

Sunday March 28, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Mark 11:1-11
“The One Who Comes”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In pairs or groups of three, have participants share their response to the question, “What do you find to be the most significant part of the Holy Week story (the crowd greeting Jesus on Palm Sunday with celebratory palms, Jesus’ teachings at the Temple, the Last Supper, Jesus’ prayers in Gethsemane, Jesus’ betrayal by Judas, Peter’s denial, Jesus’ trial, or Jesus’ crucifixion)?”

Mark 11:1-11 Context.

Read Mark 11:1-11

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Mark 11:1-11 again.

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- While Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt, the Roman leader Pilate would have entered Jerusalem for the upcoming Passover festivities on a war horse (likely with his own celebration by those wanting to be in his good graces that would serve as a reminder that Rome was bringing “peace” to the known world). What is the symbolism of Jesus arriving “victoriously” to Jerusalem through this “parade?”
- Jerusalem would have likely begun to swell in population as crowds came to celebrate Passover. How would Passover being on their minds have contributed to the hopes they projected on to Jesus? [Passover recalls Israel’s deliverance from the oppression of the Egyptians. This would reinforce the idea of a leader like Moses or even David freeing the people— in this case from Roman occupation.]
- If you have time, the group could read Psalm 24 as a psalm of victory to kings as they rode into town.
- This might be a familiar story to many, but perhaps the events of 2020 might allow us to see this passage with new eyes. Why do you think those in the crowd threw their cloaks and palm branches before Jesus?

- What did their shouts of “Hosanna” mean? How are the symbols of palm branches that we might wave in worship a symbol of our allegiance to Jesus as our king?
- Too often in the twenty-first century, we perceive a hard division between government and religion or faith and politics. There was no such division in Jesus’ time. What this crowd was engaging in was both a religious and political protest for freedom and salvation. (If the Roman guards understood the actions of the crowd and the symbolism of Jesus’ riding on a donkey, Jesus would likely have been arrested, and the crowd would have been handled swiftly.) How does the political unrest and the calls for police reform we witnessed in 2020 give us a bit of insight into the yearnings of those in the crowd on Palm Sunday
- How will you observe Holy Week? What practices might help prepare you to celebrate appropriately the good news of Easter?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Lord, we too cry, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” We yearn for the day when your salvation and justice will be the experience of all people. We continue to repent from when we have failed to be obedient and extend your love and grace. This week, as we remember again the sacrifice and mercy of Good Friday, give us a fresh experience of your amazing and world-changing grace that burst forth from the good news of Easter Sunday. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.