A FAIR PALM SUNDAY
Worship Resource from Traidcraft

Traidcraft’s pioneering new fair trade palm oil, dubbed FairPalm, lends itself to a palm-themed service of worship for Palm Sunday and another great opportunity in the church calendar to talk about God’s justice for the poor.

This resource includes a talk that explores the depth of faith of those who welcomed with palm branches the King riding on a donkey, interesting facts about palm, the FairPalm story, and a challenge to have faith that produces fruit.

Reading

Matthew 21: 1 – 11
Jesus comes to Jerusalem as King

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

“Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”
“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”
“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”
About Traidcraft

For more than 30 years, Traidcraft has worked with farmers, growers and artisans across the world to help them escape the cycle of poverty by:

- sourcing and selling their products
- offering training, skills, knowledge and investment
- working to change unfair trade rules and company practices, raise awareness of injustices and build public support.

Smallholders grow 70% of the world’s food but make up half of the world’s hungriest people

Help us to help families GROW more, EARN more and EAT more

Hymn & Song Suggestions

All Creatures of Our God and King
(Assisi, Francesco / Mcphee, George Mcbeth.)

All Glory Laud and Honour (Theodulph of Orleans, translated John M. Neale, music Melchior Teschner)

All Hail King Jesus (Dave Moody)

All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name (Edward Perronet)

Blessed Be the Name of the Lord (Don Moen)

Brother sister, let me serve you
(Richard A M Gillard)

Come People of the Risen King (Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend)

Hope of the Nations (Brian Doerksen)

Hosanna (Carl Tuttle)

Hosanna (Hillsong)

Hosanna (Paul Baloche)

I Will Enter His Gates (Leona Von Brethorst)

Make Way (Graham Kendrick)

O Worship the King (William Kethe or Chris Tomlin version)

Rejoice the Lord is King (Charles Wesley)

Ride On, Ride On In Majesty (Henry Millman)

We Are Marching/Siyahamba
Meanwhile, they left the date fruits on the tree, unused, perhaps wasted, as the events of that week unfolded. But I want to talk about a different type of palm tree, The African Oil Palm, or Elaeis Guineensis.

[At this point use the material from the Fair Palm oil story that follows, to suit your service.]

Jesus expects his followers to bear an abundance of good fruit (John 15:8, Gal 5:22-23) in the form of genuine faith expressed in a life that seeks to do His will, and love like He loves. We know that Jesus’ heart was for the poor, the marginalised, the outcast, and his anger showed when he came up against hard-hearted exploitation and injustice, as well as a lack of true worship or faith.

It’s widely thought that the crowds that shouted ‘Hosanna’ on Palm Sunday were probably made up of many of the same people who later shouted ‘crucify’ on Good Friday. The powerful King they expected had become the suffering servant. Their faith was in the wrong sort of King, their commitment to following was short-lived, their love turned to violence.

They wanted nothing to do with what this King was about. They were all about showy waving of branches, and left the real fruit behind on the palm tree.

Today is Palm Sunday. Today we mark the moment when followers cut palm branches and spread their cloaks in front of Jesus as he rode the donkey up into Jerusalem from Bethany; the occasion when they waved the palm branches shouting ‘Hosanna’.

Palm branches! Can anyone guess how many known types (species) of Palm tree exist in the world today? Answer: 2813.

Which of these fruits comes from palm trees – dates, coconuts, pineapples? Answer: Dates and coconuts grow on palm trees, but pineapples don’t.

Palm trees can live for between 100-740 years. Despite their height they’re not trees at all. Genetically they have more in common with grasses and onions than with trees. A horizontal cut through a regular tree trunk shows growth rings, but a cut across a palm trunk shows no rings, or bark or woody tissue, just a mass of spongy hardened material that expands as the palm grows taller. This means that palms find it harder to resist disease and injury so they tend to grow better in tropical climates, like the Middle East.

It’s generally thought that Jesus’ contemporaries used branches from the Date Palm on that first Palm Sunday, because a particular type of Date Palm, Phoenix dactylifera, flourished in Palestine at that time (although they’re now very rare).

As we know, the people waved the branches and sang ‘Hosanna’ welcoming their King into Jerusalem as the people in King Solomon’s time did after Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon with oil in Bethany. The people were full of excitement as they expected Jesus to shortly take his rightful place as their messianic King and free them from all their troubles.
Did you know that palm oil is a hidden ingredient in 50% of products available in UK supermarkets, from pizzas to soap, from ice cream to toothpaste? It’s also a controversial commodity.

Demand for palm oil has grown so dramatically over the past 100 years that intensive cultivation has led to the creation of huge plantations in Malaysia and other areas of the Far East. This is often at the expense of natural rainforest which continues to be cleared at an alarming rate.

The world’s most ancient rainforest which represents the lungs of the world is a unique natural habitat for creatures like the orang-utan, but is being replaced with a monoculture that destroys eco-systems and displaces farmers. So palm oil now has a poor reputation from an environmental perspective.

However, palm oil originates from West Africa, and for many years palm oil was a major export for the region - rather like cocoa is today. Oil palm trees grow very well in West Africa’s tropical climate and have always grown well alongside other crops including cocoa. But smallholder farmers in Africa cannot compete with the prices of mass produced palm oil from the Far East, so the palm fruit which grows naturally is wasted.

Oil palm produces a beautiful soft red fruit which is harvested from the trees. The skin is peeled off, then the fruit pulp is pressed, processed and refined to produce beautiful amber-coloured palm oil.

Traidcraft wanted to take palm oil back to Africa, and make it fair, so Traidcraft is working with multi-crop smallholder farmers and processors in Ghana, the traditional home of palm, to produce fair trade palm oil (FairPalm) in a way that supports smallholder farmers, protects the environment and offers bags of potential for poor communities.

The smallholder farmers are paid fair prices and given support to farm efficiently, and the palm oil processing unit employs local people on fair wages. A premium is paid which is used to fund local community projects such as providing clean water to villages that previously had to travel to obtain water.

The local processor, Serendipalm, provides valuable employment in this remote area of Africa where jobs are scarce, particularly for women. Serendipalm is supplied by over 600 farmers with land holdings of around three acres each. The farmers are organised into six associations and receive 10% above the market price for their palm oil when they sell to Serendipalm, who produce palm oil that is fair trade and organic.

Once the palm bundles are delivered into Serendipalm, up to 200 women (in the busy season) process the palm. The women earn almost double the average daily rate for the area, and Serendipalm provides a free, hot meal for every worker, every lunchtime, and the women receive a bonus at Christmas and Easter.

The workers also receive regular medical checks, especially for their hands (the bundles are sharp) and have health insurance. The workers who process the palm fruits as they are steamed, crushed and the oil extracted and clarified, wear effective but simple protective equipment.

Serendipalm pays a fair trade premium for local community projects that has so far brought clean water from deep boreholes for four communities, nurse and midwife cover at the local clinic, public toilets, and school supplies which benefit the whole community around the plant.

This FairPalm oil is now used in the first household cleaning range ever to carry the Fairtrade Mark, and is being used in Traidcraft’s fair trade cookie range. The Clean & Fair cleaning range is eco-friendly and also contains Fairtrade coconut oil from FTAK, Traidcraft’s partner in rural India. Purchases of the Clean & Fair range have already meant more benefits for the smallholder farmers including better healthcare, better food and regular work.
Daniel Nyano

Daniel Nyano is 34 years old. He’s a younger farmer who grows a variety of crops on his smallholding and sees palm as his future. He understands the importance of growing in an environmentally sustainable way.

“I grow my palm using modern but environmentally friendly methods, because of the training I have had. Spacing of the trees is important - increases yield to space the plants 29 feet apart - older farmers planted much closer together. I get a third more palm on the same amount of land.

I enjoy growing palm. I can provide casual work for harvesters, and because of Serendipalm, there is a better market for my crop. I sell direct, there is no middleman, so the price is fair. I have a better life, I want to do well.

It is my father’s farm, and I still give part of my profits to my dad. But one day I want to marry and have a family of my own and the palm will make that possible.”

Josie Abnu

Sitting in circles of around ten women, the processors work quickly to detach the soft palm fruits from their spiky bundles.

“We always try to make sure that we get our fair share of the riper, softer palm which is easier to separate from the spines. As we work together, we talk about our children and our families. We talk about the food we are going to grow, and the food we will cook. And we talk about our husbands... we talk a lot about our husbands...!”

Safiano Moro

Plant manager, Safianu, is proud that the welfare of workers at Serendipalm has such a high priority.

“It’s a good working environment, and we take safety and the health of our workers very seriously. We are like a family, we want the people who work here to be looked after well. Fairness, sustainability and respect is our aim.”
What to do:

1. Cut out plenty of ‘reverse’ palm branch templates, so that the shape forms a hole on the sheet of paper.
2. Stick a template onto another full piece of paper using blutak to form a stencil.
3. Squeeze some paint into a mug/bowl with about ½ inch of water in it, add a squirt of washing up liquid.
4. Stir the paint, washing-up liquid and water together with the spoon.
5. Put the straw into the mug/bowl and blow to make lots of bubbles so they overfill the mug/bowl.
6. Gently turn the stencil upside down and place on top of the bubbles then lift off to reveal the bubble impressions.
7. You can do this several times to layer up with different coloured bubbles.
8. Allow to dry.
9. Gently unstick and lift off the template to reveal a beautiful palm branch.

You will need:

Paper, Scissors, Palm branch templates, Blutak, Water
Poster paints – water-based and child-friendly, ideally greens, blues and browns.
Traidcraft Fair Palm washing-up liquid
Spoon, Straws, Mugs/bowls
Prayers

Christ Jesus, we long for justice. We long for the prosperity we deserve, the freedom we were meant to have. We long for victory over our adversaries, for our cause to be upheld. We long for release from the people and demands that hold us back. We long for you to reign as King in our world.

Christ Jesus, forgive us when we misunderstand your justice. We long for your compassion and mercy. We long for your grace and peace. We long to surrender ourselves to your gentle humility. We long to be more like the servant King.

Christ Jesus, we long for your justice. We long for the poor to be released from poverty. We long for the oppressed to be freed from fear and exploitation. We long to uphold the cause of the weak. We long for your Kingdom to come.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen

A Prayer for Smallholder Farmers

Lord, we pray for the sowers and harvesters of the world. We pray for those who make their living from the land, Those who seek to feed, clothe and educate their families, Those who tend small plots, Those who battle with hostile weather and destructive pests, Those for whom the help of a donkey would not be out of place even in this day and age.

Thank you for their hard work and long hours. Thank you that they bring food to our tables and commodities to our homes. We remember them. We ask you to strengthen, encourage and protect them. We ask that they would be rewarded fairly for their work.

Help us to be mindful of them, and to live out our faith even when we’re shopping.

Amen

Extra Resources

More information about Traidcraft's Fair Palm Oil traideat.co.uk/clean-fair
Traidcraft’s Clean & Fair range of cleaning products traideatshop.co.uk
More information about Serendipalm traideat.co.uk
Order free posters traideatshop.co.uk
Order free leaflets traideatshop.co.uk
Stand Up and Start Shopping!
A call to action / How to respond

Stand up for Justice.
UK companies are getting away with things in developing countries which just wouldn't be tolerated here. We're calling for companies to be held to account and for people who have been harmed to be able to get justice.

We campaign to make trade work better for people living in poverty. Our campaigning has already helped improve lives. But there's more to do. Join us and help make a difference. traidcraft.co.uk/campaigns

“Take care, someone's story is in your shopping basket.”

In a world where the gap between rich and poor continues to grow and where maximising profit is higher up the agenda than social responsibility, millions of hard-working and skilled producers and workers throughout the developing world remain in poverty.

Fair trade was created as an alternative way of doing trade. It is based on partnership, which means that the interests of farmers and workers are just as important as other commercial considerations.

It represents one solution to poverty and a model for development.

At Traidcraft fair trade isn't just part of our business, it's all of our business. And we're 100% committed to it.

- To shop online for yourself go to traidcraftshop.co.uk
- To find out more about shopping on behalf of others go to traidcraft.co.uk/buy-fair-trade
- To shop for fair trade supplies for your church, school or organisation go to traidcraft.co.uk/refreshments
- To shop so that other people can shop for fair trade through you go to traidcraft.co.uk/fairtrader
- Or call 0191 491 0855

traidcraft.co.uk

TRTAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade
Help families GROW more, EARN more and EAT more

Support our Fair Necessities appeal

The Collection Plate

Traidcraft works with smallholder farmers throughout Asia and East Africa, and our support helps them to grow more, earn more and eat more. Right now we have an amazing opportunity to double the impact that your generous donations can make, because every pound donated to Traidcraft until 3rd April, will be matched by the UK government. That means double the number of farmers to whom we can offer the training, skills and knowledge needed to increase yields, profits and quality of life. Double the number of children who can look forward to an education, to health care and enough food to eat. Double the number of farming communities that can start to learn from each other, become profitable and grow into sustainable, thriving local economies for years to come. Imagine the amazing impact that could have, the transformation that could bring about for these communities!

Your generous donations to Traidcraft Exchange are always put to good use. But now we have the opportunity to do twice as much. All donations to Traidcraft Exchange will be matched, pound for pound, by the UK Government until 3rd April 2015.

Thank you so much for your generosity.

Quick! £1 = £2 Your donations doubled!

From 4th January until 3rd April 2015 the UK Government will double every pound you donate. Donate online at traidcraft.org.uk/brew

traidcraft.co.uk