



HANOVER

United Methodist Church

Message Summary
Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020
From Pastor Harley

Matthew 21:1-11 The Message (MSG)

The Royal Welcome

21 1-3 When they neared Jerusalem, having arrived at Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples with these instructions: “Go over to the village across from you. You’ll find a donkey tethered there, her colt with her. Untie her and bring them to me. If anyone asks what you’re doing, say, ‘The Master needs them!’ He will send them with you.”

4-5 This is the full story of what was sketched earlier by the prophet:

Tell Zion’s daughter,

“Look, your king’s on his way,
poised and ready, mounted

On a donkey, on a colt,
foal of a pack animal.”

6-9 The disciples went and did exactly what Jesus told them to do. They led the donkey and colt out, laid some of their clothes on them, and Jesus mounted. Nearly all the people in the crowd threw their garments down on the road, giving him a royal welcome. Others cut branches from the trees and threw them down as a welcome mat. Crowds went ahead and crowds followed, all of them calling out, “Hosanna to David’s son!” “Blessed is he who comes in God’s name!” “Hosanna in highest heaven!”

10 As he made his entrance into Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken. Unnerved, people were asking, “What’s going on here? Who is this?”

11 The parade crowd answered, “This is the prophet Jesus, the one from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Oh, I just love interruptions to my schedule by unexpected and unnerving events, said no one. Ever! But that’s just what this is to the people. I was talking about Palm Sunday 2,000 years ago. And today. Regular schedules and order were interrupted by the Son of God entering. Now we know that God is always present. But we’re not always paying attention.

Are we so used to going to church to experience God’s presence that we forget that that God is among us to save, heal, forgive and love, at all times and places?

Palm Sunday took place in the downtown business district. Not a church. [or Synagogue or Temple.]
Easter took place in a cemetery. Not a church.

Feeding of the 5,000 took place on a lawn. Not a church.

Birth of Christ took place in a barn. Not a church.

Jesus first miracle, turning water into wine, took place at a Wedding Reception. Not a church. (Jesus would get into trouble with 4 out of 5 churches today if he did this and went against church no alcohol in our building policy).

Healing of the crippled man took place in a home. Not a church. (Also, would be frowned on in our churches, since they had to make a hole in the roof to lower the crippled man down, as the place was so packed and there was no room for more people.)

You get the picture. God breaks into our world. Our space. Our time. And messes up our plans and schedule.

But let's get honest. We were pretty messed up already. We needed God to break into our consciousness. Our lives.

I pray that of all the things that we are conscious of today, and every day, it is: He is here. Jesus is here. He's here to save. Here to redeem.

After all, his name is literally, 'He saves'.

Salvation is here.

And so we with Joy proclaim, just as they did 2,000 years ago:

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

May Christ's presence be ever on our minds this week, Holy Week.

Next week, we will have virtual (online here) Communion, so have a beverage and a piece of bread or cracker, or any other piece of food, handy.

May the Peace of Christ be on our minds now and always,

Pastor Harley