



Christ • Communion • Community

CASCADIAN WEEKLY

April 2, 2021

Week 56

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JILL

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

As I write this it is Tuesday of Holy Week. The time between Palm Sunday and Easter was a full week for Jesus, and while we recognize the events of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, Jesus was on the move and sharing the Kingdom of God on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week. Jesus was in and around Jerusalem on these early days of Holy Week, and the Gospel of Matthew records what the Savior did as He prepared for His death and for parting from His disciples on Friday.

If you have a Bible that has the words of Jesus in red, you'll see in Matthew 24 and 25 that there was still so much that Jesus wanted His followers to know. These are two chapters of solid red ink as Jesus speaks and Matthew writes it down. Matthew tells us Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, sat down, and did what He often did, He taught His disciples the way of God, telling the Twelve how there would be signs that would indicate the end of the age, but that only the Father Himself knew the day and hour of when Jesus would return. The overarching message that Jesus wanted His followers to hear was – be ready. As the time left for Jesus to be on earth was counting down to a few days and hours, Jesus last teaching, His last sermon before His death, was – be ready.

These words have an extra punch to them as we live through these strange times. Much has happened since Lent and Easter of 2020 that we were not ready for. Our Scout troops learn early on “Be prepared” and our financial advisers tells us to do the same. We like the idea of being ready, and don't like to be caught off guard in life, but so often we are. There are things we didn't see coming, what we thought was stable isn't, and life can quickly spiral in ways we could not have imagined.

Here, in the last days of His early life, Jesus reaches out to us and says He gets it; uncertainty, sickness, pain, disasters were not God's plan for us, but due to the sin of our original parents in the Garden of Eden, you can be certain that the uncertain will come. Our Gracious Jesus tells us what it will be like for those who listen to Him and are ready, and what it will be like for those who ignore the Kingdom of God.

Jesus tells of ten bridesmaids, getting ready for the evening wedding celebration of a bride and groom. The groom will parade through town, and the bridesmaids will be part of the wedding party that will light his way to the ceremony and celebration. As often happens with weddings, there is a delay, and five of the bridesmaids run out of lamp oil and are in the dark, the other five planned ahead and have a backup supply. Those five get to be part of the celebration, as the bridegroom tells the five standing in the dark that he doesn't know them. Jesus tells another story of being ready describing a businessman who leaves his servants in charge as he journeys, giving them money to invest in his absence. One servant buries the money, the other two invest. When the businessman returns the two who expanded what they had been given are praised, the one who hid the money is fired in shame. Jesus then takes this teaching further, telling of how when He returns He will divide the people of earth as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, reminding all that when we feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, help the sick, and visit the prisoner, it is as if we have done it for the Lord Himself. In this last sermon Jesus tells us – keep following Him and be ready.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JILL (CONTINUED)

Many were not ready for the first Easter. There was doubt and confusion. People could not figure out who Jesus was, where He was, or what Holy Week had meant. The women came prepared to finish the burial of a dead friend; they were not prepared to be greeted by a Living God. The disciples were in hiding, unprepared for the news the women told them of seeing Jesus alive. Even though Jesus said He would rise in three days, no one was ready, no one quite believed.

We live on the other side of the cross and empty grave, we know Jesus lives, and yet, I wonder if we are ready. There are a few days now, before Easter, for us to prepare, for us to be ready, not for Easter baskets and a family dinner, but to prepare for the return of the Risen Lord. That is Jesus' last sermon to us, so let's follow Him to the cross, to the grave, and out the other side to His glory. And let's do what He urges us to do - Be ready.

A blessed Easter to you! Keep the faith and love our neighbor, Jill

ELDER MEDITATION FROM CHRIS NOORDYKE

Excerpt from "Simply Christian" by N.T. Wright

I had a dream the other night, a powerful and interesting dream and the really frustrating thing about it is that I can't remember what it was about I had a flash of it as I woke up enough to make me think how extraordinary meaningful it was and then it was gone I had the meaning but missed the experience.

Our passion for justice often seems like that. We dream the dream of justice. We glimpse, for a moment, a world at one, a world put to right, a world where things work out, where societies function fairly and efficiently, where we not only know what we ought to do but actually do it. And then we wake up and come back to reality. But what are we hearing when we're dreaming that dream?

It's as though we can hear, not perhaps a voice itself, but the echo of a voice: a voice speaking with calm healing authority, speaking about justice, about things being put to rights, about peace and health and prosperity for all. The voice continues to echo in our imagination, our subconscious. We want to go back and listen to it again, but having woken up we can't get back into the dream. Other people sometimes tell us it was just a fantasy, and we're half inclined to believe them, even though that condemns us to cynicism.

But the voice goes on, calling us, beckoning us, luring us to think that there might be such a thing as justice, as the world being put to rights, even though we find it so elusive. We're like moths trying to fly to the moon. We all know there's something called justice, but we can't quite get to it. You can test this out easily. Go to any school or playground where the children are old enough to talk to each other. Listen to what they are saying. Pretty soon one child will say to another or perhaps to a teacher that's not fair!

You don't have to teach children about fairness and unfairness. A sense of justice comes with the kit of being human. We know about it, as we say, in our bones. You fall off your bicycle and break your leg. You go to the hospital and they fix it. You stagger around on crutches for a while. Then, rather gingerly, you start to walk normally again. Pretty soon you forgotten about the whole thing. You're back to normal. There is such a thing as putting something to rights, as fixing it, as getting it back on track. You can fix a broken leg, a broken toy, a broken television.

So why can't we fix injustice?

Why am I talking about injustice or justice during an offering meditation?"

John tells us in first John chapter 2. Dear friends, I'm not writing a new commandment for you; rather it's an old one you have had from the very beginning. This old commandment to love one another is the same message you heard before. Yeah it is also new. Jesus lived the truth of this commandment, and you also are living it. For

ELDER MEDITATION FROM CHRIS NOORDYKE (CONT'D)

the darkness is disappearing, and the true light is already shining.

When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees in the book of Matthew what was the greatest commandment he said you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all of your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. And these two Commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

One way we can fight injustice and love our neighbors is giving our time and treasure to causes and organizations that help others that are less well off. We as a Church are involved in many of these ministries and missions. For those of you who are actively involved I thank you for those who want to do more, and by the way this could be donating your time, please contact us, we can use more hands!

Let us pray:

Father, we are in the fourth quarter of this terrible pandemic and we thank you for bringing us through it. It is not for us to question why it has happened, we ask that you open our hearts to learn the lessons you have taught us in the last year. We ask that you open our hearts not only to the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do to yourself." But also remind us of the Platinum rule: "We should do, love and talk to others as they would do, talk, and love to themselves. Help us to understand others who are different than us and open our hearts to love our neighbors through giving our time and treasure.

In Jesus name, Amen.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS	
<u>Sunday</u> _(4/4).	Sunday School - 9:30 AM EASTER SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM
<u>Monday</u> _(4/5).	Worship Committee Meeting (Zoom) 5:45 PM
<u>Tuesday</u> _(4/6).	Women's Bible Study (Centennial Hall) - 9:00 AM
<u>Wednesday</u> _(4/7).	Middle/High School Wednesday Night (High School Room) - 6:30 PM Troop 334 Boy Scouts (Centennial Hall) - 7:00 PM
<u>Thursday</u> _(4/8).	Griefshare (Zoom) - 10:30 AM
<u>Friday</u> _(4/9).	Church Office Closed
<u>Saturday</u> _(4/10).	

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4:

Join us online or in person for our celebration for Easter, including an Easter party for the children of the church. This is such a day of hope, triumph over death and sadness, and we will worship Jesus with gratitude and joy! Worship services at 9:30 and 11:00.

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING SESSION

On April 17th from 8:30-3:30, the Anti-Racism Action Group will be holding a day-long anti-racism training session led by Reverend Kathy Bird DeYoung. To sign up contact the church office.

MULCHING & YARD WORK DAY

Please join us on May 1 from 9:00 AM-12:00PM for a mulching and yard work day! Things to bring include; Work gloves, shovel, rake, tarps, leaf blowers, if you have them. Not to worry if you don't, we will have extra. All ages are welcome!

SECOND MILE HOUSE NO LONGER ACCEPTING DONATIONS

Second Mile House is not accepting donations of any kind at this time. We recommend bringing your donations to Goodwill or Salvation Army. Thank you!

EASTER LILIES 2021

Terri & Terry Wing	In memory of Don & Marie Wing; Bill Whitney
Rick & Carol Tiemeyer	In memory of Bill & Joanne Tiemeyer; Paul & Esther Slater
The Ross Family	In memory of Robert Ross
Bob Van Strien	In memory of Mildred Finkbeiner and in honor of Ida Van Strien
Sue Lockhart	In memory of Glen Lockhart
Mark & Denise Pray	In memory of Grace Hoekstra
John and Marcia Hamstra	In memory of Roy & Joyce GarveLink
Karen Robertson & Family	In memory of Dan Robertson
Lee Scott & Nancy Voltz	In memory of Mary Lou Scott & H. Lee Scott
Nancy Gaskell	In honor of Pastor Jill & Mike Forton; Cascade Christian Church Congregation and in memory of Milly & Bob Gaskell, my parents
Jill & Mike Forton	In honor of our church staff and board and in memory of Jack Folkertsma & Margaret Forton
Kay & Jerry Fellingner	In memory of our parents
Joann King	In honor of C.R. King Family & dear friends
Michael & Sue Ann O'Brien	In memory of Ronald & Jolene Wibirt
Georgia Gaskin	In memory of Douglas Gaskin (husband) and Douglas Gaskin (son)



CAMP CRYSTAL

June 20-25 Elementary Camp
July 6-9 Day Camp
July 11-17 Middle School Camp
July 11-17 High School Camp
July 18-24 Family Camp

All registrations will be online this year.
Check the website for details



REGISTRATION

Registration for Camp Crystal is LIVE! Go to www.CampCrystal.org/registration then scroll down to Online Registrations. Please help us spread the word about Jesus through our awesome summer camp on the beautiful shores of Crystal Lake. We have many different options available for you this summer -- including a day camp, with an overnight option! If you would like to learn more about any of these opportunities or have issues registering, please email Michael at mdirksen@cascadechristian.com. We want to make sure every kid that wants to go to camp, gets to go up to camp this summer!

CAMP CRYSTAL SCHOLARSHIPS

We have scholarships available for anyone who needs them through Cascade Christian Church. The scholarship form is available online here: <https://forms.gle/A2gvybPcbs5sB2h1EA> or hard copies may be picked up in the church office. Participants must be registered for camp to receive the scholarship. If you are in need of further monetary assistance paying for camp, please still apply for the scholarship and also contact Jill in the Church office.

INTERESTED IN BEING A COUNSELOR?

Are you or someone you know interested in being a counselor or counselor in training for Camp Crystal this summer? We are looking for counselors! If you are interested in counseling for Elementary Camp please email Jill at jforton@cascadechristian.com. If you are interested in counseling for Middle School or High School camp, please email Michael mdirksen@cascadechristian.com.

COME ON UP TO DAY CAMP

Do you want to experience a week (or just a day or two?) up at Camp Crystal with your child or grandchild? Come on up to Day Camp! If your child or grandchild is entering 6th grade or younger, you're invited to come up to Camp Crystal with them, enjoy our day camp programming during the day and then have your own fun during the afternoon and evening. Day camp is July 6th-9th and the programming starts at 10 AM and ends at 2:30 PM. Scholarships are available for families who want to participate!

CAMP NURSE NEEDED!

We need a camp nurse for Elementary Camp. If you are able to serve as the nurse for a week, please contact Jill at jforton@cascadechristian.com. The dates are June 20th-25th. Lodging and food are provided.



TIME TO REGISTER FOR CAMP! INVITE A FRIEND TOO!

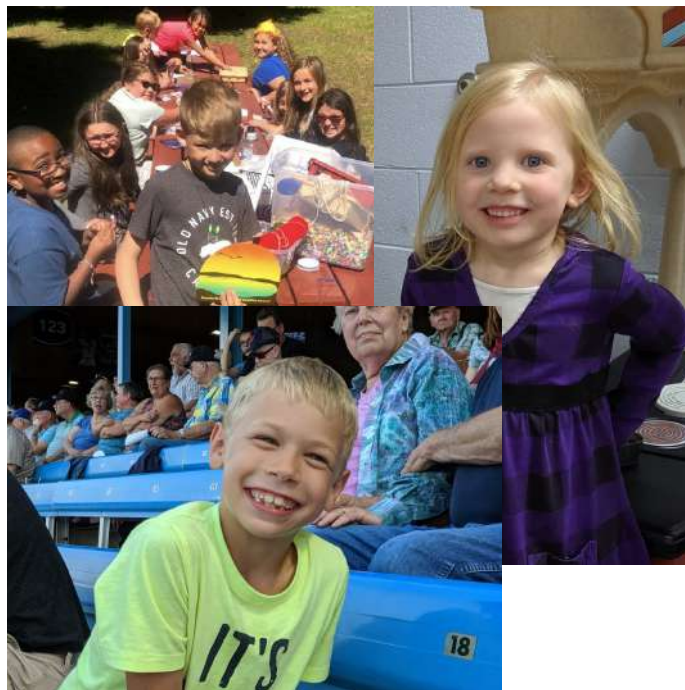
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

SUNDAY SCHOOL IN-PERSON

Every week at the 9:30 service we have in-person Sunday School for children ages 4 and up. The children begin the morning in the sanctuary with their families and then are dismissed to go to class. Students will be brought back down to church after the service.

VOLUNTEERING

We are in **need** of some parent volunteers to help us run Sunday School at the 9:30 Service as well as come on Wednesday Nights. If this is an area where you may have an interest in helping, please send an email to Michael Dirksen at midirksen@cascadechristian.com. No need to have kids in the program! All volunteers need to be screened before they are able to help.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - SAVE THE DATE

Our Vacation Bible School will be held from July 26th-30th 2021. Please save the date and stay tuned for how you can help us make this happen this year!

CRIB ROOM REOPENED

Our crib room has reopened for infants and toddlers through age 3 at the 9:30 service. Parents must make a reservation for this kind of childcare. Drop-ins will not be permitted. Reservations are appreciated by the Wednesday before the Sunday you plan to attend. Call the church office to make your reservation.

SONSHINE CONTEST

We look forward to celebrating Easter Sunday with the children of the church. If they are here for in-person Sunday School at 9:30 there will be an Easter movie, Easter crafts, and a selection of Easter prizes for those who have been doing their Sunday School pages at home.

Children get a point for every Sunday School lesson page that they do that was sent to them in the mail, a point for each time they do the daily devotion with "Gather Around the Cross", and a point for every activity they do in the Lenten pencil book that was mailed to them at the beginning of Lent. This is all on the honor system, so Moms and Dads are asked to keep track of points and send your child to Sunday School with an approximate tally of what they have done. Those who are doing Sunday School at home only and will not be at the Easter Celebration, can call in their point tally, and prizes will be mailed to them or dropped off at their home.

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

WEEKLY EVENTS

We are back to a regular weekly schedule of events that include Sunday School during the 9:30 service. Wednesday Night Youth Group from 6:30-8:00. Then typically the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month we will do a special event! We hope you join us!

EASTER SUNDAY

We will be having Sunday School on Easter Sunday for all ages. Come ready to learn about what happened on Easter, for some snacks, games, and much more. If you have any questions about our COVID precautions or anything, please email Michael at mdirksen@cascadechristian.com

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL IMMERSION (MISSION) TRIP

We are going on a Mission Trip this year! Think of this as Mission Trip: Remixed. We are taking the Middle and High Schoolers to Detroit to serve with Rippling Hope from August 1st - August 5th. If you would like to sign up or help us as a volunteer, please follow this link: <https://forms.gle/VZyWHwg4M4GeLmhp6> (same sign up as Mackinac)

MACKINAC ISLAND - JUNE 28TH-30TH

We are planning a trip to Mackinac Island for all the Middle and High School students this summer. We will be leaving during the day on June 28th. That night we will be staying at Camp Crystal. The next morning we will leave early from Camp Crystal and go to the Island for a day of fun on the island. That night we will be heading back to Camp Crystal where we will stay one additional night and return to Cascade around 1 pm on Wednesday, June 30th. To sign up, please go here: <https://forms.gle/VZyWHwg4M4GeLmhp6> (Same sign up as the Immersion Trip)



3.28.2021 THE QUESTION OF THE AGES SERMON

So what is the best thing that ever happened to you? Maybe it was when you met your wife, husband, or partner, or when you completed your degree, or got the job of your dreams. The best thing that ever happened to you might have been the birth of a child or grandchild, or a long planned trip that was full of fun and adventures, or maybe you won the lottery and came into a sum of money that changed your life. What is the best thing that ever happened to you?

Jesus Christ is the best thing that ever happened for me. Maybe you agree with me. Sure, I have been incredibly blessed with terrific parents, a great childhood, a couple of college degrees, a loving, wonderful husband, and a son I am so proud of. I have friends that I adore. I get to live in a country that amazes me, and I have a home I enjoy, a car I like to drive, and a dog who is always happy to see me. I get to work at a church that I love, and get to Kingdom-build with people like you who faithfully serve Christ, Communion, and this community with open doors, open hearts, and open minds. I am blessed beyond what I deserve. And as great as all these people and things are - Christ is still the best thing that ever happened to me.

Can you say the same? What is the best thing that has ever happened to you?

Today we round the corner in our Lenten sermon series "On the Move with Jesus: The Places of the Passion." We leave the countryside where Jesus began His ministry, where He spent three years mostly on the road, traveling, teaching, making disciples, doing miracles, and upsetting the religious leaders who didn't believe in Him. Jesus was the best thing that had ever happened to many of the people that He met in His travels. He had cured them, the lame could walk, the blind could see, some who had been dead were raised to life. Jesus was the best thing that had ever happened to them as He assured them of the love and forgiveness of God, whether they had been a greedy tax collector, a prostitute, an outsider from Samaria, or simply a child who had received Jesus' loving welcome and blessing. He'd fed them when they were hungry and explained the Kingdom of God by telling stories that they could understand. Jesus was the best thing that had ever happened to them.

This is the week that the travels of Jesus end. Jesus makes an important move, He leaves Bethphage, a village on the Mt. of Olives, a little place on the outskirts of Jerusalem. If you look at a topographical map of this area, the road from Jericho to Bethany, to Bethphage, through the Mt of Olives and Gethsemane is uphill all the way. From Bethphage, Jesus rides forward, this is His Palm Sunday ride, and there will be no retreat, no turning back. Jesus rides against evil, to foil Satan's plans by conquering sin and death with His own death. He is on the move, getting closer to His passion, to the suffering He will endure for us. Jesus goes into battle, knowing that it will appear for a while that sin, and darkness, and evil win.

I have never served in the military, or been in law enforcement, but many of you have. I have never worked in the field of medicine, been a bus driver, or worked in a grocery store, but some of you do. In these professions, especially this year, going to work might have meant placing your life on the line like

3.28.2021 THE QUESTION OF THE AGES SERMON

going into battle. And still, you went, and selflessly served others and the common good by going into the danger zone. This Palm Sunday we watch Jesus enters Jerusalem, and we feel the joy, the thrill of hope, that help is here, at last! But we also can sense there is something else in the air, a whiff of envy, of worry, and a fear that this parade of palms might lead to something else. The people are joyfully greeting Jesus, but they are restless, and very soon a life will be on the line - let's read what Matthew wrote:

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King Matthew 21:1-11

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."

Matthew was there, and he saw that the whole city was stirred, the people were talking, and soon everyone had heard about this palm procession. The whole city, not just part, not a neighborhood or two, not just the Jews, but everyone was shaken. The population of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus has been estimated to be at eighty to a hundred thousand people, and it could double in size for the high holy days like the Passover. There could have been close to two hundred thousand people in the city, people who were stirred, people who were shaken up.

The people had one question, and it is the **question of the ages**. **Who** is this? **Who is** this? **Who is this?** That's the question for Palm Sunday, who is Jesus? If we get this right, we get everything right. If we get this wrong, we get everything wrong. How do you answer the question? The crowd said, **"This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."** There are those who think that yet today, that Jesus is a prophet who could tell the future, like a fortune teller who could tell people everything about themselves. There are people, then and now, who see Jesus as a therapist who helps with the problems of life. There are those who see Jesus as an activist who would encourage you to march for the causes

3.28.2021 THE QUESTION OF THE AGES SERMON

you believe in, pray against your opposition, listen to the right leaders. Others see Jesus as a coach who helps us run the race of life and go faster, stronger, better, or maybe as a guru who tells you to look and find answers from within. For many Jesus is a wise man, a teacher, who lived a beautiful life and taught great lessons for the common good. There might be others still who see Jesus a good luck charm, their four leaf clover, their personally Santa Claus to turn to when they need a favor.

Who is this? That truly is the question, and your entire future, everything, every single thing you hope for, have planned, worry over, dream about, everything depends on your answer. Who is Jesus? Matthew's gospel tells us, and the picture we have of Jesus on Palm Sunday shows us everything we need to know. Jesus is our humble king. Matthew wrote *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 is a kingly request where Jesus employs the law of royal levy, that a king has the authority to get anything from anyone at any time. Jesus says it - tell the owners of the donkeys that the LORD, the King, needs these animals. So Jesus is King, but what kind of king? Certainly kings have abused royal levy and mistreated their subjects. Is that the kind of king Jesus is, the kind who takes whatever He wants? No, not at all. Matthew quotes the Old Testament prophet Zechariah, who wrote these words about Jesus 500 years earlier.

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

5 "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.'"

But Matthew left out part of the prophecy, Zechariah wrote - *Behold your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, humble and riding on a donkey.* Why did Matthew omit righteous and salvation? Those words are in his gospel many other times. But by leaving out that part of the prophecy, Matthew is emphasizing Christ's attribute of humility. Matthew would have known, he had been with Jesus for three years, and had written these words of Jesus in Matthew 11:29- *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Who is this? Jesus is King, divinely royal, but gentle, with a humble heart. The choice of riding a donkey further emphasized the humility of Jesus. By not riding a horse, an animal that you would ride into war, Jesus announces that He doesn't come to bark out orders, but to wash feet. He doesn't come to intimidate and take prisoners, but to love, forgive, and to weep with us and for us. Jesus doesn't muster an army, which is what I think the religious leaders and Romans feared, instead He came to be handed over to those who envied Him, who feared His power, and hated the thought that He could be who He says He is. Jesus, the gentle, humble King could have called down legions of warrior angels, instead stretched out His arms, and took friends and enemies alike into His loving embrace as He is nailed to the

3.28.2021 THE QUESTION OF THE AGES SERMON

wood of the cross. This King of Kings and Lord of Lords became poor so we could inherit the Kingdom, and live, in freedom, grace, love, and with joy. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 20:28- "***The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.***" Jesus is King, humble and gentle, yet with all power and authority, and he uses His authority to serve - us.

So He rides uphill, on a little donkey, with the donkey's foal or colt alongside. A grown man on a small animal, to go into the fight, forward into battle, to ransom his life for others. You know that a ransom is a sum of money paid to release a prisoner, and Jesus pays with His life to ransom us, to releases us from anxiety, fear, hatred, emptiness, selfishness. Jesus is our humble King, and He is the God who stoops to serve His people, and He is our mighty warrior. Jesus fights for you - that is why the people pulled the palm branches from the trees - palm branches are an ancient symbol of honor. That is why they threw their coats on the road for the donkey to ride over, and shouted

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Hosanna means **save us now!** Couple that phrase - save us now - with the victory sign of the palm branches and you'll find the reason that another crowd shouts on Friday - crucify him. The kind of love, grace, forgiveness, and hope that Jesus brought was a threat, it was too radical for the religious leaders, that is why the people were talking, that is why Jerusalem had been shaken.

When asked - who is this - the people answered Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee. Jesus is the radical prophet who shakes things up. Prophets do that - prophets always shake things up - because very often the people of God need a good stirring. If we don't get stirred up now and then we get stale, lethargic, and self-important. The Old Testament prophets were radical - you might remember their words, but do you know how they delivered God's message? Isaiah walked around naked for three years! Jeremiah buried his underwear; Hosea married a prostitute. They shook things up - and Jesus does too. The haters beat him, stripped him, mocked him, nailed him down, raised him up on a cross and impaled him until he was dead. Then, you might remember, the earth itself shook, the rocks split, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, and there was a great earthquake. The death of the radical prophet Jesus shook the foundations of the world, and He further shakes things up when He kicks back death and rises on Easter.

THIS is who Jesus is, he is your Divine King, humble and gentle, He is the God who stoops to serve His people, He is the Warrior God who fights for you, He is the radical prophet who is in love with you. He rides the little donkey, climbing uphill all of the way, and let's nothing stop Him from coming after you. Out of a deep love, deeper than our hearts can hold, he fights sin and evil by laying down His life, like a lamb led to the slaughter. Jesus fights the evil one in a manner Satan could not have imagined, Jesus gives His life for His people, and He wins, Jesus wins! That's who JESUS IS!

3.28.2021 THE QUESTION OF THE AGES SERMON

So “who is this?” the people asked. Who do you say Jesus is? It is the question for the ages. Get it right and you get everything right, get it wrong and you get it all wrong. It is the first and most important question in life. Who is Jesus?

I invite you, now, to join me in my original declaration, that Jesus Christ is the best thing that ever happened to me. If you choose – let’s say it, repeat after me and speak it like to mean it:

Jesus Christ Is the best thing That ever happened To me.

Hosanna and amen.

How do you answer the question of the ages? What would you say if someone asked you who is Jesus? This is our Jesus – the Son of the Living God, our Savior, the best thing that ever happened to us.

Amen and amen.

CHANGE REGARDING MEMORIAL GIFTS

Effective 4/1/21, we are no longer able to accept any gifts of trees or benches. There is not room on the church campus for any more of these items. We appreciate your understanding of this change.

The Gifts Team

WORSHIP UPDATE

You no longer need to pre-register to attend worship. We will continue with health screening, masking, no singing, and distancing. Please join us this Sunday.

OFFICE TO BE CLOSED ON FRIDAYS

The church office will be closed on Fridays beginning Friday, April 2. The Pastor and Business Manager will be in and can be reached by phone. By closing the office on Fridays we are preparing for Keely Guikema’s maternity leave. Please try to cover all church office business on Monday through Thursday. Thank you!

CHAPEL TO REOPEN IN LATE APRIL

We have a tech team at worship in the chapel, adding the equipment needed so we can live-stream and project in our lovely 1880’s house of worship. We anticipate being back to worship in the chapel by the end of April. If you attend traditional worship and would like to be trained in live-streaming, please contact Jacob at the church office.

Financial giving for the week

ending in 3/28/2021:

Budgeted:\$8,432

Given: \$23,231