



# HE IS RISEN!

*Join us this Holy Week as we celebrate our risen Savior*



*Briarwood*  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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# HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONAL

## **PALM SUNDAY**

### **THE ROYAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM**

#### **MATTHEW 21:1-11**

Most of us are familiar with the events that took place on Palm Sunday when Christ made his royal entry into Jerusalem. Why is this day so significant? Israel had long awaited the Messiah, a king who they believed would come as a military leader to conquer all of their enemies. Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah King, but He looked very different from what Israel expected. On Palm Sunday, He came not mounted on a war horse, but mounted on a donkey, the symbol of peace. Palm Sunday is significant because Jesus was not only making His procession into the city of Jerusalem, but to the cross to take on the sin of His people! At the cross, He would make a way for man to have peace with God. He did not come to Jerusalem to conquer neighboring lands or people, but to conquer sin itself. This parade, this processional, is all about the King, who was also the unblemished Lamb who gave His life so that we may have life in Him.

Notice that Matthew describes the donkey as “a beast of burden.” Donkeys were used to carry both people and the weight of their cargo. Just as the donkey carried the weight of Christ into Jerusalem, remember that Christ carried the weight of your sin to the cross. He took on your burden of sin so that you may be free in Christ. All those who are in Christ proclaim “Hosanna (save us) in the Highest!”

Written by Rev. Jay Shaw

## **MONDAY**

### **THE CURSING OF THE FIG TREE**

#### **MATTHEW 21:18-19**

The cursing of the fig tree is an interesting story. Jesus was returning to the city of Jerusalem and became hungry. He saw a fig tree that was full of leaves. It gave the appearance of a fruitful tree but upon closer examination he found no fruit. What did Jesus do? He cursed the fig tree, and it withered immediately!

Many scholars and commentators agree that this was a picture of the Jewish church at the time in Jerusalem. It had all the appearances of a fruitful church with its temple, yearly feasts, daily services, the Old Testament Scriptures, and its sacrifices. These were just mere leaves of religion, but the Jewish church had no fruit. JC Ryle says, “It had no grace, no faith, no love, no humility, no spirituality, no real holiness, no willingness to receive the Messiah.” Jesus made it a withered fig tree that couldn’t even give the appearance of bearing fruit.

This Easter let us use this story to honestly examine our own lives. Are you bearing the fruit of the Spirit or have you been caught up in just keeping appearances? The fruit of the Spirit is the only sure evidence that we are in Christ. Let us see this story as a warning that causes us to repent and trust in the work of Christ alone.

Written by Rev. Max Bunn

***Pick up a copy of the full Holy Week Devotional this Sunday  
or view and download it online at [briarwood.org/easter](http://briarwood.org/easter).***

## FEATURED EVENTS

### **Palm Sunday — Holy Week 2024 | March 24 \***

Our Holy Week celebration begins with Palm Sunday as we remember Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Children ages K4–6th grade will have the opportunity to begin our morning worship services with a palm branch procession.

### **Maundy Thursday Communion Service — Holy Week 2024 | March 28 \***

Maundy Thursday is the night that the Passover was transformed and translated from the Old Covenant Meal to the New Covenant Lord's Supper. Join us at 7:00 p.m. for a service of remembrance and celebration with the sacrament of Communion.

### **Good Friday — Holy Week 2024 | March 29 \***

Join us at noon on Good Friday as we assemble for a Service of Reflection on the Cross with Bible readings and the singing of the great Atonement hymns.

### **Easter Sunday — Holy Week 2024 | March 31 \***

Resurrection Lord's Day we celebrate our risen Savior with a Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. and worship services at 8:00 and 10:55 a.m. Continue the celebration of worship Sunday evening with our Briarwood Music Staff and Professionals in Concert.

### **“Raising Up a Sexually Faithful Generation” — Parenting Conference | April 13 \***

This Harvest USA conference hosted here at Briarwood is designed to help give parents insight, practical help, and principles in raising children as they face the sexual confusion of our culture. Register at [briarwood.org/parentingconference](http://briarwood.org/parentingconference).

\* Nursery is available for select events upon reservation at [briarwood.org/nursery](http://briarwood.org/nursery).  
Stay up-to-date with upcoming events on the Briarwood App.

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## IN THE BRIARWOOD BOOKSTORE

### ***Poetry of Redemption: An Illustrated Treasury of Good Friday and Easter Poems* by Leland Ryken | Adult Book**

This beautiful anthology features readings on the events of Holy Week and our response. Through carefully selected poems, images, and insightful commentary, Ryken takes us on a spiritual and aesthetic journey into the agony and the ecstasy, the power and the paradox of Christ's betrayal, crucifixion, and resurrection. Ryken examines forty hymns, poems, and Scripture texts in a celebration of their artistry and meaning. Price: \$13.99

### ***The Donkey Who Carried a King* by R. C. Sproul | Children's Book**

*The Donkey Who Carried a King* offers a unique perspective on the events of Jesus' Passion Week and calls all believers, both young and old, to follow in the footsteps of the Suffering Servant for the glory of God. Jesus was willing to leave the glories of heaven to suffer and die in this world on our behalf, so we should serve Him with all our hearts. Price: \$15.00

Featured books are available to purchase online at [briarwood.org/bookstore](http://briarwood.org/bookstore).

# MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

**Easter Basket Donations** — Now until March 24. Daniel Cason Ministries needs Easter baskets to give to children at an evangelistic Easter event. Cellophane wrapped Easter baskets can be dropped off in the Women's Ministry Office A106.

**Communion Service** — The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated in the Maundy Thursday service on March 28. An alms offering for the Mercy Ministry will be received. Elements are gluten-free.

**Church and School Offices Closed** — Friday, March 29 in observance of Good Friday.

**Women Business Leaders Event** — Thursday, April 4 from 6:30–8:00 p.m. at The Caroline House. Join garden designer Molly Hendry as she shares “From Soil to Soul” with practical tips for cultivating fruit in our lives and gardens. Tickets \$10. Register at [bit.ly/fromsoiltosoul](https://bit.ly/fromsoiltosoul).

**Trailblazers Lunch** — Tuesday April 9 at 11:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Kathryn Lavallet Tortorici, author of *Two by Two—Conversations Between Friends Navigating Breast Cancer*, will be sharing. Tickets \$10 in the Bookstore and online at [Briarwood.org/trailblazers](https://Briarwood.org/trailblazers).

**Congregational Meeting** — April 14. A congregational meeting has been called by the Session following the evening service. The purpose of the meeting is to dissolve the call of Associate Pastor Dave Matthews. A reception will follow in the fellowship hall to express our love and appreciation to Dave and Betty for their 28 years of service and ministry.

**“The Art of Discipleship” MidWeek Class** — April 3, 10, 17, and 24 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Randy Pope will lead this MidWeek Series that will challenge you with the power of intentional relationships that lead to spiritual impact and Kingdom growth.

**Camp Briarwood Testimonies Needed** — Did Camp Briarwood change your life? Send us a 1–3 minute video sharing your experience. Be sure to end your video with the tagline “CAMP CHANGED MY LIFE!” Email video to [campbriarwoodlegacy@gmail.com](mailto:campbriarwoodlegacy@gmail.com).

**Summer Camp Employment** — Camp Briarwood 2024 counselor applications are now available at [campbriarwood.org](https://campbriarwood.org).

**VBS** — We need your help for this summer's VBS, June 3–7! If you are interested in volunteering, email Raleigh Macoy at [rmacoy@briarwood.org](mailto:rmacoy@briarwood.org). Child registration will open in April at [briarwood.org/vbs](https://briarwood.org/vbs).

**Faith Promise Pledges** — Turn in your Faith Promise card during a worship service, mail your card to Briarwood, email [faithpromise@briarwood.org](mailto:faithpromise@briarwood.org) with your commitment, or fill out the form at [briarwood.org/faithpromise](https://briarwood.org/faithpromise).

**Graduate Information Needed** — BYG and College graduating seniors, we want to recognize you! Please take a moment to fill out the form on the website. High school seniors go to [briarwood.org/seniors](https://briarwood.org/seniors). College seniors go to [briarwood.org/college](https://briarwood.org/college).

**Job Openings: Full-time & Part-time Staff** — There are a number of ministry positions open. See all employment and job openings at [briarwood.org/employment](https://briarwood.org/employment).

# WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

## **Monday, March 25 — Briarwood Prayer Focus**

Let us pray for those who do not believe in the resurrection, but continue to live in darkness. Prepare our hearts during this week of Holy Week as we renew our hearts and minds in focusing on Jesus' walk to the cross.

## **Tuesday, March 26 — Birmingham Prayer Focus**

Briarwood's Foster Care Ministry seeks to glorify God by providing the training, support and encouragement. Pray the Lord will call believers to see the need and minister to the children, parents and social workers engaged in the foster care system in our community. Pray for the Fostering Hope support group that meets once a month in Bride's Room.

## **Wednesday, March 27 — Missions Prayer Focus**

Pray for ministry partner, Nathan Newman, in Washington D.C. with Ministry to State. Nathan has been meeting with senior leaders in government to discuss the PCA's letter urging them to protect children from the harms of rejecting their biological sex. Pray that the results in each meeting would glorify God by extending the Kingdom. Pray over all individual lives through all areas of society and in all nations and cultures.

## **Thursday, March 28 — Global Ministry Partners**

Pray for Wayne and Amy Newsome with Mission to the World in Japan; Sashko and Anna Nezamutdinov with Mission to the World Poland; Gregg and Julie Nicholson with United World Mission in Thailand; and Bill and Cheryl Nikides with Reformed Evangelistic Fellowship serving Internationals.

## **Friday, March 29 — National Ministry Partners**

Pray for Jeff and Ann Nelson with Children's Bible Mission in Alabama; Doug and Pam Nuenke with Navigators in Colorado; Shane and Vickie O'Hara with Team 5:18 in Louisiana; Phil and Amy Pippenger with Crossroads in East Tennessee; and Christian Service Mission.

## **Saturday, March 30 — Briarwood Officers and Staff**

Pray for Briarwood elders Bill Brazeal, Gene Head Jr., Dale Sitton; deacons Sid Borland, Brent Gilbert, Steve Mace; and Shepherding Pastor Michael Wichlan and wife, Denise.

## **Sunday, March 31 — Church Family**

Pray for our hospitalized members Frank Barker III, Martha Dobnikar, Janice Hamil, Betsy Hayes, Kathy Lawrence, Lynn Thompson.

Lord Jesus Christ, I rejoice in Your glorious and triumphant victory over death on this Easter Sunday. We are grateful forever for the price You paid for our salvation. We can now come directly into Your presence and *cast all our anxieties upon You because You care for us* (I Peter 5:7).

*“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.*

*He is not here, for He has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where He lay.*

*Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and behold,*

*He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him. See, I have told you.”*

*So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy,*

*and ran to tell His disciples. Matthew 28:5-8*

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## THIS LORD'S DAY

### **Palm Sunday Morning Worship Services:**

“Jesus Moves Mountains”

Matthew 21:12–22

Dr. Dan Doriani

### **Palm Sunday Evening Worship:**

Join us for a Season of Prayer in preparation of Holy Week

Watch our live-stream on the Briarwood App, Facebook, YouTube or [briarwood.org](http://briarwood.org).

Watch or listen to previous sermons on the Briarwood App.