

**Sunday, April 10, 2022 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Palm/Passion Sunday**

**Bible Study – Luke 19:28-40 and Luke 22:14-23:56
“The Lord Needs it”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes)

As a group, read again (either in unison or participants reading aloud specific lines) the Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline:

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE^[1]

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

the early Christians observed with great devotion
the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection,
and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration
there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.

It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins
and had separated themselves from the community of faith
were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness,
and restored to participation in the life of the Church.

In this way the whole congregation was reminded
of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ
and the need we all have to renew our faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church,
to observe a holy Lent:

by self-examination and repentance;

by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;

and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

- Then ask, “How has this season of Lent brought new meaning to this invitation?”

Luke 19:28-40 Context. When Jesus “turned his face” and headed to Jerusalem, he continued to teach and heal, and draw a crowd. He tells his disciples that he will suffer and die when he reaches the city, and then will rise again. They have no idea what he means. As he approaches Jericho, he heals a beggar and then invites himself to dine with Zacchaeus, a wealthy man and a chief tax collector, hated by the people. But after dining with Jesus, Zacchaeus sees the light and gives to the poor half of all he has and promises to make whole four times over anyone that he has defrauded. Then, with Jerusalem in

sight, Jesus goes on to tell the parable of the talents, where a hated ruler rewards his slaves who multiplied the gifts he had given them, but punished the slave who buried his gift in the ground. He concludes the parable with the stern ruler decreeing death for those who opposed him. Then...

Luke 22:14-23:56 Context. For many years, the Gospel reading for the Sunday before Easter has included the entire “Passion Narrative,” from Jesus’ last supper with his disciples on Thursday evening, through to his burial on Friday afternoon. This is the climax of the Gospel story. All four evangelists recount it with considerable detail: Jesus’ last meal with his closest followers; Jesus’ prayers and his arrest; Peter’s denial and the various interrogations of Jesus by the Jewish authorities and Pilate; his execution, death and burial.

Read Luke 19-28-40 and Luke 22:14-23:56

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 Luke 19-28-40 and Luke 22:14-23:56 again

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

During Holy Week, we see many images of Jesus. As a group, have participants choose one of the following images to share why it is a meaningful image to them.

- Jesus beaten as a false Messiah and then enduring suffering on the cross
- Jesus willingly arrested and mocked
- Jesus hailed as king of the Jews
- Jesus as humble king
- Jesus as teacher of the new law
- Jesus gloriously resurrected
- Kings and Caesars would ride warhorses into cities as signs of victory. What point is Luke emphasizing by noting that Jesus rode into town on a colt? [It emphasizes that Jesus is a different kind of Messiah.]

- What point is Luke emphasizing by observing that the people placed cloaks before Jesus (and not waving palm branches as in other gospel accounts)? [Deemphasizing the joyous nature of Jesus' arrival, it gives a more sacrificial and humble tone to the story. It also asks what we are willing to lay down for this Messiah.]
- Place yourself in the story of Palm Sunday. What do you notice? What would you tell the crowd shouting "Hosanna" or "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord"? What would you like to tell the group of Pharisees trying to calm the crowds? What would you say to Jesus?
- **(R)** How has this Lenten journey impacted you? What are you looking forward to during the coming Holy Week? How will you prepare for crucifixion? The Resurrection?

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). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

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:

God of humility and power, we confess that like many others before us, we have at times made you into our image instead of being in awe of your glory. This coming week, help us to see you anew and afresh. Help us to be amazed and shout Hosanna. **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.