



Palm Sunday

Welcome to this third edition of 'Together, Apart', intergenerational resources to help us be church together while we're keeping each other safe.

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you. You can use the resources on-line or print whichever pages of the PDF you need.

You can find lots more free resources like this at www.reflectionary.org

Here is what you will find in each week's post:



A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage.



Inner Space

A blank space for you to record your thoughts.



Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world.



Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



Creation Station

A craft activity for children (or silly adults!)



Outside In

Suggestions for activities throughout the week that link with the Bible passage.



High 5

Suggestions for how to spend time with God.



A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this passage from The Bible. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

Matthew, chapter 21, verses 8-11

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.”

(NRSV)



Food for Thought

Palm Sunday – it's a familiar story, with Jesus on the donkey and the people waving palms. But have you ever wondered why it happened?

This was not any special day in the Jewish calendar. Jesus was just making his way to Jerusalem for Passover, same as loads of other people. And he'd been around for three years now, so why did they choose today to give him the red carpet treatment?

Q: Why do you think Jesus suddenly 'went viral' on Palm Sunday?

We can get a glimpse into the thoughts of the crowd by reading the Old Testament passages that would have been running through their minds. Their shouts of praise are straight out of Psalm 118, a popular hymn for Passover, particularly verse 25 ('Save us, please!') which in Hebrew is pronounced 'Hosanna'.

It's worth having a look at the rest of Psalm 118. There are many different situations and emotions described.

Q: What phrases from Psalm 118 have you heard quoted in other places? Which verses describe how you are feeling today?

The other Old Testament passage that would have leapt out at the crowd is Zechariah 9:9, quoted by Matthew earlier in chapter 21. It tells of a king coming to Jerusalem, but who is the king?

For the crowds, the obvious king would have been David. He entered Jerusalem in triumph after defeating his enemies in 2 Samuel 19. But in Zechariah, just before the quote, God says he is camping at his temple to protect it, so is the coming king God himself?

In verse 10 God distinguishes between what he (God) will do and what he (the king) will do, so perhaps this is a new King, like David, who acts on God's behalf, one coming 'in the name of the Lord'.

Q: Why do you think Jesus chose to enter Jerusalem like he did?

As Christians, living on the far side of Easter, we see Jesus in these verses. As we look further on in Zechariah 9, we find more references to his life, death and saving work.

Not all of the crowd welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. Not all who saw him recognised him.

Q: What is the responsibility of those who recognise the king coming to rule?



Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?



Looking Closer

Follow this link for printable [Puzzle Pages for Palm Sunday and Holy Week](#).

This is a rather strange story – riding a donkey? People waving tree branches? And what's with 'Hosanna'? And who is this 'Son of David'?

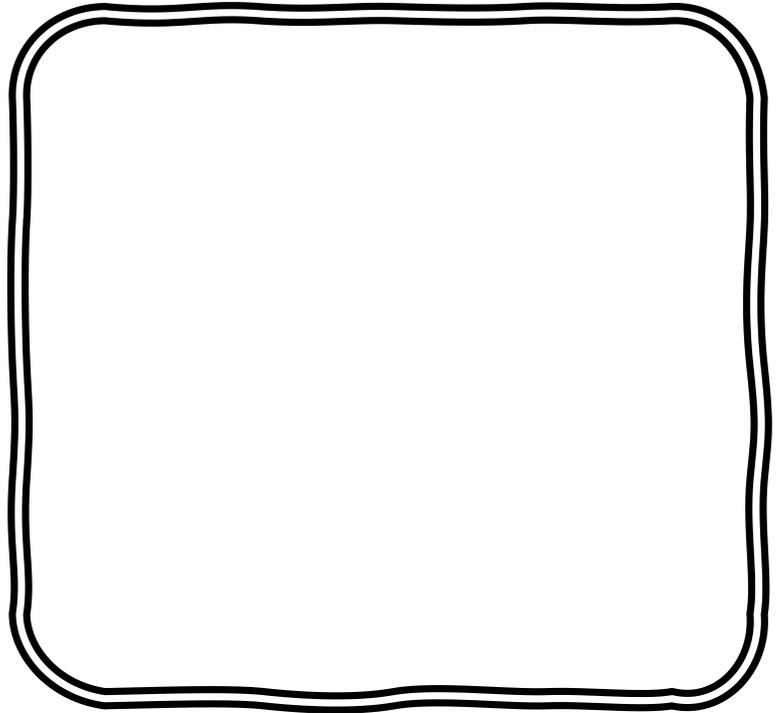
What on earth is going on?

OK, easy one first. Hosanna means 'Save us please!', but people also used it for 'Hooray!'

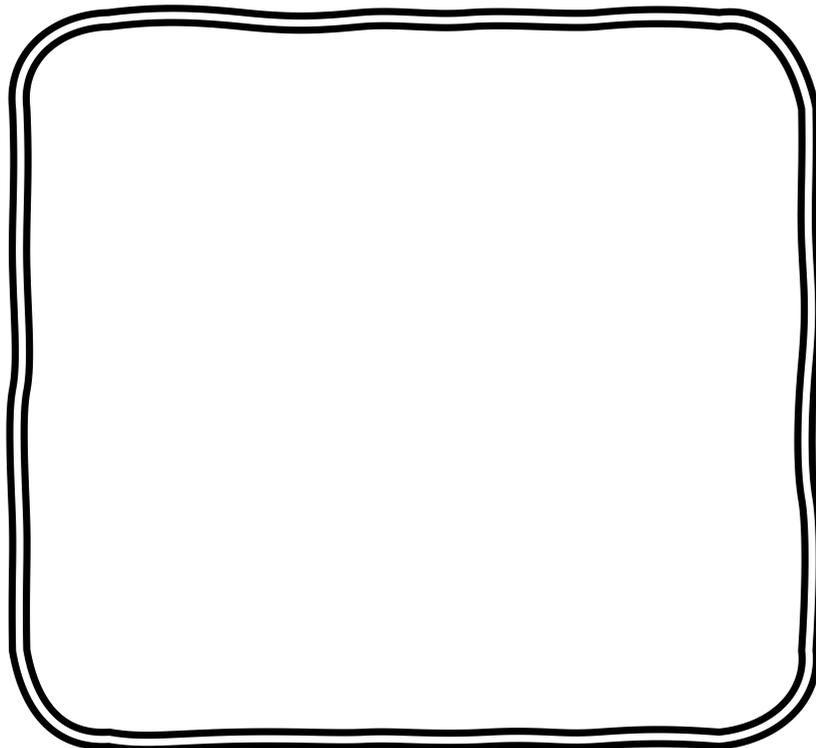
I wonder what the people thought Jesus would save them from. What do you think?

John's version of this event tells us they were palm branches, that's why we call it 'Palm Sunday'. It was their version of waving little flags on sticks when the Queen goes by.

Draw some leafy palm branches here. Write on them what you would be shouting if you were in the crowd.



But queens and kings don't ride on donkeys! They ride in posh cars or golden carriages, or at least on a fine war-horse. So why did Jesus choose a donkey?



I'm glad you asked. It comes from Zechariah 9:9 in the Old Testament, and Matthew helpfully quotes it a little earlier in chapter 21. Read it now. (Zion is another name for Jerusalem.)

Jesus knew his Bible well, and so did the people in the crowd. Does that give you a clue about why everyone was so excited?

Why do you think they called Jesus 'Son of David'?

What kind of king do you think Jesus is?

Draw a crown shape then fill it with words to describe Jesus.



I Wonder...

Try to picture yourself in the story.

Where are you? What can you see, hear, smell, feel?

I wonder where you are in this story. Can you draw yourself in the story?

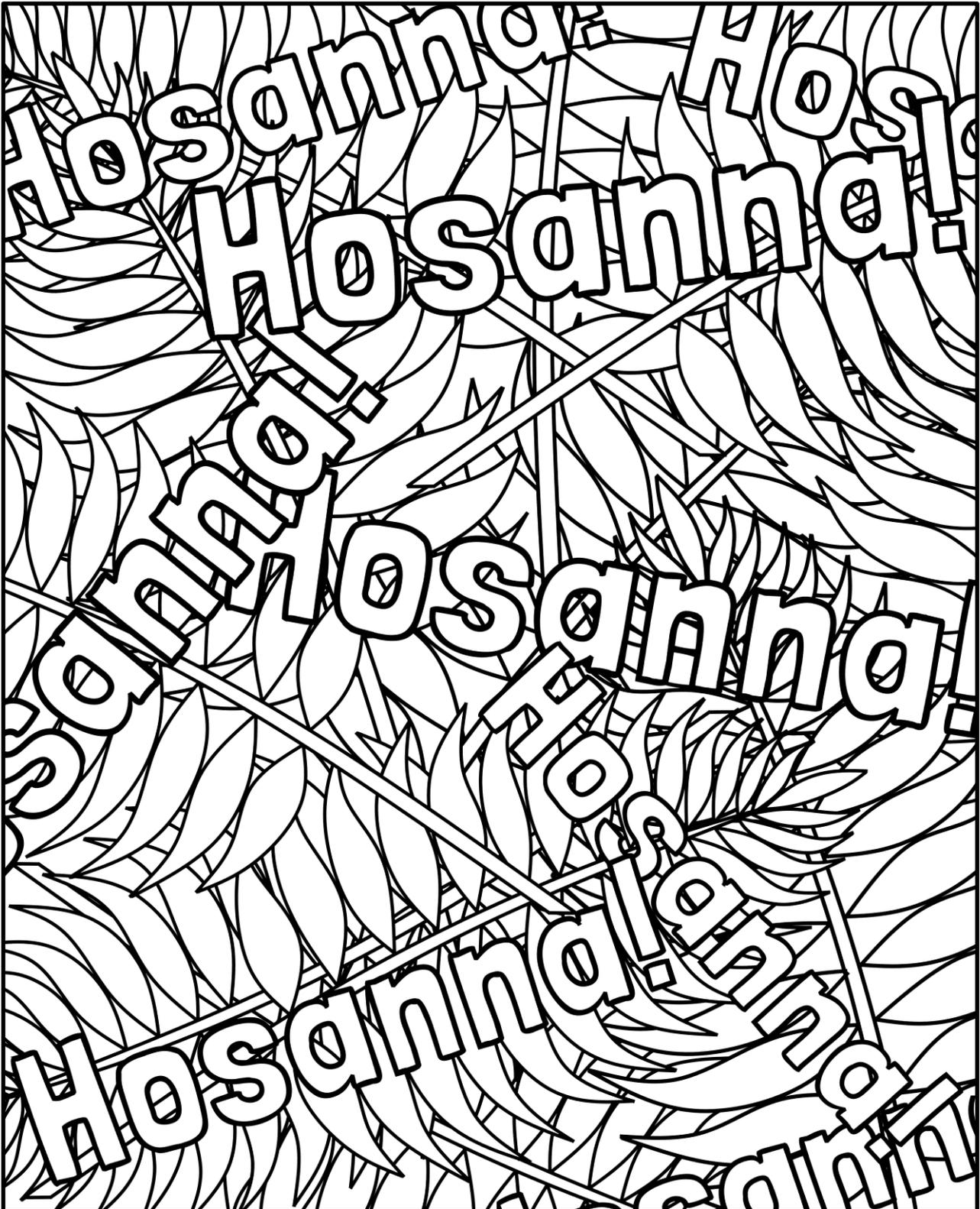
I wonder what your favourite part of this story is. Write or draw it here.



Take a Break

Put on some music, or listen to the passage being read out while you simply sit and be. You can colour the picture below, or fill it with zentangles, or you can just spend the time breathing.

Matthew 21 on Bible Gateway audio [ESV](#) – [Message](#) – [NIV \(Dramatised\)](#) – [NIV \(Suchet\)](#)





Creation Station

This week, we can make our own palm crosses – what's that? You don't have a palm tree? No problem!

You can find step-by-step photos at The Reflectionary, [[click here for photos](#)] or [[click here for a video](#)]. Younger children can simply cut the paper into strips and glue them into crosses.

You will need:

- Paper in white or green
- Felt-tip pens in shades of green, brown and yellow
- Damp sponge
- Scissors

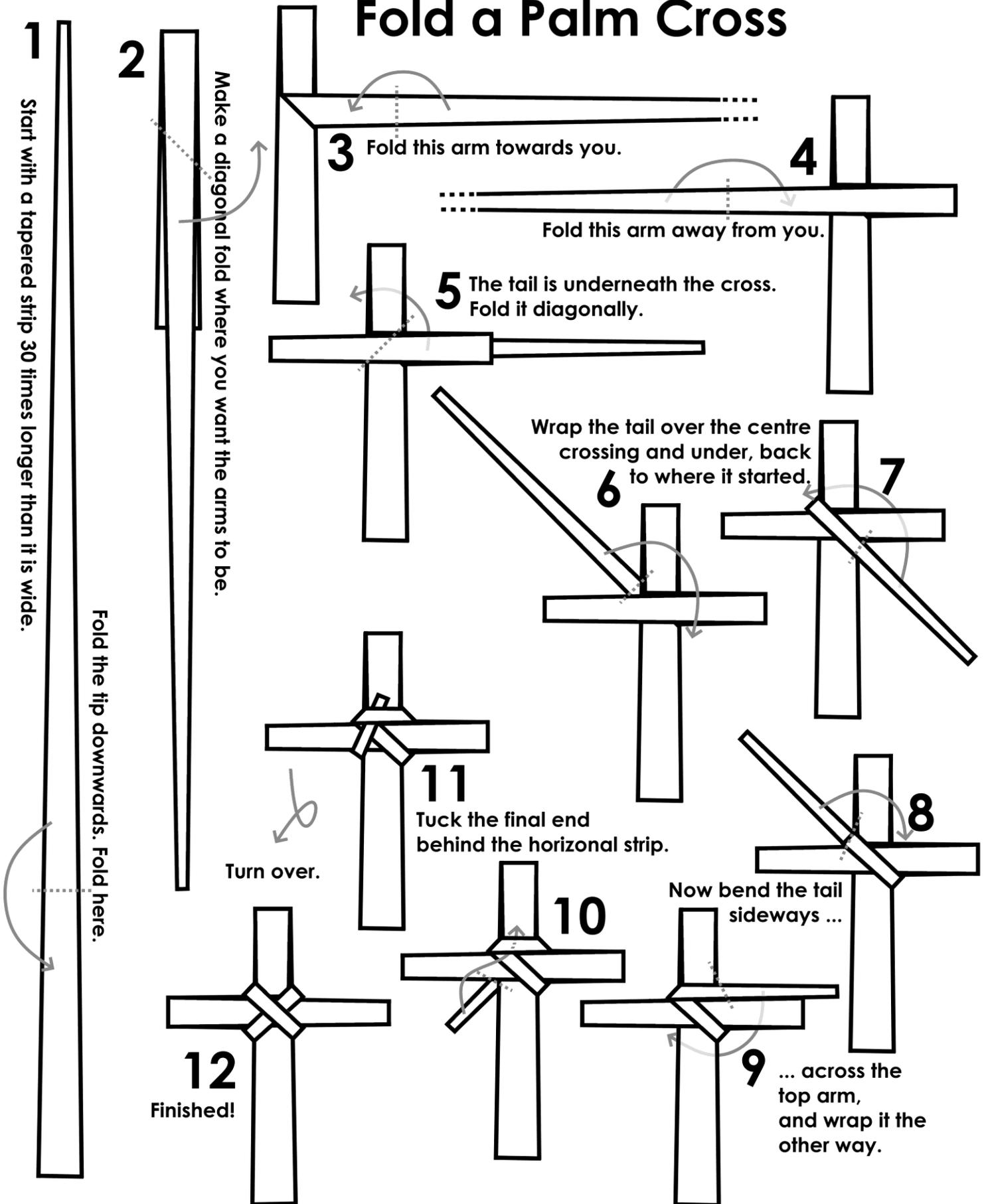
What to do:

1. Draw close lines from top to bottom of your paper in shades of green, brown and yellow. Each cross only takes a very narrow strip, so you do not need to fill the sheet.
2. Wipe the damp sponge along the lines to smudge them and let the ink flow to the surrounding paper. The paper should now look like palm strips. Let it dry and then cut it into narrow tapered strips, at no more than 1cm at the base.
3. The crowd were shouting bits of Psalm 118. Choose your favourite verse from this psalm and write it on the back of the strip.

Now comes the folding. Use the diagrams on the next page or the photos linked above.

4. Start with the strip writing side up (this will be the back) and the broader end at the bottom. Make a fold $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way from the bottom, bringing the narrow end down. The fold marks the top of the cross. With A4 paper, it will be 7 or 8cm tall.
5. Next, make a 45° fold on the long end, level with where you want the arms to be. The long end will point sideways now.
6. Decide how wide you want the arms to be, and fold the long end over across the middle, with the 'palm' side showing. Then fold it under to the middle again. Make sure that the remaining tail is at least as long as the cross is tall.
7. Fold the tail back on itself at an angle, so that it lies between an arm and the main stem of the cross. Wrap it once around the crossing and back to the same corner.
8. Bring the tail over the main stem of the cross, horizontally. Then wrap it around the crossing the other way. If you look on the other side, there should be an X.
9. Finally, tuck the last bit of tail through the horizontal loop to secure it. Turn the cross over and you have finished!

Fold a Palm Cross





Outside In

Hosanna!

The crowds cheered and shouted, 'Hosanna!'. They forgot about their troubles and worries for a while and they celebrated good things.

It's good to get outdoors if you can do so safely, but be sure to follow physical distancing rules. If you can't get out, try bringing the outside in.

Here are some ideas for finding things that you can shout and cheer about.

- Get a tree branch and wave it around like you are someone in the crowd on Palm Sunday. You could even make a road of coats. Can you get an adult to be the donkey and have a ride like Jesus did? Shout and cheer!
- Have you been clapping and cheering our medical workers in your street? Get some pans and spoons, whistles and other things ready to make a big noise!
- If you can take your daily exercise near a big road, wave and shout 'Thank you!' to the lorry drivers as they pass. Count how many wave back to you or give you a toot.
- Put on some lively music and make up an exercise routine or dance based on all the people who help us. You could stack things like a supermarket worker, wipe things down like a cleaner in a hospital, or deliver food and medicine to people at home.
- Make a big heart in your garden out of scarves and gloves. Every time you put an item down, think of someone to say thank you to, and give them a big cheer.
- Dress up as a scientist helping to make medical equipment or a vaccine. Make a video or take a photo and put it on social media with a THANK YOU message.

What else can you think of?

My ideas:

Which will you do this week?



High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

Palm Prayers

Fill up the leaves on one side of this palm branch with people or things you want to thank God for. Fill up the other side with things you want to ask God for. If you like, you can colour the leaves green, then cut around the palm branch and wave it before God as a prayer.

