













NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Leading people to become faithful followers of Jesus Christ together in God's world

Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'

Mark 11:9

Senior Pastor Associate Pastors

Parish Associates

Music

Ministry Directors

Dr. Ray Hylton, Sr.
Dr. Quinn Fox
Rev. Lisa Larsen
Dr. Nancy Fox
Dr. Kerry Stoltzfus
Dr. Michael Denham (Director)

Todd Fickley (Organist)
Joanna Zorack-Greene
(Contemporary Music Leader)
Jonathan Edwards (Serve)
Kristin Franke (Youth & Families)

Jill Meek (Children) Leslie Saum (Connections)

HOLY WEEK & FASTER AT NATIONAL

For more information about all of our Lenten and Easter events, please visit our <u>Easter page</u>, accessible on the home page of our website. To view any of our services, please join us on our <u>watch webpage</u>.

Welcome to Palm Sunday! Worship at 8:45 & 11:00 am

Today we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem with a children's palm procession! Children are invited to take part in the palm processional, leading the way into worship during the opening song. Kids, simply arrive a few minutes early to worship where Children's Ministry Directors will meet you with palm branches and instructions.

Palm Sunday Prayer Gathering Sunday, March 24, 9:55 am, Chapel

We invite you to a prayer gathering on Palm Sunday in the Chapel between worship services. This will be a rich time of prayer and reflection to center our hearts and open ourselves to see what God wants us to learn or experience this Holy Week.

Holy Week Devotional

Take a special journey to a deeper relationship with God. You'll find our Holy Week devotional on pages 12-15 of this bulletin or <u>online</u>, accessible from our website's <u>events page</u>.

Mozart Requiem

National Presbyterian Church Festival Choir & Orchestra

Today, March 24 at 5 pmNo tickets required - Freewill offering *Bring Your Family and Friends!*

Maundy Thursday Worship March 28, 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter, commemorating the day when Jesus celebrated his Last Supper, washed the feet of his disciples and commanded them to do the same for each other.

Good Friday Worship March 29, 7:00 pm

On Good Friday we will share in reflections in word and music on the seven last words of Christ.

Easter Worship

March 31, 8:30 am, 10:00 & 11:30 am Rejoice with us in the resurrection of our Lord! Join us on Easter Sunday at worship in-person in the Sanctuary and online on our Watch webpage.

After Worship Services, Easter Sunday: Coffee, Cookies and Easter Garden

Everyone is invited to come down to Stone Fellowship Hall after any of the worship services for coffee, cookies, and complimentary keepsake photos taken in the beautiful Easter Garden!

Children & Easter

- Childcare is available for children age 4 and under from 8:15am-12:45pm (including a Bible story and activities in the toddler room during 8:30am and 10:00am worship).
- "Children's Chapel" for children age 5 to 5th grade takes place during the sermon at 8:30am and 10:00am worship.
- An Easter Egg Hunt for pre-K to 5th grade follows the 8:30am service (in the garden) and the 10:00am service (on the school playground).

8:45 AM WORSHIP

Sanctuary and Online

WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE

GATHERING **Improvisations** Joanna Zorack-Greene, piano

CALL TO WORSHIP Zechariah 9:9 Dr. Quinn Fox

One Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

All Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

One Lo, your king comes to you;

All Triumphant and victorious is he; humble and riding on a donkey.

One Let us lift up our hearts and worship God together.

▲ OPENING SONG Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang.

Through pillared court and temple, the lovely anthem rang.

To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast, the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed mid an exultant crowd,

the victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud.

The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,

nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

"Hosanna in the highest!" that ancient song we sing!

For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven our King!

O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice, and in his blissful presence eternally rejoice!

▲ PRAYER OF ADORATION

CONFESSION OF SIN in unison

Almighty God, as we worship you today,

we remember that your Son our Savior entered Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed Messiah and King.

Many spread garments and branches along his way,

but did not know that way would lead to Calvary.

As we too raise branches of palms and voices singing, "Hosanna,"

we bow before you in humble repentance.

Help us remember that the One who came in the name of the Lord, came for our forgiveness and redemption.

SILENT CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Believe the good news of the Gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

▲ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Nettleton

Glory be to God the Father, glory also to the Son, glory to the Holy Spirit,

Ever Three and ever One;

As it was in the beginning, now and evermore shall be; Alleluia and thanksgiving, now and through eternity. ▲ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed

Dr. Fox

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Welcome And Announcements

Dr. Fox

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE Mark 11:1-11 Deacon Jeanne Su

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately." ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ¹Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁶Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁶Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Dr. Fox

Children ages 5 to 5th grade will then be dismissed for Children's Chapel. Parents may take children age 4 and under to the nursery.

SERMON

Experiencing God's Persistent Love
Great Expectations

Dr. Ray Hylton, Sr.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE AND CALL

Children return to join their parents in the sanctuary.

CALL FOR OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

Rev. Lisa Larsen

You may bring your gift forward during the offering song, or place it in an offering plate as you exit the Sanctuary.

▲ OFFERING SONG What A Beautiful Name Ben Fielding, Brooke Ligertwood

You were the Word at the beginning; One with God the Lord Most High.

Your hidden glory in creation, now revealed in you our Christ.

What a beautiful Name it is, what a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ, my King. What a beautiful Name it is, nothing compares to this.

What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

You didn't want heaven without us, so Jesus, you brought heaven down.

My sin was great, your love was greater; What could separate us now?

What a wonderful Name it is, what a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ, my King. What a wonderful Name it is, nothing compares to this.

What a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

What a powerful Name it is, what a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ, my King. What a powerful Name it is, nothing can stand against.

What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

▲ Doxology

Lasst uns erfreuen

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below: *Alleluia!*

Praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Larsen

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

▲ CLOSING SONG Shout Hosanna Kristian Stanfill

To the King of glory and light, all praises. To the only giver of life, our Maker.

The gates are open wide; we worship you.

Come see what love has done, amazing. He bought us with his blood, our Savior.

The cross has overcome; we worship you.

Shout hosanna, Jesus, he saves!

Shout hosanna, he rose from the grave!

Come and lift him up, hosanna!

To the King of glory and light, all praises. To the only giver of life, our Maker. The gates are open wide; we worship you. *Chorus*

Come see what love has done, amazing. He bought us with his blood, our Savior.

The cross has overcome; we worship you. (2x) *Chorus* (2x)

Come and lift him up hosanna! (2x)

▲ Benediction and Passing the Peace of Christ

Dr. Hylton

▲ SENDING NPC Band

▲ Congregation standing, as able

11:00 AM WORSHIP

Sanctuary and Online

WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

My Lord, What a Morning Overture

Raymond H. Haan G. F. Handel Todd Fickley, organ

CHIMES

CALL TO WORSHIP Zechariah 9:9 Dr. Quinn Fox

One Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

All Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

One Lo, your king comes to you;

All Triumphant and victorious is he; humble and riding on a donkey.

One Let us lift up our hearts and worship God together.

HYMN Hosanna, Loud Hosanna Ellacombe

Choir and Children

Hosanna to the King of Kings! Hosanna, let the praises ring! Hosanna to the King of Kings! Hosanna, let them ring! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna! Hosanna to the King of Kings! Hosanna to the King!

▲ Congregation Standing

Hosanna, loud hosanna the little children sang.

Through pillared court and temple the lovely anthem rang.

To Jesus, who had blessed them close folded to his breast,

The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

From Olivet they followed 'mid an exultant crowd,

The victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud.

The Lord of earth and heaven rode on in lowly state,

Nor scorned that little children should on his bidding wait.

▲ PRAYER OF ADORATION

▲ Congregational Response

Ellacombe

"Hosanna in the highest!" That ancient song we sing, For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven, our King. O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice, And in his blissful presence eternally rejoice!

CONFESSION OF SIN in unison

Almighty God, as we worship you today,

we remember that your Son our Savior entered Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed Messiah and King.

Many spread garments and branches along his way,

but did not know that way would lead to Calvary.

As we too raise branches of palms and voices singing, "Hosanna," we bow before you in humble repentance.

Help us remember that the One who came in the name of the Lord, came for our forgiveness and redemption.

SILENT CONFESSION AND KYRIE *sung first by the choir, then the congregation* Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon

Dr. Fox

Believe the good news of the Gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

▲ RESPONSE OF PRAISE

Truro

Lift up your heads, you mighty gates, behold, the King of glory waits; the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.

▲ Affirmation of Faith

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

Dr. Fox

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE

Mark 11:1-11

Deacon Kathy Arveson

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately." ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Dr. Fox

Children ages 5 to 5th grade will then be dismissed for Children's Chapel.

Parents may take children age 4 and under to the nursery.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE AND CALL

Children return to join their parents in the sanctuary.

CHORAL RESPONSE

The King's Majesty

Ride on! Ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die:

Bow thy meek head to mortal pain, then take, O God, thy power to reign.

CALL FOR OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

Rev. Lisa Larsen

Charles Gounod

Offertory Sanctus

Daus Sabaoth

Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis! Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

with Sheri Jackson, soprano

▲ Doxology Old Hundredth

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below: Praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Larsen

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

▲ Hymn 88

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Valet will ich dir geben

▲ BENEDICTION

Dr. Hylton

▲ CHORAL RESPONSE

Winchester New

Ride on! Ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die: O Christ, thy triumphs now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.

▲ Passing the Peace of Christ

Rev. Larsen

▲ Postlude

Finale from St. Matthew's Passion

J.S. Bach

Todd Fickley, organ

▲ Congregation standing, as able

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

All worship services are in the Sanctuary and online on our Watch webpage.

8:45 am: Contemporary Worship
9:55 am: Sunday School for all ages
11:00 am: Traditional Worship

Spring 2024 Adult Sunday School

The spring Adult Sunday School classes have begun. For class descriptions and more information please visit our Adult Classes webpage.

- Alpha Marriage Course:
 Couple Facilitators, Garden Room A
- The Border and Beyond: Migration and Immigration in the Mission of God: Nancy Fox, Jonathan Edwards, and Lewrene Glaser, Room 209
- Paul's Epistle to the Romans:
 R.V. Seep, Stone Fellowship Hall and online
- God's Plan of Redemption Through History: Dr. Quinn Fox, Parlor
- Exploring Luke's Gospel: Margaret Gardner, Donna Duss and others, Garden Room C
- **Parent Gathering:** Kristin Franke and others, Jones Hall

Childcare

The Nursery rooms are available 8:30 am until noon for infants to walkers, up to age 4.

Youth Sunday School

Visit our <u>Youth webpage</u> for information about Sunday School and other youth events. Youth grades 6-12, please come to the Multipurpose Building for Sunday School. We'll meet there briefly then split to smaller groups by age.

Children's Sunday School

Visit our <u>Children's webpage</u> to read about our Children's Ministry.

- Children ages 2-3 years have Sunday School in the Toddler Room in the main church building.
- Children age 4 through 5th grade meet for Sunday School in the Education Building (National Presbyterian School).

Are you grieving the loss of a loved one?

Griefshare is a 13-week program for those who are grieving. Visit www.griefshare.org or contact careoffice@nationalpres.org / 202.537.7540

Called to Care

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join Our Easter Welcome Team

Easter is just around the corner and we are looking for friendly volunteers to serve as a warm and welcoming presence. As our church community gathers to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, your service is crucial to making our Easter celebration a success. To join our Easter Welcome Team, please visit our Serve at Church webpage. You can also contact Leslie Saum directly at lsaum@nationalpres.org or 202,537,7494 for more information.

Easter Dedication Flowers

Would you like to honor or remember a loved one by supporting NPC's Easter flower displays? You will find Flower Ministry envelopes on the tables outside the sanctuary. You may make your donation to NPC by check or online, noting "Easter Flowers" on the memo line.

Women's Ministry Lunch Saturday, April 6, 12:00 pm Stone Fellowship Hall

All women are invited to the Women's Ministry Lunch. This noon fellowship gathering will be a time of prayer and praise as we celebrate a year of growing deeper roots in Christ and commitment to one another. Please join us for delicious food and faith-filled conversation.

Registration is available on the NPC website.

Pathway of Christian Discipleship Class Saturday, April 13, In-person

Becoming a church member here at NPC can be a meaningful step forward in your spiritual journey. To inquire about membership or just learn more about Christian faith, please attend the one-day in-person Pathway of Christian Discipleship class. For more information, and to register by April 3, contact Kemet Rakiatu at krakiatu@nationalpres.org or 202.537.7578.

Vacation Bible School Sign up today!

Join us for "Scuba" VBS, June 24-28 from 9:30am-12:30pm. Children age 4 to rising 5th grade are invited to explore the depths of God's love through Bible stories, music, crafts, games, service, and more. We also need adult volunteers to lead crews of campers or activity stations. To sign up or learn more, contact Jill Meek at jmeek@nationalpres.org.

Youth Group Dinners

On Sunday nights, our youth group meets for dinner and fellowship. We're always grateful for those who would be willing to provide a simple meal and spend time in fellowship eating with us! For more details, contact Kristin Franke (kfranke@nationalpres.org).

Week at a Glance

Palm Sunday, March 24

- 8:45 am: Contemporary Worship
- 9:55 am: Sunday School for all ages
- 9:55 am: Prayer gathering, Chapel11:00 am: Traditional Worship
- 5:00 pm: Festival Choir & Orchestra Concert Mozart Requiem
- 6:30 pm: Youth Group

Maundy Thursday, March 28

7:00 pm: Traditional Worship

Good Friday, March 29

• 7:00 pm: Tenebrae Service on the Last Words of Christ

Easter Sunday, April 9

- 8:30 am: Easter Worship
- Easter egg hunt in the Garden (after 8:30 service)
- 10:00 am: Easter Worship
- Easter egg hunt on the school playground (after 10:00 service)
- 11:30 am: Easter Worship

JOIN OUR NPC TEAM!

Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor

National Presbyterian Church is searching for an Executive Assistant to provide administrative support to the church's Senior Pastor. The successful candidate will have excellent organizational skills, be a strong communicator and self-starter. Day-to-day responsibilities include managing the Pastor's schedule and correspondence, coordinating Church meetings, partnering with church committees and providing administrative support. The position will serve as the primary interface and receptionist for the Senior Pastor to the congregation, staff, and public. The position is full-time and includes comprehensive benefits. Occasional weekend work may be needed to support church functions. Qualified applicants should send a resume to <a href="majorage-needed-nee

Associate for Young Adult and Youth Ministries

NPC is searching for an Associate for Young Adult and Youth Ministries. The successful candidate will have an innovative spirit and relational heart for developing new, sustainable models of ministry to young professionals in our congregation, and supporting the existing youth ministry programming. To apply, please send a resume, cover letter, and a list of 3 references to kfranke@nationalpres.org.

Church Hospitality Coordinator

The Church Hospitality Coordinator plays a pivotal role in ensuring that all church events, from Sunday services to special occasions, are marked by a warm, welcoming atmosphere for fellowship. The ideal candidate will organize excellent hospitality services at church events, fostering a warm and nurturing environment for all who enter our doors. The Church Hospitality Coordinator is a full time position under the supervision of the Director of Facilities, and is not exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The anticipated work schedule is Saturday through Wednesday with some flexibility. Qualified applicants should send a resume to recruiting@nationalpres.org.

NOTES



SETTING OUR FACES TOWARD JERUSALEM

A National Presbyterian Church Holy Week Devotional

When the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up to heaven he set his face to go to Jerusalem. Luke 9:51

Monday Luke 21:1-4: A Widow's Offering

Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

Leading up to this encounter, the chief priests and scribes were unhappy with Jesus' popularity. They attempted to entrap Jesus by posing various questions to elicit responses they could use against Jesus. Jesus, being the Son of God, knew their hearts, so their offerings, while impressive, were not genuine. Jesus makes the point that the poor widow, despite the meager offering, was the one demonstrating true piety and faith. She gave her all, revealing a genuine, sacrificial faith. She gave from her heart.

- 1. What does this story tell you about what God desires?
- 2. Why is it easier for us to give out of our abundance rather than out of our devotion?
- 3. Our finances often show us what we value. What do your finances tell you about where you put your trust?
- 4. What do you need to do to grow more rooted in your faith?

<u>Next step</u>: When the widow gives all she had to live on, she shows the depth of her trust in God. What is one area in your life where you are holding back from fully trusting in God? Does this affect your generosity with money, or time, or attention? Ask God to deepen your trust in Him during this Holy Week.

<u>Listen to</u>: Some hymns and contemporary songs have been chosen to enhance our understanding and experience of each daily devotion. See the <u>Holy Week Devotional</u> <u>Events page</u> for links.

<u>Prayer</u>: Holy God, help us to build our faith to become more like the widow. May we worship you wholeheartedly and trust you in every area of our lives. Amen.

Tuesday Luke 22:1-6: The Plot to Kill Jesus

Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people. Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

Jesus' ministry threatened the chief priests and scribes. Their authority over the people was challenged by Jesus' purity and commitment to the truth. By this point in the narrative, the Jewish leaders were coming to the conclusion that Jesus had to die. For the first time since the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Satan reappears in the story and enters Judas' heart to bring about Jesus' destruction.

- 1. What circumstances make temptation easier to choose? What circumstances make temptation easier to resist?
- 2. Judas was part of Jesus' inner circle, yet his heart was not fully committed to Jesus and his ministry. Why do you think that was so? What can you do to ensure that your heart is protected from being led astray?
- 3. Judas looks for an opportunity to betray Jesus when the crowd was not present. Why do you think was so? How does being in a group offer protection from temptation?

<u>Next step</u>: Take a look at your friend group today. Who encourages you to make good decisions? Is there someone you can seek to create personal accountability or to share your struggles with for the purpose of support and encouragement?

<u>Listen to:</u> See the <u>Holy Week Devotional Events page</u> for links to songs.

<u>Prayer</u>: Merciful God, it's so easy to be led astray when I am not in good relationship with you. Protect my heart against the evil one and strengthen my connection to you through the Holy Spirit so I hold fast to you. Amen.

Wednesday Luke 22:24-27: The Dispute about Greatness

A dispute also arose among the disciples as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

Jesus and his disciples have gathered for the Last Supper in the upper room and Jesus has just revealed that one of the men around the table had plans to betray him. The disciples ask who that could be and they divert the conversation to determine who around the table is the greatest. Jesus teaches them that in the kingdom of God, greatness is not measured by power or authority, but by a heart and life of service. By this definition, Jesus is the one who is the greatest.

- 1. This is not the first time the disciples have asked who among them is the greatest. (See Luke 9:46). Why do they fixate on their status rather than focus on the meaning of the Last Supper and the impending betrayal Jesus has just revealed?
- 2. In what ways do you show a heart for service? In what ways do you seek power and authority? What can you do to shift the balance to model Jesus more consistently?

Next step: Serving others is a powerful way to honor God. And God can use even small acts of service –a smile, a kind word, a show of patience – to transform a relationship or situation. Brainstorm some simple ways you can serve someone today, and then do it!

<u>Listen to</u>: See the <u>Holy Week Devotional Events page</u> for links to songs.

<u>Prayer</u>: Holy God, we are more like the disciples than we care to admit. We often miss the point of your ministry and we focus on the wrong things. Open our eyes to others and give us hearts to serve them with your compassion and mercy. Amen.

Maundy Thursday Luke 23:1-12: Jesus before Pilate and Herod

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place." When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

The Jewish leaders had determined that Jesus was guilty of their false accusations, but they couldn't execute anyone without the consent of the Roman government. They brought Jesus before Pontius Pilate with the expectation that he would agree to their demand. Pilate was known for his brutality and didn't hesitate to crucify criminals, but here, we see that Pilate didn't believe Jesus was guilty of a crime against Rome, so he sent Jesus to Herod. Herod wanted Jesus to entertain him with signs and wonders, but Jesus refused to engage in a sideshow. Jesus' silence unites the former enemies into friendship because it suited their purposes of satisfying the crowds and maintaining order and power.

- 1. The Jewish leaders wanted Jesus dead, Pilate didn't want to deal with Jesus and Herod wanted entertainment. In what ways do you try to make Jesus into your image? In what ways do you ignore Jesus for your own purposes?
- 2. Have you seen enemies become friends out of convenience? What did you learn from that?
- 3. What do you make of Jesus in this text? How does his silence affect you?

<u>Next step</u>: What do this story tell us about the potential perils of positions of power? What situations is God bringing to your attention that you should be praying for in light of this passage?

<u>Listen to</u>: See the <u>Holy Week Devotional Events page</u> for links to songs.

<u>Prayer</u>: Gracious God, I want to follow you with abandon, but I am fearful. I fear the judgment of others, the loss of status, and I fear what you call me into. Help me to stand firm in my faith in you and to have courage to profess my belief in you. Amen.

Good Friday Luke 23:32-33; 39-43: Jesus and Two Criminals

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with Jesus. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

We know very little about the two men crucified next to Jesus other than the Romans found them guilty of crimes severe enough to warrant death on a cross. One criminal doesn't express remorse or ask for forgiveness; he is only interested in Jesus if Jesus will save him from his fate. The other criminal showed reverence to Jesus. He opened his heart to Jesus and encountered him on a deeper level which transformed his heart into one of faith. He asks Jesus to remember him, and Jesus promises him that he will have eternal life with him.

- 1. What human trait prompted the first criminal to react to Jesus in the way he did? In what ways are you like the first criminal?
- 2. What made the second criminal behave differently? In what ways are you like him?
- 3. What does your salvation in Christ mean to you?

<u>Next step</u>: Think of someone in your circle who doesn't have faith in Jesus. What specific actions can you take to demonstrate your faith in God and witness to this friend or relative? Commit to regularly pray for your loved one to come to faith. Invite someone to church.

<u>Listen to</u>: See the <u>Holy Week Devotional Events page</u> for links to songs.

<u>Prayer</u>: Merciful God, you have transformed my life by sending your son, Jesus, to pay for my sin and transgressions. You offer life and relationship with you through your precious son. Help me to be truly aware of this gift and to show you my gratitude. Amen.

Saturday Luke 23:50-56: Jesus' burial

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Joseph was a wealthy member of the Jewish council who was a good and upright man who looked for the kingdom of God. But he did not go along with the schemes and action of the other Jewish leaders because he was a secret disciple of Jesus. After Jesus' death, Joseph found courage he hadn't previously displayed, to go to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body, to reverently care for it, and give Jesus a proper burial. These actions would show the crowd who Joseph truly was: he couldn't hide his beliefs in Jesus any longer.

- 1. Why was Joseph reluctant to publicly acknowledge his faith in Jesus before Jesus' death? What changed?
- 2. In what ways are you similar to Joseph? In what ways are you different? What fears hold you back from being more honest with others?
- 3. Joseph prepares the body for burial and the women complete the preparations of anointing the body with spice and ointments after the Sabbath. What does it mean to you that these individuals showed such care for Jesus in death?

<u>Next step</u>: Fear can be a powerful force holding us back from being our true selves. What would you do if you weren't afraid? How could you take a small step toward conquering that fear?

<u>Listen to</u>: See the <u>Holy Week Devotional Events page</u> for links to songs.

<u>Prayer</u>: Holy God, we praise you for Jesus and his willing sacrifice on our account. We thank you for examples in scripture of people who loved your son. Help us to have courage to love Jesus wholeheartedly and to show others our faith in word and deed. Amen.

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We pray:

that our hearts would be full of gratitude for all God's blessings now and to come.

We pray for:

Little Lights Urban Ministries as they provide tutoring, friendship, holistic ministry and services to children and families living in poverty in DC housing projects.

How may we pray for you?

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