus look like? What would you want to shout as you praise Jesus and your love for him?

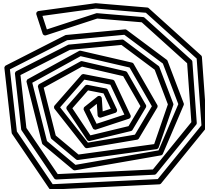
Into your spacious

heart

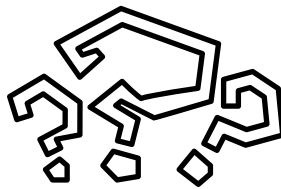
AND LOVING HANDS

dear God

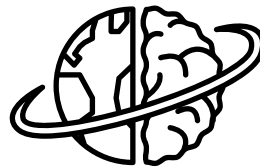
I place



my fears,



my "what ifs,"



my spinning  
world and mind

Comfort me with the

TRUTH

NO FEAR

is too big for the

GREAT ONE

who is always with me.

am never alone.

CALMING GOD, BRING COURAGE

TENDER SPIRIT, BREATHE PEACE

GENTLE JESUS, BE CLOSE

Amen



## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**ARIANNE BRAITHWAITE LEHN** is a mother, one half of a clergy couple, writer, and ordained minister with the Presbyterian Church (USA). As a South Dakota native, Arianne originally planned on Law School until God called her to Taiwan where everything changed. She later graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary (Chicago). She and her family live in Wilmette, Illinois. Arianne is the author of *Ash and Starlight: Prayers for the Chaos and Grace of Daily Life*. You can connect with Arianne and her writing at her website [ariannebraithwaitelehn.com](http://ariannebraithwaitelehn.com).

**CORBY ORTMANN** is a digital illustrator and animator, whose work includes caricatures, graphic design, children's books, and animated commercials/music videos. He currently lives in Fargo, North Dakota with his wife and daughter, who help him to step away from the art table every so often. You can find more of his work at [www.corbyortmann.com](http://www.corbyortmann.com).

**LAYTON WILLIAMS** is a Presbyterian Church (USA) minister and a writer based in Charleston, SC. She serves as the Director of New Dawn Ministries at Sunrise Church on Sullivan's Island, and she is the author of *Holy Disunity: How What Separates Us Can Save Us*. She received her M.Div from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and previously served on staff at Sojourners in D.C. and Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Prior to ministry, Layton worked as a nonprofit educator for middle and high school students.

## ABOUT THE EDITOR

**REBEKAH LOWE**, a local of Kansas City, Southern California, and Austin, Texas, earned a B.A. in Biblical Studies with a minor in Leadership Studies and a minor in Hebrew at Azusa Pacific University and served as the Director of Children's Ministry at Brentwood Presbyterian Church (USA) in Los Angeles, California, for over five years. She resides in Austin, Texas with her husband and their two daughters.

## ABOUT ILLUSTRATED MINISTRY'S FOUNDER + CEO

**ADAM WALKER CLEVELAND** is an artist, pastor, pastor's spouse, and father of four (two living). Adam is an ordained Teaching Elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and after doing youth ministry for over 15 years, he founded Illustrated Ministry, LLC. He resides in Racine, Wisconsin with his wife and children.