

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH



April 4, 2021

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Minister: The People of St.Andrew's

Pastor: Rev. Cheryl Bolton Ministry of Music: Lynn Sloan

A Walk Through Holy Week - *Mailbox Ministry/At Home Edition*

Holy Week is the name the Christian Church calls the last week in the season of Lent. We take this time to remember the last steps that Jesus took on his way to the cross. Sometimes the events makes us feel sad or angry or even guilty. As difficult as those feelings are please remember that those feelings draw us closer to Christ and are a very necessary part of the journey. Think about them, talk about them, pray about them.

Palm parade - Mark 11: 1-11

Reflection

Jesus was greeted by crowds who had heard of his healing and teaching ministry; they hoped he would bring in God's reign of compassion for everyone. It was a day of hope for a better future, filled with simple joy.

Activity

Look at your photos of the last year. Share the great ones with one another, and if you have family living far away, perhaps you can share some with them, too.

Turning over Tables - Mark 11: 15-17

Reflection

Sometimes we keep doing things "because we've always done them" and yet they're no longer life-giving to us or others. What traditions will you let go of now, or after, COVID lockdowns end?

Activity

Consider clearing out a drawer, a closet, a dresser, or a filing cabinet. (Some stuff may be useful to others— consider giving that away).

Foot-Washing - John 13: 1-18

Reflection

Foot washing was a lowly, degrading task of a servant. What Jesus had done was meant to be an example of how his people were to treat others – with humility and servitude.

Washing someone's feet and having them wash yours can change you for many reasons: It can start the healing process in a broken relationship. Powerful stuff.

It strips the normal hierarchy from groups. Pastor and child, bully and bullied are alike when we wash each other's feet. When our feet are being washed, we grow a little more trust as we allow ourselves to be vulnerable.

Activity

Gather a basin, a towel, a little soap and a pitcher of water and take turns gently washing each others feet.

Last Supper - Mark 14: 17-26

Reflection

This "last supper" of Jesus was filled with history and love among friends. Imagine the ritual of remembering the sacred story of the Passover* together and also imagine the simple day-today memories of "highs and lows" that were shared. While breaking bread, Jesus said, "EACH time you break bread, remember me." What impact might this have on both the regular and the special meals you share? **Activity**

Try to bring together your family for a meal tonight. If you live alone, consider sharing your meal with another person over a phone, Facetime or Zoom call so that you can share "highs and lows" together. (Note: each person gets to share a high and a low, and others simply listen and "receive with thanks" whatever is shared.)

Praying in the Garden - Matthew 26: 36-46

Throughout Jesus' ministry, when crowds were pressing in on him, when thousands were needing to be fed, when he was discerning his next steps, he prayed.

There, in the Garden of Gethsemane, alone, when death loomed near and his friends were close at hand but far away, Jesus prayed. But how? How did he pray in the Garden?

He wasn't reciting the rote version of what we know as the Lord's Prayer.

He wasn't doing a breathing practice.

No, this prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane was grittier. Messier. Drenched in tears, shaking with the inward and outward howls of grief and anguish. Unreasonable. Unedited. Raw.

Activity

Come before God in prayer, either written or out loud. Bring to this prayer situations or circumstances — Covid-19 related or not — whatever it is that you are grieving or that are difficult for you in some way. write down or speak out loud everything you can — unedited — about your thoughts, feelings and desires about the situation, *with no regard as to how petty, realistic or appropriate they are!* This is for your and God's eyes and ears only. The unvarnished and unedited truth of your experience is what this prayer is about.

When you feel you have expressed everything you can about what is on your heart, release everything into God's hands by saying ... "Nevertheless, your will be done".

The Arrest - John 18: 1-14

Reflection

Have any of you ever seen a daffodil or tulip? Daffodils and tulips grow from bulbs but bulbs are pretty boring just sitting doing nothing, they look more like a stinky onion than a pretty flower. Unless a bulb is planted into the soil they just stay boring bulbs, they never become anything more. The bulb allows itself to be transformed into so much more. It seems crazy that God's Son would allow himself to be arrested and put to death, but Jesus knew there was only one way to save us from our sin. He loved us so much, he was willing to die for us. Jesus died so he could create something beautiful in us.

Activity

Consider planting some spring bulbs either in your flower beds or gather a pot and some soil and bring new life inside your home.

The Crucifixion - Mark 15: 25-41

Reflection

The story of Jesus' execution by torture on a cross is gruesome, and we don't like to linger long near such horror, but today is the day to remember that it still happens, too often, and everywhere. In our gospel, Mark tells of the women who stayed close by to be witnesses for Jesus. If your children ask you why Jesus had to die, try turning it into an "I wonder" conversation, where you can ask the child why they think bullying happens, why racism happens, why wars happen. If you do that with children, you give them the skills to contemplate not only the ugliness, but also the alternative futures we can forge together.

Activity

Write a few of today's "crucifixions" on small scraps of paper, and create a collage cross with them, sticking them on one side of a white piece of paper. (Keep this cross for Sunday morning). Be witnesses, like the women.

Easter Sunday

Processional Hymn - Welcome Happy Morning

Welcome

Our long journey through the darkness is over!
We have danced into the light of Jesus' resurrection!
No more do we need to fear!
No more will we feel that we are alone and lost!
Jesus lives in our hearts and our spirits!

Jesus calls us to be a source of hope and joy for others! Alleluia!
Alleluia!

Opening Prayer

Lord, this Lenten journey has been filled with the unexpected. You have asked us to look deep within ourselves, to identify the many ways in which we have turned away from you. Again this day we ask that you open our hearts to receive your word of healing and hope. The cross of Good Friday looms in our future and we face it with fear. Bring us through this time with confidence and trust in your guiding love. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

Scripture Reading - Mark 16: 2-7

Moderator's Message/Reflection and Activity

Reflection

This Gospel's Easter story is quiet, and mysterious. It is full of questions and many emotions, and a gradual dawning. Think of moments when a deep, good news has come to you; remember how it took time to become integrated into your way of being. Try to experience a quiet, dawning awareness of how EVERY morning has within it the renewal of life.

Activity:

If you can, enjoy a moment of quiet early in the day. Go outside to "discover" signs of life.

Hymn - Jesus Christ is Risen Today!

Message from Rev. Cheryl Prayer of Thanksgiving and Concern

‘Why is it, Lord, that we rush headlong into holidays? The store shelves have been filled with bunnies, eggs, candy, and all the trimmings of the secular Easter, and we are drawn to planning for that day. We feel a sense of urgency, and yet you have called us to be on this journey, gradually coming with Christ to the Cross and

beyond. Slow us down. Help us to look more closely at our own lives, at the many ways in which they are driven and demands are placed upon them. Remind us again of the ministry and mission of Christ, who came that we might have life. We have offered prayers for family and friends, for situations near and far. We have asked for your help, healing and blessing. Make us ready to receive these precious gifts. Walk with us on this pathway. Help us look at the barriers that have prevented us from following Christ and guide us through them that we may become stronger in our faith and our service to you, for we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Dance, celebrate, sing, and shout for joy! Christ is Risen and He goes before us, into this world of fear and pain. He has called us to bring the Good News of healing and hope, of redemption. Go in peace, and feel the presence of the Risen Lord with you, now and forever. AMEN.

Recessional Hymn - He is Risen (Choir Tableau)

Announcements



Easter Memorial

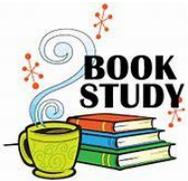
In memory of Gladys, Brian, and Ronald Payson – Marjorie Gowdey

In memory of Lena and Ella Hatch-The Hatch Family

In memory of Ted and Elsie Butler-The Hatch Family

In memory of Mary Boxall-The Hatch Family

In memory of Mathieu Francis Neil(infant son of Jennifer and Patrick Lefebvre)-The Hatch Family



If you would like a copy of the book study “The Cup of Our Life” please contact the office and we will be sure to send it with your bulletin. It is designed to do on your own or if you are able you can join our weekly discussion group.

You can phone in by dialing: **+1 647 374 4685** **Then when prompted enter the Meeting ID: 830 1433 0922**

Easter Sunday - Please sign up for your spot. We can have 20 people in at a time and have divided the morning into 4 half hour segments with ten minutes in between to clear folks out and clean before the next group comes in. Masks must be worn!

Call the office to book your spot. Please book by Friday, April 2nd at 4pm.

Service 1 - 10:00 - 10:30

Service 2 - 10:40 - 11:10

Service 3 - 11:20 - 11:50

Service 4 - 12:00 - 12:30