

THE HOPE JOURNAL

LEARNING TO LOVE, TOGETHER



MARCH 24, 2024

LITURGY

remembering together a holy week

by Drew Downs

For the modern era, we have struggled with how to keep Holy Week. Industrialization brought clocks, schedules, and work weeks. And with it, something we call “productivity,” which mostly appears to be a word for increasing expectations of busyness.

Patterns of keeping this time special have evolved into having a Sunday for the Passion and then one for the Resurrection. And I’ve noticed how often lifelong Episcopalians

make these Sundays their commitment.

Casting these theological ideas as the essential point misses the point most profoundly.

We gather during this time to remember. To literally re-connect (re-member) the story and people of God. That the divine politics of love and grace are beyond the scope of human comforts and preferences.

LENT

2024

WHAT'S GOING ON

*"You know we've got to find a way
To bring some loving here today".*

-Marvin Gaye

Disciples, Apostles, and Saints!

Holy Week

The season of Lent is capped with a final week of devotion. It begins on Sunday with a day the church uses to remember both the beginning and end of the week—a day to remember both the palms in procession of Jesus's entrance into Jerusalem and the crucifixion near the week's end.

The church gathers again for a sequence of liturgies we call the Triduum. In it, we remember Maundy Thursday, the evening when the disciples gathered with Jesus for the final time. Then on Good Friday, to remember the passion. And then late on Saturday, to celebrate the first service of Easter in the brilliant and festive Great Vigil of Easter.

If you would like to follow along with meditation for each day of the week, visit:
<https://drewdowns.net/2015/03/28/holy-week-meditations/>

And join us in the communal re-membering:

- Sunday 3/24 — 10:00 only, Palm and Passion Sunday
- Thursday 3/28 — 6 pm, Maundy Thursday, with foot washing
- Friday 3/29 — noon, Good Friday
- Saturday 3/30 — 8 pm, The Great Vigil of Easter
- Sunday 3/31 — 8:00 & 10:00, Easter - with brunch and egg hunt

With love,
Drew

LENT

2024

FOR SUNDAY

Sunday of the Passion

March 24, 2024

Collect

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Reading

from Mark 14:1-15:47

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

LENT

Reflection

As we progress through Lent, we are reminded that Jesus is heading to Jerusalem. There, he will confront the Temple authorities, they will arrest him, try him, and hand him over to Rome to be tortured and executed. And then, on the third day, he will be raised.

It is both familiar and something we avoid dealing with. That this is the way things would work out.

In Mark 8, when Jesus first tells his followers of this inevitability, Peter famously rejects it. He wants to find a way to keep it from happening. And who wouldn't?

Jesus. He wouldn't. And I think that's the point.

As we now work our way through Holy Week, which isn't only punctuated by the Passion, but is colored by it, listen to the prophetic voice of Jesus. Because he keeps drawing the disciples to see what is happening. To walk this road with him. Being his disciple means carrying our *own* cross to Jerusalem.

And maybe literal crucifixion isn't our fate. But for some disciples it was.

His death is not his end. Nor is his death *our* end—the movement would continue—and then, on top of that, is the resurrection. The end isn't even the end!

As many of us face mortality and mourning, desiring hope and understanding, may we gain clarity in the journey—that we all must carry a cross. Not because God wills it, or such a thing is natural to life, but it is the inevitable outcome of human failure. That economics keeps us from family, disease keeps us from community, and responsibilities keep us from engaging.

We carry our cross with Jesus. With the promise that the burden is lighter. And the end isn't the end. Because God's grace and love can handle any challenge.

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
215 N. 7TH ST TERRE HAUTE IN 47807
812.232.5165

STSTEPHENSTH.ORG
