

Palm Sunday celebration

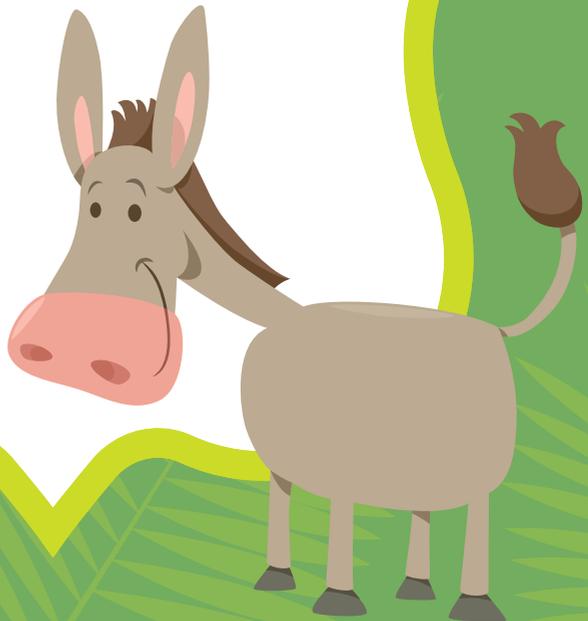
for toddlers



**This book
belongs to**

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Here comes Jesus on Palm Sunday!

Here are some ideas to help your toddler group celebrate Palm Sunday. Telling the story from the point of view of the little donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem will enable the children to “feel” all the noise and excitement of that day.

Ready:

Hang up some colourful bunting.

Make some simple palm leaves for the children to colour by cutting out big leaf shapes and snipping a few triangle shapes from the edges.

Bring a toy donkey for the story and coconut halves for sound effects!

You might like to ask your church leader to join you and to make the point that Jesus made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem at the start of the dramatic Easter week on the back of a little donkey, not a war-horse. Here was a gentle king who knew each and every one of his people.

(Your group might like to consider adopting a donkey from a sanctuary.)

Teddy:

You could bring Teddy dressed as a king with a crown and cloak (as a way of talking about Jesus being a king.) Or he could be holding a flag because he is waiting to wave it at someone very important. (In Jesus' day, palm leaves were waved to welcome important people.)

Go:

Your aim is to share the joy and excitement of Palm Sunday with your group and to show that Jesus is a king who cares for each one of us.

Storytelling tips:

Let the children use up some energy before the story by pretending to be little donkeys or horses walking, trotting and galloping around the room. Encourage them to practise using their hands for ears and moving them backwards (feeling worried) and forwards (feeling happy/curious). Swish tails (wriggle bottoms) and make a loud “hee-haw” sound!

The story: Here comes Jesus!

Leader:

A little donkey lived at Olive Tree Farm. Hee-haw!

All:

Hee-haw!

Leader:

He had a soft brown coat and long pointed ears that he could move backwards and forwards ... (*do "ear" action with hands each time.*) He often stood under the olive trees, dreaming of the day when he would be big enough to give someone a ride on his back. Who would that be, he wondered. And where would he take them?

One day, the little donkey heard voices. Who was that? He put his ears right forward ... Two men were coming through the gate. They had smiling faces and stripy cloaks.

"Hello, little donkey!" they said.
"We're going to untie you. Jesus our Master needs you!"

The little donkey wondered what was happening. He didn't belong to these men. Back went his ears ... Then he opened his mouth, and gave a very loud HEE-HAW!

All:

HEE-HAW!

Leader:

"Hey! Where are you taking my donkey?" called the farmer. "Jesus,

our Master, needs him," said the men. "But we'll bring him back soon!"

The farmer gave a big smile. "Then go on, little donkey! You'll be quite safe with Jesus!"

As he trotted along between the two men, his hooves made a funny sound on the road. *Clip-clop, clip-clop!* He put his ears forward again ... This was an adventure! What was going to happen next?

Soon they met some people talking and laughing at the roadside. The little donkey didn't know who they were. He stopped still. Back went his ears ... until they touched his fluffy mane. But a man with a kind smile came and whispered in his ears.

"Don't be afraid, little donkey. I'm your friend, Jesus. Will you help me? I want you to carry me all the way to Jerusalem."

The little donkey wasn't sure. He hadn't given anyone a ride before! But he stood quietly to let Jesus climb onto his back. Then they all set off along the road. *Clip-clop, clip-clop!*

Lots of people were standing at the side of the road, waiting to see them.

"Look who's coming!" they shouted. "It's Jesus, our gentle king, riding on a little donkey!" The little donkey twitched his ears ... He couldn't

believe it! Was he *really* carrying a king on his back?

"Hello, Jesus!" called a boy. "Thank you for making my sister better!"
"And please bless our family!" said a mum with her baby.

As they started to go down the steep hillside, Jesus' friends began to sing for joy and crowds of people waved their spiky palm leaves! *Shall we do that too? (Hand out any palm leaves.)*

Song:

(To the tune, *I hear thunder!*)

I hear Jesus, I hear Jesus,
Here he comes, hear he comes,
Clip-clop on his donkey, clip-clop on his donkey,
Wave your palms, wave your palms!

Repeat and then end with a shout:

All:

Hosanna! (*Both arms raised*)

Leader:

Now the road climbed up, up into the city of Jerusalem. But somehow the little donkey didn't feel tired. They walked under a big archway. *Clip-clop, clip-clop*, rang out the little donkey's hooves until someone laid a cloak on the road. How soft it felt under his feet.

"Here comes Jesus!" shouted all the people. "Hosanna! Welcome to our

gentle king!" The noise was so loud! But the little donkey kept his ears pointing forwards ... He didn't feel scared any more – just pleased and so proud to be carrying King Jesus on his back. Hee-haw!

All:

Hee-haw!

Prayer:

Ask a member of the group to read the prayer.

Dear King Jesus,

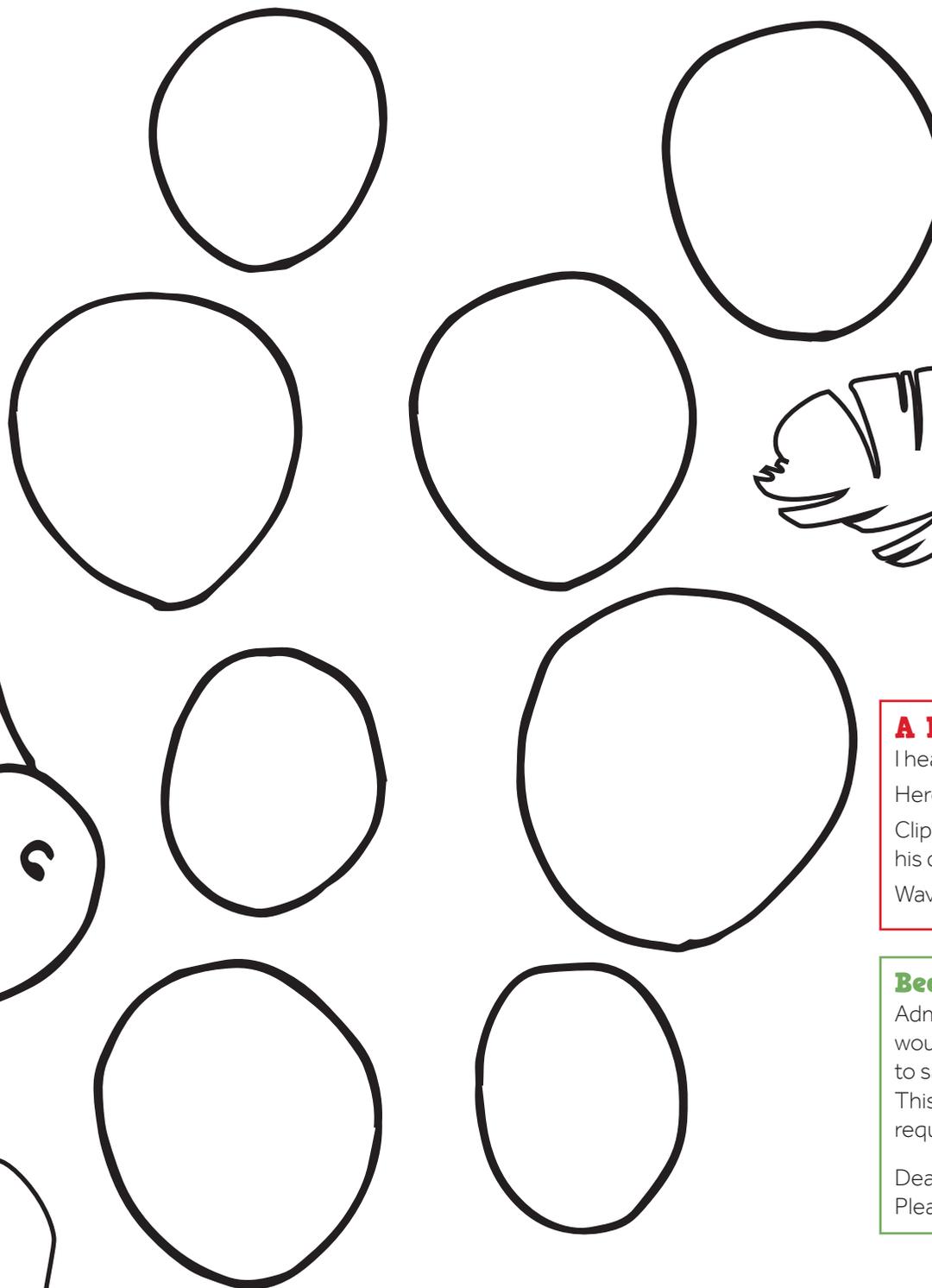
Thank you for all the fun we've had today celebrating Palm Sunday – the day when you rode into Jerusalem on a little donkey. Thank you that you know the name of each one of us here today and that you love us and care for us. Please help us to get to know you better each day! Amen.

Party bag:

You might like to encourage parents to continue the theme of Palm Sunday at home by giving them the "Here comes Jesus!" activity sheet.

Here comes Jesus!

Have fun with your toddler drawing your faces and those of family members or friends in the crowd below. Colour in the palm leaves!



A Palm Sunday Song

I hear Jesus, I hear Jesus,
Here he comes, here he comes,
Clip-clop on his donkey, clip-clop on
his donkey,
Wave your palms, wave your palms!

Bedtime prayer

Admire your finished picture! What would you and your toddler like to say to Jesus as he rides past? This could be a simple thank you or request.

Dear God, Thank you ...
Please ... Amen



Playtime



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