

Sermon Title: From Hosanna to Ohana
The Risen Life, Together We Rise Series

"The Lei of the King"

(Start by holding a single palm frond in one hand and a finished, beautiful Lei in the other)

"Aloha, Church! Today is Palm Sunday. Now all our services are here at Hanalani and we welcome and follow Jesus into our new season for us here at Hanalani Schools.

We know the story on Palm Sunday: Jesus rides into Jerusalem, and the crowds go wild. They're ripping branches off the trees, throwing their cloaks on the dirt, and shouting 'Hosanna!' at the top of their lungs.

It was a celebration, yes, But if we look closer at those people in the crowd, most of them were there for **themselves**. They wanted a King to fix *their* problems, lower *their* taxes, and kick out *their* Roman enemies, just a crowd of individuals, standing side-by-side, but miles apart in their hearts. In Hawaii, we know that a pile of loose flowers on the ground is just a mess you have to sweep up later. But when you take those same flowers and you weave them together—**needle through the heart, one by one**—they become a *Lei*. They become a gift of honor. They become a symbol of *Ohana*.

On that first Palm Sunday, the crowd gave Jesus loose branches. But in John chapter 13 - 17, as Jesus looked toward the Cross and the Resurrection, He wasn't asking for more branches. He was praying for a **Lei**. He was praying that we—you and me—would be woven together so tightly that the world couldn't tell where one starts and the other ends.

“And church, we don’t have to imagine what that looks like—we just saw it this past week on the North Shore. When the floods hit, people lost homes, belongings, stability... but something else rose up.

It wasn’t a crowd. It was an Ohana. (Give examples of this)

Neighbors showed up. Churches showed up. People weren’t asking, ‘What about me?’—they were asking, ‘Who needs help?’ And the kokua needs to extend long after the relief organizations leave.

That’s the difference between loose flowers... and a Lei.

Anybody can show up for a moment and wave a branch. But it takes love to stay, to serve, to sacrifice, to be woven together.

What we saw this week—that’s a glimpse of the Risen Life.”

We just finished talking about **The Jesus Way** and how it’s **'Mo Betta Togedda.'** Well, today we start a new journey: **The Risen Life.** Because here’s the truth: Jesus didn’t just rise from the grave to give you a private ticket to heaven. He rose to build a family.

He didn’t come for a parade; He came for a **Huki-lau.** He’s throwing the net out today, and He’s calling us to stop standing on the shore cheering, and start grabbing the rope and huki together. Because when the Risen King leads the pull, that’s when the harvest happens.

Today, we’re moving from the 'Hosanna' of the crowd to the 'Hana Hou' of the Community. **Together We Rise by . . .**

Theme: The Risen Life is not a solo performance; it’s a community symphony.

1. Living from "Scattered" to "Gathered" (The Power of Presence)

32But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when you will be scattered, each one going his own way, leaving me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. 33I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

Jesus tells the disciples that although they will be scattered and feel alone, the Holy Spirit (the Helper) is coming.

He highlights that while he must go, they are being brought into a new union.

When talking about isolation in John 16:32, add: “You know what struck me about the North Shore this week? In a moment where people could’ve pulled back, protected their own, and gone into survival mode... they did the opposite.

They moved toward each other. That’s the Risen Life. The world scatters—but the Spirit gathers.”

Share about being I can manage on my own to having a community who when someone needs kokua we can rally around one another. And when the Good an Spesho Spirit is in the center, that becomes even more powerful and that’s what happened in that Risen Community of believers.

When we’ll face challenges, it’s so good to have others, especially with the love of Jesus to come to our aid. And that’s the kind of Risen Community is needed for the world to see. Jesus says in this teaching to his disciples in **John 13:33 - 35**

33Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can't come where I am going. 34So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

- **The Action: Invite an "Easter Plus-One."** Palm Sunday is the "entry" point. Challenge the congregation to identify one person in their circle currently living in "isolation" and invite with the intention of gathering them for one taste of the community we talking about next week.
- **The Link:** Just as Jesus entered Jerusalem to draw all men to Himself, we reach out to huki all those around us to him.

2. Trading Personal Privacy for Gospel Publicity (The Power of Unity)

20 "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. 21I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. 22 "I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. 23I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me (John 17:20 - 23 NLT).
(DGASB)

I stay tight wit dem, an you stay tight wit me. Den dey goin stick togedda to da max. Cuz dey stick togedda, da peopo inside da world goin know dat you da One dat sen me hea, an dat you get love an aloha fo dem guys jalike you get love an aloha fo me" (John 17:23 DGASB)

Jesus prays specifically for those who will believe through the disciples' message. His big ask? *"That they may all be one... so that the world may believe."*

The Action: Practice Radical Vulnerability. Community isn't built on nicely put together lives; it's built on shared needs. Challenge everyone to join a small group or "Ohana" circle this week to move their faith from "private" to "shared."

Share about the new ohana groups being formed and if you are like that individual flower needing to be woven, wiliwili, into a nice haku lei, a lei poo, then pray and take next steps to be woven with others.

Share about The Konno and Muramoto OG, they sought God, prayed, and now from just the two couples now it seems they have four. And they still have room for more.

Others have approached me and maybe others are feeling a need to connect as well. Go online to check on all the groups available, but more than that, those in groups, invite those around you to a group, maybe even to your group.

The Link: The world saw a King on a donkey; they will see the Risen King through our unity. Our love for one another is the "demonstration" of the message.

3. Living the "Sent" Life Together (The Power of Purpose)

Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth (John 17:18 - 19 NLT).

Jesus isn't just saving us *from* the world; He is commissioning a community *to* the world.

The Action: Commit to a "Unified Act of Service." Announce those specific community projects or outreach happening during the Easter season. Give tangible ways to "obey the Jesus Way" by serving as one body.

- Kokua da NS Community initiatives
- Good Friday Concert at Excel Church, partnering with them
- We wanna appeal to some families with their kids, so we'll have an Easter Egg hunt or maybe more of a grab, in the covered court next door.
- Invite people to our Easter service: Our sign and hula ministers are practicing hard, there's gonna be a testimony of a radically transformed ohana who is a part of that haku lei I mentioned.

Palm Sunday was the start of the mission that led to the Cross and the Empty Tomb. We celebrate the "Risen Life" best when we are move toward the needs of others together.

"Jesus said our unity would be the reason the world believes.

And I guarantee you—this past week, people weren't asking what church you go to.

They just saw the Church.

Serving. Loving. Showing up.

That's John 17 in real life."

"Palm Sunday, 2000 years ago started with a crowd waving branches.

But this past week on the North Shore—we saw something better.

We saw a Lei being formed. We saw Ohana in action.

And that's what Jesus was praying for all along."

"Church ohana, the rope is already in the water.

The question is—are we just going to celebrate those who pulled...

Or are we going to grab the rope ourselves?" And huki lau togedda in Lokahi (Unity)

"Church, Palm Sunday was a moment where people shouted 'Hosanna!'—which means 'Save us!'

But many of them never moved beyond the moment... they never followed Him as King.

And today, we have the same opportunity.

Not just to wave a branch...
But to give Him our lives."

"Some of you here today—you've been around the crowd...
You've heard the songs...
You've seen what God is doing...
But you've never personally said, 'Jesus, You are my King.'

Today can be your moment.

The Bible says Jesus didn't just ride into Jerusalem—He went to the Cross... and then He rose again... so you could be forgiven, made new, and brought into His family.

Not just saved from something...
But saved *into* something—His Ohana."

"If that's you today, I'm going to lead you in a simple prayer.

Ohana Group Discussion Questions

1. From Crowd to Commitment

On Palm Sunday, the crowd shouted “Hosanna,” but many never followed Jesus as King.

Where in your life are you still part of the “crowd” instead of fully surrendered to Jesus?

👉 What is one specific step you can take this week to make your faith more personal and real?

2. Stop Solo Surfing

Jesus warned that we would be tempted to scatter and live isolated lives (John 16:32).

What is one area of your life you’ve been handling on your own instead of inviting others in?

👉 Who is one person in this group (or church) you can open up to this week?

3. From being a lone flower to a part of a haku lei

Jesus prayed that our unity would show the world that He is real (John 17:21).

👉 What would it look like to take one step toward vulnerability and connection this week?

4. Grab the Rope (Live the Sent Life)

The Risen Life is not just about being saved—it’s about being sent (John 17:18).

Who is your “Plus-One”—someone in your life who is disconnected or needs hope right now?

👉 What is your specific plan to invite them into your life, your group or to Easter next week?