Sermon:

Strange mixture today – explain. So how can I put Harvest and Palm Sunday together?

Mark 4 has the Parable of the Sower – sowing and reaping harvest.

Harvest – is a recognition that this world is good, it is God’s; so we thank God for this world, for the preparation of sowing undertaken months ago and all the growth produced to keep us fed and healthy.

Palm Sunday – is a climax of Jesus’ ministry, prepared and sown in Galilee, reaped in the celebration as he entered Jerusalem. He came as a peaceful king, not the expected warrior.

Both are celebrations, preceded by months or years of preparation. Are they so different?

Harvest is followed by longer nights and shorter days as we make our way to the death that is Winter.

Palm Sunday is followed by darker days where Jesus is challenged and his opponents plot his death.

Are they so different?

The *fact* of Winter makes Harvest all the more a celebration.

The *fact* of the Cross makes Palm Sunday all the more poignant.

But remember also that the story goes on.

Harvest has Winter but is followed by Spring again, as the sower once again sows the seed.

Palm Sunday has the Cross but is followed by…. What?

This week we have had 2 funerals – Vera’s and Stephanie’s, both part of this church.   
Both are only sad because their lives were lived well.

But like Easter, their stories do not end there.

So today we rejoice and sing hosanna! But as we do so we both remember the difficult days ahead and the ultimate hope of renewed life – for the earth, for Vera and Stephanie, and for ourselves, *all in God’s love*.