

Sunday Service: March 28, 2021 (Palm Sunday)

“A Good Guy without a Gun”



Zoom service starts promptly at 10 am:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84841981079?pwd=OG1TMThyZFFQZ1Q0dStpZlJCdURUUT09>

Lent–Easter 2021 Theme: Going Deep

Nearly a year ago we entered the world of isolation and virtual connection with which all of us are now familiar. Suddenly the wilderness of Lent has become all too real, as we were stripped of our usual resources, surroundings, activities, and circles of relationship. During this time our world has experienced both deep grief and invitations to a new spaciousness of time, as we needed to release so much of what usually fills our lives.

In the Scriptures and the traditions of Lent, we see a scrubbing away of the excess to get to the core of our Christian journeys and of ourselves. The call to go deeper can be frightening or overwhelming when we feel we are not ready and do not know what we will find. We keep much of our pain in our depths. But only from these depths can the voice of God reach us and transform us.

FOCUS for Palm Sunday

Deep in the current. Called to deep hope: As we follow Jesus into Holy Week, we sense the rush of the crowds and seek the deep, steady current of God’s steadfast love, calling us to deep hope in the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude

Call to Worship



One: In the current of life, God calls us to deep hope.

Many: God wakens my ear, and I turn to God. I do not turn toward those who strike me. I do not hide my face from insult.

One: God helps us, so let us stand up together.

Many: Save us, O Lord! Bind the festival procession with branches. You

are our God. We give thanks, for you are good, and your steadfast love endures.

One: Many shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!”

Many: The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, who humbled himself and became our hope.

All: *We call out to you, as you call us to deep hope.*

“Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality.” — Jonas Salk

Opening Prayer

Opening Song

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Many: Deep calls to deep. We call to you from the depths of our hearts.

One: We confess the rapid pace of life that sweeps us off our feet into whirlpools of expectations, into eddies of busy distractions. We confess our need for a steadfast stream of your grace enduring forever, saving us.

(Silence. Or name the forces that keep us from deep hope.)

Deep calls to deep. You call to us from the depth of your love.

Many: *Calling us to deep hope. We come to you, God.*

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures (John 12:12-16)



12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord--the King of Israel!"

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: 15 "Do not be afraid, daughter of

Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

Message: "A Good Guy without a Gun"



Last Sunday Geoff encouraged us to look to the sky! "What do you see?" But suddenly on Monday our gaze was once again pulled downward in pain and confusion as the tragedy of massive gun violence in our nation so rudely intervened.

We cannot become numb to mass killings; they cannot be allowed to become a normal part of our society. Today is Palm Sunday, an event that gives us the antidote!

"Life is passion, celebration in the face of chaos, light in the face of darkness, hope in the face of despair, and joy, for the universe without life feels nothing, is nothing, and does nothing except slowly die." — Rick Tumlinson

3. RESPONDING TO GOD



“Our uniqueness, our individuality, and our life experience molds us into fascinating beings. I hope we can embrace that. I pray we may all challenge ourselves to delve into the deepest resources of our hearts to cultivate an atmosphere of understanding, acceptance, tolerance, and compassion. We are all in this life together.” — Linda Thompson

Response

Joys and Concerns

Sending Song

Sending Blessing

Through the current of the crowd, Jesus came. The shouts swelled, blurred, and hurried, but he remained calm. It is easy to be swept up in a changing current. May we see the current for what it is and be centered in deep hope. Go in the knowledge that the current of the crowd was not the end of the story, but led to a new beginning. May hope in the kingdom of God be with you always. Amen.

“Darkness comes. In the middle of it, the future looks blank. The temptation to quit is huge. Don't. You are in good company... You will argue with yourself that there is no way forward. But with God, nothing is impossible. He has more ropes and ladders and tunnels out of pits than you can conceive. Wait. Pray without ceasing. Hope.” — John Piper