

MARCH 24, 2021

AGAPE FROM AFAR

Adjusting to life amidst Coronavirus

A WORD FROM PASTOR JILL

As a way to remain connected during this time apart, I will be putting together a weekly newsletter with a reflection based on the upcoming Sunday scripture passage. I hope that by taking a few moments to reflect on the Word of God and pray, we can feel grounded and connected to God and to one another during this uncertain time. -*Pastor Jill*



The scripture for this week is from Mark 11:1-11. This is the familiar story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem which we call Palm Sunday. It is hard to believe that in a week's time Jesus will go from being celebrated with a parade in the street to being executed surrounded by criminals. What can we learn from this well-known story about Jesus as we move into Holy Week anticipating Easter?

Reflect more on this passage on the following pages.



Read the passage:

Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples 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. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

“Hosanna!

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

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

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.



Reflect:

1. This is a very familiar story, since we hear it every year on Palm Sunday. What did you notice this time that you haven't noticed before?
2. A significant part of this passage is spent describing the acquisition of the colt. Why do you think Mark spent so much time on those details?
3. The crowds who shout “Hosanna” on Sunday will shout “crucify him” (Mark 11:9) on Friday. How does that knowledge impact your understanding of Palm Sunday?
4. What is this passage calling you to do today? This week?

Pray:

Loving God, when we are wrapped up in following the crowd, give us pause to make sure we are following the crowds that seek your justice.

Amen.



Holy Week at First Church

Palm Sunday - March 28

Celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem by watching the pre-recorded service and waving your palms (hands).

Maundy Thursday at Home - April 1

To remember Maundy Thursday, a simple service to follow along on your own while you eat a meal at home. Watch for it in your email next week.

Good Friday Worship - April 2

A pre-recorded service will be available beginning Good Friday afternoon. You are welcome to watch it whenever you have the time and space on our website or on the Facebook Page.

Easter Sunday - April 4

At 10:15 a.m. we will worship in-person outdoors at the church. Please bring a lawn chair and dress for the weather.



**Please reach out to
a staff member if
you need financial,
emotional or
spiritual assistance.
As always, we are
here to help!**

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