**Bearing Fruit – March 28, 2021**

**Palm/Passion Sunday**

Palm/Passion Sunday, the Sunday before Easter, reminds us of the honor due Jesus Christ as King, but also the week of teaching and suffering that leads us to Christ’s death on the cross and his resurrection. The Palms are the beginning of the story while the Passion are the events that lead to the cross.

You will notice that palms aren't specifically mentioned anywhere in the Scripture passage we will read on Sunday (Luke 19:29-44). Well, John 12:13 tells us that the "branches from the trees" that were cut at the time are actually palm branches:

This kind of welcome signifies a few things as we read in the Bible.

Psalm 118:25-26 is one of the psalms people sang as they entered Jerusalem, but it also points to Christ as the long-awaited Messiah.

2 Kings 9:13 They recognized that Christ is King

Zechariah 9:9 They all honored Him as both King and Messiah

When we worship, we not only remember, we are present.

Worship during Holy Week is to be experienced, not simply observed. Today on Palm Passion Sunday, we are part of the pilgrim crowd on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Passover is the way that God’s people, the Jews, remember and are present in celebrating God’s redemption from slavery in Egypt. Once they were no people, but now they are claimed as God’s people.

The pilgrim crowd expects that God may save them through a conquering messiah. They are correct that Jesus has come to save, but not in the way they expected. They are looking for a political solution to save them from the Romans. The crowd expects a crown while Christ seeks the cross. On Palm/Passion Sunday we remember the days of agony and glory as Christ is first declared King and then unjustly condemned to death on the cross. The movement of our service begins high and celebratory and ends with us standing at the foot of the cross, singing the criminal’s words, “*Jesus remember me when you come into Your Kingdom*.”

Through the work on the cross and the empty tomb we are claimed as God’s people. Once we were no people, but now we are claimed as God’s people. Our awareness as God’s people through Jesus Christ is born out in the enactments of Holy Week.

We remember the height of celebration from the hosannas to the depth of suffering we recall on Palm/Passion Sunday as we sing, “Jesus, remember me.”

We remember Christ’s most basic commandment, “Love one another” on Maundy Thursday.

We remember not only the human suffering of Good Friday mingled with divine grace we remember with the benefit of hindsight the mighty work on God on the cross.

Many of you will be helping greet the community and share the good news of Jesus Christ on Easter Saturday. Volunteers will arrive at 8:00 a.m.; our guests will begin arriving at 9:30. We will have a walk-through Holy Week at the Easter Party on Saturday.

For two millennium followers of Jesus Christ have gathered to remember the events surrounding his great sacrifice and resurrection. Please make plans to worship by watching both or either of our special services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Come and remember (online). Come and be present (online). We are God’s Easter people