

Greetings to our members, those from United Congregational Church in Conway and all our friends at home, **This Sunday is Palm Sunday, also referred to as Passion Sunday.** Christians celebrate the entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem with the waving of palms and shouts of *Hosanna!* We also recall the passion of Jesus as we enter Holy Week and the shadow of the cross.

There will be an Easter Sunday YouTube video again this year with a worship resource. While there is no Maundy Thursday service, I will be sending a link to a Conference Good Friday service. An Easter Sunrise service is being planned. Details will be sent out next week.

Your Pastoral Search Committee has been busy! They have completed the church profile and by working with a team from the Conway church have also produced a shared ministry document. These important documents are in the process of presentation and recommendation from the Executive Committee, through the Church Council before coming before the congregation for conversation and vote. Your participation in this process is essential for the search to continue. Within the next two weeks look for details concerning a date for a church conversation and another date for a special meeting of the congregation.

Wishing you God's peace as we now step into Holy Week.

Pastor Rob

Welcome to Palm Sunday Worship

March 28, 2021

The Sixth Sunday of Lent

Good Morning to our members, those from United Congregational Church in Conway and all our friends at home. Today is Palm Sunday on the Christian calendar, also referred to as Passion Sunday. It is the sixth and final Sunday of Lent. Traditionally, this is the Sunday when we recall Jesus' entry into the city of Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week.

Prayer Requests: We are accepting requests for prayer (healing, comfort, thanksgiving, and others). Please send your requests to the Pastor at pastor01089@gmail.com. Requests will then be sent out through our email list to the congregation for our common prayer life during the week. PLEASE remember that all prayer requests received become public knowledge. If you are uncertain if your request for another might be confidential, do not send it.

And now let us be in worship

Call to Worship (Responsive, L=Leader, P=People)

Mark 11:7-10

L We remember when Jesus entered Jerusalem;
The disciples brought a colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it.

P Many people spread their cloaks on the road and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

L Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting:

**P Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna to the Son of David!**

Unison Morning Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

All glory and honor be to you, O Christ! With the rising of the sun on this new day, we praise you, we welcome you, and we sing in celebration. Just as you entered the city of Jerusalem, so enter into our hearts this day and be with us in our journey through this week, for the sake of Christ who taught us to pray saying, *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Prayers of the People

Our prayers for this Palm Sunday recall the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the shadow of the cross and the character of Jesus. We will also pray for ourselves in the present day and our calling into the future keeping Jesus' character in mind. There will be time for personal prayer and meditation. Let us come to God in prayer.

God of Abraham, God of Jacob, of Ruth and Rachel, God of all creation and all our history. God of what once was, what is this day, and what is yet to be born, this day we are pulled back, held in the present, and summoned into the future. We can see, as you did see, the day of glory, the passage of your Christ through the gates of Jerusalem. We see, as you did see, the days of freedom, turn into arrest and bondage. We summon to memory, what you remember, the love and courage of Jesus. His alertness to his calling, and his unbreakable allegiance to you. We can see, as you did see, the crowds and their shouting, the waving of palms, and the shadow of the waiting cross.

This day we are also held in the present, challenged by our memory to keep our promises, honor all our pledges, and be faithful in our walk with Christ, and with each other. Like the crowds, we are prone to cheer one day and walk away the next. We are often tempted to stand at the gate, let Jesus pass us by and then turn away returning to where we have been before. In this present day, we pray for our own love and courage. For our own alertness to our calling, and our own unbreakable allegiance to you

This day we are summoned into the future. We would go with Jesus, though the way is dark through this week. We would see his passion, and in so doing we would come to grips with the tragedies of our own lives. We would believe that in Jesus, there is salvation, there is healing, there is what we yearn for, to be free of all that binds us, holds us, imprisons, and corrupts us. We would look into our future with hope, knowing that in all things, you are present, as you were yesterday, as you are today, as you will be tomorrow, and for this, we are grateful. Hear now, gracious God, these our prayers, the meditations of our hearts, our prayers of thanksgiving, our prayers of concern for others, our prayers for the ministries of our congregation, and our fervent prayers for peace in our time. (personal prayer and meditation) Gracious God creator and sustainer of life, God of all our days and all our history, God what is yet to be, we thank you, we bless you and we praise your name. Amen

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:32-42

Scripture records that on the Sunday before Passover, Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem to the waving of palms. Over the next three days, Jesus, and his disciples, entered and left the city on a daily basis, staying each night in the village of Bethany. On Thursday, Jesus sends his disciples, Peter, and John, into Jerusalem to prepare the Passover meal for that evening. After sunset, Jesus and his disciples return to the city and celebrate Passover in the upper room. Following that meal and after Judas departs, Jesus and his disciples retire to the Garden of Gethsemane. Our Gospel for today picks up the narrative at this point. From the Gospel according to Mark Chapter 14, Verses 32 through 42.

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again, he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 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. 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. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand." 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. 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." So, when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." All of them deserted him and fled.

After the reading, you may reflect on this passage.

The sermon for this text may be seen in this week's video.

Sermon: *Today's Crowd*

Benediction:

#179, *Were You There*, First Verse

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?