



Palm and Passion Sunday

March 28, 2021

Lutheran Church of the Living Christ
Florissant, MO | lc-livingchrist.org

This week is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. Mark's gospel presents Jesus in his complete human vulnerability: agitated, grieved, scared, forsaken. Though we lament Christ's suffering and all human suffering, we also expect God's salvation: in the wine and bread, Jesus promises that his death will mark a new covenant with all people. We enter this holy week thirsty for the completion of God's astonishing work.

+GATHERING AROUND THE WORD+

WORDS OF WELCOME

P: Today is a special service because this week is unlike any other week in the Christian calendar. Today we celebrate Palm Sunday, Jesus' joyous entry into Jerusalem. But we will also turn to the events that followed, walking through the moments that led up to Jesus' arrest. Our service today includes a series of scripture readings, followed by spoken or musical responses and reflections. As we hear these familiar stories again this year, may our hearts and minds be opened to hear them anew. As you listen or read along, lean in. Feel the truth of this narrative - for it was a holy week, and it was a hard week. Let us begin.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: As we prepare our hearts to hear God's word proclaimed, please join me in our call to worship. On Palm Sunday so many years ago, the people saw Jesus and asked,

C: Who is this?

P: In worship, we respond. In worship, we declare:

C: Jesus is a miracle worker and healer.

P: Jesus is a teacher and preacher.

C: Jesus is our light and our salvation.

P: Jesus is our source of love.

C: Jesus is our path in the wilderness.

P: So may we lay down our hearts like they laid down their coats.

C: Let us worship Holy God.

+PROCLAIMING THE WORD TOGETHER+

SCRIPTURE READING

Palm Sunday

Mark 11:1-11

When [Jesus and the disciples] were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" ⁴ They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵ some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶ They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹ Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

HOSANNA LITANY

P: A parade, a protest was gathering.

C: The streets were crowded with all kinds of people.

P: Shouts came from deep in the heart.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: Save us from lukewarm faith and callous indifference.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: Save us from soft-mindedness and hard-heartedness.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: Save us from unquenchable greed and selfishness.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: Save us from the death-dealing ways of the empire.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: Save us from limited dreams and visions of your reign among us.

C: Hosanna. Save us!

P: We cry from the depth of our hearts and the very pit of our souls.

C: Hosanna. Save us now!

PALM PROCESSIONAL & TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

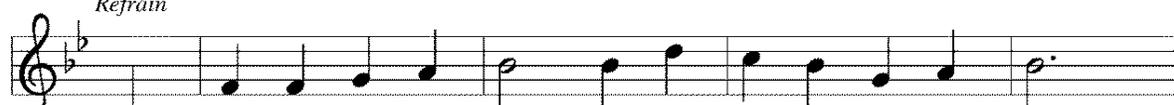
You are invited to wave your palm branches and sing.

HYMN

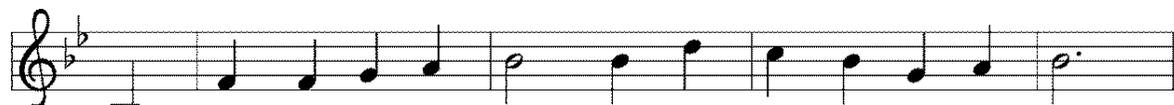
"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"

ELW #344

Refrain



All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.



- 1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
- 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
- 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
- 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
- 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,



Refrain

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

SCRIPTURE READING

Tables Turned

Mark 11:15-19

Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; ¹⁶and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." ¹⁸And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. ¹⁹And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

REFLECTION AND RESPONSE

P: Who is this who enters the doors of our temple, who overturns the tables, strews silver and gold on the floor, frees the sacrificial doves from gilded cages? Listen, as they rise, the beating of their wings is a song of loud hosanna.

C: It is Jesus of Galilee, the Son of God, who comes to cleanse the great temple, to restore its subverted chambers to a house of hallowed prayer.

P: Then let us open the doors of our hearts even wider, so he can cast out the thieves who would take what is sacred and tender and turn it hard as gold in a fist.

C: May the temple within us be a refuge where doves of peace roost in the rafters.

P: May it be a garden that bears the fruits of a generous spirit.

C: Oh Lord, take what is corrupt and withered and let it break forth in beauty.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: We sing, we wave our branches, we shout 'Hosanna.' Then, we turn away, to go back to our old ways, our old lives, our old sins. But God is in the business of granting forgiveness and filling us with new life. Let us confess to the One who comes to fill us with grace.

(A moment of silence is held for personal reflection)

P: Gracious God,

C: Forgive us. When we expect glory and power, Jesus shows up as a servant. Like our palm branches, we pick up the faith we had laid on the ground and hide it away. Our pride keeps us from following your way of self-giving love. Hosanna, Steadfast God, save us! Take our fears, our doubts, our faithlessness. Transform them into trust as we follow Jesus Christ, who comes in your name and gives up his life in love.

P: Tell the children of despair, proclaim it to the siblings of sadness: Christ has come to save us! Hosanna! We will give our thanks to God, who comes to bring us grace, hope, life.

C: Hosanna in the highest. Amen!

SCRIPTURE READING

Authority Questioned

Mark 11:27-33

Again [Jesus and the disciples] came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him ²⁸ and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" ²⁹ Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me." ³¹ They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ³² But shall we say, 'Of human origin?'"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. ³³ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

SCRIPTURE READING

Anointed

Mark 14:3-9

While [Jesus] was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. ⁴ But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? ⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. ⁶ But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. ⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

POEM FOR REFLECTION

Blessing for the Anointing

by Jan Richardson

Some with ointment.
 Some with tears.
 Me, today,
 with words
 gathered and treasured
 carried and poured out
 for you
 wherever you are.

May you welcome this
 as what it is:
 a needful extravagance
 an offering both lavish
 and crucial
 that has let go
 of everything
 to lay itself at your feet
 and tell you

I see you
I bless you

And you,
 where can you go
 that you do not need
 this anointing,
 this blessing that drenches
 the one who gives,
 the one who receives?

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

P: In this woman's lavish gesture, we see how love pours itself out: not in self-abnegation, but in an offering that springs from the depths of who we are. Love sets free, bridges the distance between us, calls us to recognize and respond to the holy in our midst. In love, we honor that which has been given to us by God. In love, we return our money, time, and talents for God's work in the world.

Visit lc-livingchrist.org to give online and scroll to the bottom of the home page. Checks can be mailed to Lutheran Church of the Living Christ, 2725 Concord Dr., Florissant, MO 63033.

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray. Holy God, you feed us out of your own generous and gracious hands. From them, we have received welcome, nourishment, hope, and consolation. May these things grow in us, alongside the gift of faith, so that we may plant their seeds in the world around us. Through the Holy Spirit, guide us in the week ahead to re-member our place in your great and on-going story of resurrection, redemption, and restoration through Jesus Christ.
C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Betrayal and Passover Supper

Mark 14:10-21

Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

¹²On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, ¹⁴and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" ¹⁵He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." ¹⁶So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

¹⁷When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." ¹⁹They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" ²⁰He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. ²¹For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."



1 Je - sus, I will pon - der now on your ho - ly pas - sion;
 2 Make me see your great dis - tress, an - guish, and af - flic - tion,
 3 Yet, O Lord, not thus a - lone make me see your pas - sion,
 4 Let me view your pain and loss with re - pen - tant griev - ing,



let your Spir - it now en - dow me for med - i - ta - tion.
 bonds and blows and wretch - ed - ness and your cru - ci - fix - ion;
 but its cause to me make known and its ter - mi - na - tion.
 nor pre - pare a - gain your cross by un - ho - ly liv - ing.



Grant that I in love and faith may the im - age cher - ish
 make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails, did wound you,
 For I al - so and my sin wrought your deep af - flic - tion;
 May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Sav - ior,



of your suf - f'ring, pain, and death, that I may not per - ish.
 how you died for those, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.
 this the shame - ful cause has been of your cru - ci - fix - ion.
 that I may in heav'n a - bove sing your praise for - ev - er.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626–1681; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
 Music: JESU KREUZ, LEIDEN UND PEIN, Melchior Vulpius, 1570–1615

SCRIPTURE READING**The Last Supper****Mark 14:22-31**

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶ When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’

²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even though all become deserters, I will not.” ³⁰ Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” ³¹ But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.

COMMUNION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

We remember Christ’s passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our tables with your presence.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread and sharing of the wine. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

C: Amen

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, given for you.

Time is given for the sharing of elements.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

The Garden

Mark 14:32-42

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. ³⁴ And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." ³⁵ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." ³⁷ He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? ³⁸ Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹ He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As Jesus prayed in the garden, we now pray together. Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

In Jesus you came among us as a suffering servant. Give your church humility. Redeem your people from pride and the certainty that we always know your will. Heal us and empower us to confess Christ crucified. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In creation, life springs from death. Redeem your creation awaiting resurrection: restore lost habitats and endangered species. Grant relief from natural disasters, and nurture new growth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Jesus was handed over to the powers of this world. In all nations, instruct the powerful, that they would not exploit their power but maintain justice. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

On the cross Jesus joined all who are forsaken. Abide with those who are condemned to death. Defend those who are falsely accused. Console and strengthen those who are mocked or bullied. Accompany all who suffer; grant respite and renewal. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You called followers to tend Jesus' body in death. Sustain hospice workers and funeral directors. Bless this congregation's ministries at times of death: those who plan and lead funerals, those who prepare meals, all who offer support in grief. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You inspired the centurion to confess Jesus as your Son. We praise you for the faith you have given to people of all places and times. Give us also such faith to trust the promises of baptism and, with them, to look for the resurrection of the dead. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

The Arrest

Mark 14:43-50

⁴³ Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵ So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ All of them deserted him and fled.

+RESPONDING TO THE WORD PROCLAIMED+

HYMN

"Great God, Your Love Has Called Us"

ELW #358



1 Great God, your love has called us here, as we, by love, for
2 We come with self - in - flict - ed pains of bro - ken trust and
3 Great God, in Christ you call our name and then re - ceive us
4 Then take the towel, and break the bread, and hum - ble us, and
5 Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your



love were made. Your liv - ing like - ness still we bear,
cho - sen wrong, half - free, half - bound by in - ner chains,
as your own, not through some mer - it, right, or claim,
call us friends. Suf - fer and serve till all are fed,
joy to share. Give us your Spir - it's lib - er - ty



though marred, dis - hon - ored, dis - o - beyed. We come, with all our
by so - cial forc - es swept a - long, by pow'rs and sys - tems
but by your gra - cious love a - lone. We strain to glimpse your
and show how grand - ly love in - tends to work till all cre -
to turn from guilt and dull de - spair, and of - fer all that



heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.
close con - fined, yet seek - ing hope for hu - man - kind.
mer - cy seat and find you kneel - ing at our feet.
a - tion sings, to fill all worlds, to crown all things.
faith can do while love is mak - ing all things new.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: RYBURN, Norman Cocker, 1889-1953

Text © 1977, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music © Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

CLOSING LITANTY

P: On Sunday Jesus was everything—the center of the parade, the center of attention. His arrival was holy and unexpected and beautiful.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

P: On Monday he turned the world upside down, flipping tables while he flipped the script.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

P: On Tuesday he was a teacher. He spoke and people listened. Awe and anxiety mixed as they wondered who could teach with such authority.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

P: On Wednesday he was anointed. On Wednesday his life was traded for 30 pieces of silver.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

P: On Thursday he was the body broken for us, the blood shed for us. On Thursday he was betrayed. He was arrested. He was treated like a convict. On Thursday he was alone, while his followers slept around him.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

P: Friends, this is the refrain of Holy Week, and the refrain of our entire lives. In order to understand its depth, we have to walk through all of holy week, through the wilderness of betrayal and death, the wilderness of the tomb and surprise endings. This week we walk through the wilderness of faith - the good days, the bad days, the everyday - step by step. And in the midst of it all, God is with us. Praise to you, O Christ.

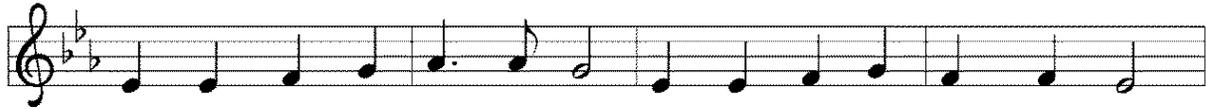
BENEDICTION

P: May God bless you and keep you

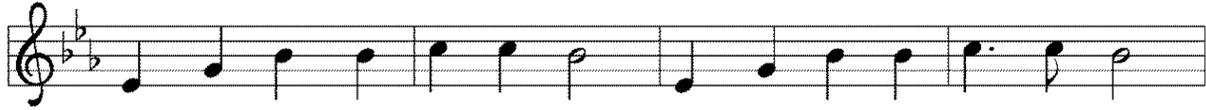
May Jesus shine on you with grace and mercy

May the Spirit look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

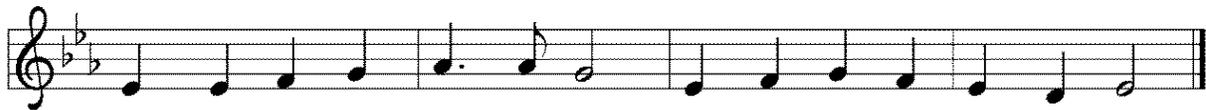
C: Amen.



1 Go to dark Geth-sem - a - ne, all who feel the tempt - er's pow'r;
 2 Fol - low to the judg-ment hall, view the Lord of life ar - rained;
 3 Cal - v'ry's mourn-ful moun-tain climb; there, a - dor - ing at his feet,
 4 Ear - ly has - ten to the tomb where they laid his breath - less clay;



your Re - deem - er's con - flict see. Watch with him one bit - ter hour;
 oh, the worm-wood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sus-tained!
 mark that mir - a - cle of time, God's own sac - ri - fice com-plete.
 all is sol - i - tude and gloom. Who has tak - en him a - way?



turn not from his griefs a - way; learn from Je - sus Christ to pray.
 Shun not suf - f'ring, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.
 "It is fin - ished!" hear him cry; learn from Je - sus Christ to die.
 Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Sav - ior, teach us so to rise.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854

Music: GETHSEMANE, Richard Redhead, 1820-1901