

Faith Life Weekly 0314

*“Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!” (Mark 11:9-10)*

*“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked.*

*“Crucify Him,” they shouted. “Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify Him!” (Mark 15:12-14)*

Every sport and every team has their share of “bandwagon supporters;” the folks who are cheering loudly in the middle of a winning streak, but nowhere to be found when the losses start to pile up. Even the “Sea of Red” on Saturdays likely has a few of these folks. My brother used to be a “bandwagon” guy with sports, and it drove me crazy. But isn’t that just like so much of life? Everybody loves a winner, until you lose. And in those moments, you understand your real worth to others.

During Holy Week, Jesus’ life takes on these extremes. The people go from hailing him to spitting on him in a matter of days, or even hours. It’s easy to cheer the empty tomb, but another thing to endure the storms of Good Friday, the threats and arrest of Maundy Thursday, and the terrible agony of the cross. All of this is re-lived, re-told, re-remembered in our faith community in the upcoming week. We will follow and examine the waves of emotion and belief together through our worship and fellowship next week. The people who followed and listened to him thought that they really knew at Palm Sunday what to expect, but it was more than a lot of them could handle.

Standing by one another in hope and strength through it all, for better or for worse, in sickness and health, etc., is where we find out who we really are, and others find out who they are to us. Those who remain after it’s popular to do so, who continue to hope when others think it naïve or futile, who speak and act without constantly checking to see the direction of the prevailing winds; the final week of Christ’s earthly life made these things clear.

I pray that you’ll take the time to join us as we encounter Holy Week together, beginning on Saturday and Sunday when we recall his entry into Jerusalem. Then, on Wednesday evening, we will gather for the “Seder” meal of Passover, an experience that revisits the history of God’s people and the shared experience that began with them and continues in us. On Thursday, we will gather to re-live the activity of Jesus’ final evening. As he washed his friends’ feet and shared his body and blood with them, so we will do the same. On Good Friday, we journey to the cross and reflect on all that it accomplished for the sake of the world. And on Sunday, we celebrate the empty tomb and ponder its wonder, mystery, hope, and inexpressible joy. God loves you and so do I.

In Christ,

Pastor Bill