

Sunday April 14 through Sunday April 21

- This morning the choir will perform *Praise to the Lamb* during the worship service.
- The Easter Egg hunt will begin at 2 pm after the Easter Cantata.
- The Administrative Board won't meet this evening.
- All Candy Egg orders need to be in to Christy Smith Monday evening.
- Candy Eggs will start being prepared in the Fellowship Hall Tuesday evening at 3 pm.
- Bible Study will be Wednesday evening at 6 pm and Choir practice will follow at 7 pm.
- Lenten Service and Luncheon is being held at First Baptist on Wood Avenue at Noon on Thursday.
- Maundy Thursday Communion Service will be hold Thursday night at 7 pm.
- Katie Shupe's Pop Up Bakery will have items for sell from 2 to 5 pm on Saturday afternoon.
- Pastor Robert leads Trinity UMC in the Celebration of Christ Jesus' Resurrection.



This WEEK at Trinity

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Sunday April 14

PALM SUNDAY

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship
EASTER CANTATA
2:00 pm—Easter Egg Hunt

Monday April 15

All orders for Candy Eggs need to be in
7:00 pm—Boy Scouts

Tuesday April 16

11:00 am—Ugly Mug Study Group
3:00 pm—Candy Egg making Party in Fellowship Hall

Wednesday April 17

6:00 pm—Bible Study
7:00 pm—Choir Practice

Thursday April 18

Candy Eggs will be available for pickup
MAUNDY THURSDAY
7:00 pm—Communion Service

Friday April 19

9:00 am—MEOC

Saturday April 20

2:00 pm—Pop Up Bakery

Sunday April 21

EASTER SUNDAY

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship

Palm Sunday

I am not preaching today. The Choir proclaims God's Word in song. The following prepares us for Holy Week and serves as a sermon on Philippians 2: 5-11.

We make the triumphant entry of Jesus into child's play. No foul. No harm. People then and now get amped up by a parade, a show of force, and the hope of victory. Those who look beyond the distractions of the cheering crowd and paving the streets with cloaks and palm branches will behold the fulfillment of the Christmas Story!

Look closely and behold God at work through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit leads Jesus into the City of God to reveal the fulfillment of the "Peace on Earth" announced by the heavenly host. This peace has little to do with donkeys, a symbol of peaceful surrender, or the waving of white flags. Friends, do not confuse religious sacrifices, or the peacekeeping forces of this world, with the Peace God made with sin and humanity.

All three arrive in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Shepherds drove tens of thousands of spotless lambs into Jerusalem through the Sheep Gate. Each family purchased a lamb, took it to the Priest, and then, together they made sacrifice. They "do this in remembrance" of God delivering their ancestors from death and slavery in Egypt. As many as 6000 Roman soldiers arrived in Jerusalem by Palm Sunday. They represent Pax Roma, the Peace of the Roman Empire. The Way of the World calls peacekeepers to punish, kill, and crucify anyone who "rises" to take their power and authority. On the other side of the Holy City, Jesus rides a donkey. He comes from Bethany, meaning House of Suffering, and Bethphage which means House of Unripened Fig. On Good Friday, Jesus will suffer. On Holy Saturday, the unripened fruit of salvation will be sown in the tomb. On Easter Sunday, the Fruit of Salvation will rise ripened. That first Holy Week, Jerusalem became the epicenter of a cosmic collision. The Way of the World, the Way of Religion, and the Way of Salvation continue this collusion still today.

God did not come to be with us in human form to surrender. He came to serve, to rescue, and heal. Friends, peace is the person of Jesus Christ. He came to make peace with us, our sin, our fear, and our enemies He calls neighbors.

The Apostle Paul speaks often of this cosmic collision. He calls the faithful to live in the world but not of the world. To live in the world, but not of it, he challenges us to "have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus." I contend that we who have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus navigate life through faith in the Peace of Christ, with Hope that seeks peace with our enemies and neighbors, which reveals the unconditional love of God. As Paul says, Faith, Hope, and Love abide, but the greatest of these is Love. Love suffers all things with patience. Patience plants the unripened fruit of Faith in the ground of Hope. Hope never disappoints. Hope "rises" in newness of life. It rises in love that sows the seed of peace, joy, kindness, and generosity.

Consider the Way to have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. (See Philippians 2: 5-11)

- "Jesus did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited." (Oneness) God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Yet, they are ONE. To put it in a more visible way God reveals Himself as Creator of all things, Redeemer of all things, and the power of Presence in all things. The Father would never say, "I have no need of the Son." The Holy Spirit would never leave the Father or Son on their own. Furthermore, they would never exploit one another. In other words, they never work against one another, or take advantage of the other, or claim to be greater than the other. (Listen closely and you should hear the root of sin and the meaning of Holiness!)
- "Christ emptied himself!" (Mercy) We know that an empty container waits to be filled! IN the same way, Jesus emptied himself to let the Father of Creation and the powerful Presence of the Holy Spirit fill Him with Mercy, Grace, and Love.
- "Jesus took the form of a slave." (Submission) To understand God's mercy, wrap your mind around the fact that Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin. Many a slave to sin believes in God, believes in Jesus Christ, but refuses to deny themselves. They believe but do not have faith to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- "Jesus was born in human likeness." (Repentance means to take a new direction.) We are born in God's likeness, image! Being "born again" requires us to become slaves of mercy, slaves of faith, slaves of hope, and slaves of unconditional love. The root of sin grows out of the heart that desires to be lord of self, the world, neighbor, and God. Therefore, sin exploits God and defies the image in which God created humanity. Sin convinces us that we are greater than God. Sin convinces us that our good, hard work provides our shelter, food, safety, and prosperity. Jesus turned to us. He emptied himself. He received our sin and died to prove that nothing has the power to separate us from God.
- "And being found in human form." (Incarnation) Incarnation means that God is pleased to pour Himself into all of creation, into human form, and into all humanity. When shall our belief become faith filled with hope and hope filled with love?
- "He humbled himself." (Denying self.) IN other words, He emptied himself to let us see what it means to have faith in the Father and hope in the Holy Spirit.
- "And became obedient to the point of death". (Faith) Faith reflects unconditional trust in: God who created the heavens and the earth; Jesus who suffered all sin, died, and rose again; the Presence of the Holy Spirit that fills all things with the light of love.

When you face trials of any kind, do you let your belief become faith? Do you have faith that Jesus made peace with sin and death? Do you let your faith become hope? Hope, like faith, cannot be seen with human eyes. Hope, however, compels faithful people to be peacemakers. Do you let your hope become love of God, self, and neighbor. The way of salvation calls humanity to reflect the image of God who said, "Let there BE Light." I contend God's Light...illuminates belief, faith, hope, and love. Herein, we experience the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. Lord, help our unbelief and ripen our unripened fruit. Amen.

One in Christ,

Robert