



Weekly Booster

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Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

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Rahab: Her Faith Changed History

Then Joshua, son of Nun, secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.
– Joshua 2:1

Rahab, like the rest of Jericho's inhabitants, was deeply frightened. As a pagan prostitute in a doomed city, her prospects seemed bleak. Across the Jordan, on the plains of Moab, an invasion force had gathered. Its numbers were beyond counting, but the menacing army wasn't the only cause for fear. Word had spread that the Israelite God had roundly defeated the gods and army of Egypt. If the greatest empire in the world couldn't stop Israel, what hope remained for a Canaanite city like Jericho?

Rahab's Story

Rahab inhabited a house in the city wall from which vantage point she prospered in her trade. There were always men hungry for pleasure. Most lived in the city, but the road that passed by Jericho also ensured a steady stream of weary travelers seeking what Rahab could provide.

Two strangers, hoping to escape notice, appeared at her door. What was more common than travelers seeking out a harlot?

Continued page 2.

“Don’t wish for it, work for it.”

Reminders

February 22nd-April 6th
Lent Season

April 1st

Men’s Bible Study – 8:00 a.m.

April 2nd

Youth, Jr/Sr Sunday School
10:30 a.m.

Confirmation – 6:00 p.m.
HS Youth Group – 7:00 p.m.
Communion Sunday

April 5th

Study with Pastor David - Noon
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir – 6:45 p.m.

April 6th

T.O.P.S. – 5:30 p.m.

**Worship Assistants are needed
for April 23rd & 30th

** Fellowship Volunteers needed
sign-up in Fellowship Hall



Faith- Continued from page 1.

But the two were spotted and identified as Israelite spies. Rahab saw an opportunity, hid the Israelites, and then lied to the king’s men, sending them out of the city in the pointless pursuit of these enemies of Jericho (Joshua 2:2 – 7). Why not? What did she owe the king or anyone else in Jericho? The Israelites would soon overwhelm the city. Moreover, something new was growing in her heart — an unaccustomed stirring called hope.

Her hope was based on what she’d learned about the invisible God of Israel. His name — “I Am” — was unlike any other god. The gods she knew were little deities who were supposed to control weather, crops, or fertility. She could bargain with them, just as she was accustomed to haggling with a man over the price of her services. This “I Am” wasn’t in the business of wrangling over terms, so Rahab negotiated instead with the spies to ensure her family’s survival (Joshua 2:8 – 16). But in doing so, Rahab gained more than safety: She received a new life. The God of Israel enfolded her in the community of his people. She left a life of shame to ultimately become a wife and a mother. Most amazing, from Rahab, would come the line of David and his greatest descendant: the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of humankind – Jesus (see Matthew 1:5 – 6).

Rahab hoped for mere survival but gained salvation on the basis of her faith.

All of this began with Rahab’s faith in a God she had come to know secondhand through nearly unbelievable stories of his great works (Joshua 2:8 – 11). She placed her hope in a God greater than those fashioned by human beings. This is the same God who can deliver us. He’s great enough to dry up the “seas” to make our way safe, destroy all the obstacles that threaten to destroy us, and demonstrate that he’s greater than heaven and earth (Joshua 2:10-11).

How did Rahab tap into God’s might? She –

- Formed an accurate understanding of him (Joshua 2:8 – 11)
- Trusted those who had experienced God’s power and entered his service (Joshua 2:12 – 14)
- Served him by helping the spies escape (Joshua 2:15 – 16), and
- Followed the instructions of those who had already learned God’s ways (Joshua 2:17 – 21).

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“Jesus is God’s selfie.”

Volunteers Needed



Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School 10:15
Questers (Adults) 10:30**

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

**Wednesday
CLOSED**

Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

****Chancel Choir –
Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m.
Sunday 8:30 a.m.**

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



What was the charge the Lord, gave to Cyrus King of Persia in the boo of Ezra?

- a) build him an altar
- b) gather his people
- c) build him a house
- d) to keep the city

By what is those who were one far off brought near according to the book of Ephesians?

- a) The blood
- b) The law
- c) The Holy Spirit
- d) Testimonies of apostles

Who was Jeremiah’s scribe?

- a) Baruch
- b) Jehudi
- c) Elishama
- d) Hananiah

Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



2nd – Nathan Blane, Gregg Broermann, Abby DeLong

3rd – Colin Powles

5th – Mary Lou Rexroth

8th – Blake & Bowen Burdorf

****See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to office@shen.church**

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

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Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new look at
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our Youtube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: There will come a time

People: When the nations will run to God's Mountain

L: There will come a time

P: When war will be no more

L: We are people who live the gospel

P: We are a people who do no harm and do good

L: We are a people who love God

P: We are a people for whom the world is our parish

"A Messiah for the God-Forsaken"

Guiding Verses: Matthew 21:1-11 & 27:27-54

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9

New Testament Reading: Matthew 21:1-11

Gospel Reading: Matthew 26:14-17, 66

Songs

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna #278

Mighty to Save #3038

I Stand Amazed in the Presence #371

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship - 79

Online Worship – 17

Our Mission:

"Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love."

Our Vision:

"We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world."

Answers for March 26^h are d) unknown d) Jabez c) Levi

Quiz s hints – Q1) Ezra Q2) Ephesians Q3) Jeremiah

Faith - Continued from page 2

Rahab's faith and service not only saved her, but it gave her a home among God's people (Joshua 6:22 – 23). The symbol of salvation for Rahab and her family was the scarlet cord in her window (Joshua 2:18,21). Today we can cling to another "scarlet cord" — the blood of Jesus, which cleanses us and makes us God's prized possessions. We've been redeemed from the empty way of life that once enslaved us by the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18 – 19).

Adapted from the article in the NIV Celebrate Recovery Study Bible. NIV Weekly Blog, HarperCollins Christian Publishing. All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, March 27, 2023.



This is the day that the Lord has made. For us. Because of us. It could be argued that out of all these high and holy days, this one is the most ... human. "Well, of course," you might think. This week is a divine and human encounter; in fact, we might argue it is THE divine and human encounter. This is true but hear me out. This day, this slash day, this Palm/Passion Day is the most human day of this whole event.

Next Sunday is God's Day – the event is God's, and we simply receive it like the gift that it is. Good Friday is the day where sin is exposed in all its ugliness – or it is the day when agape love is revealed in all its glory and wonder. Maundy Thursday is Jesus' day (I realize they are all about Jesus) when he tries one more time to teach by example and by word what it means to follow him.

But this day is our day. Yes, it is the day Jesus chose to make a declaration, the day he claimed the ritual and the pageantry of triumphal entry and royal enthronement. Yes, it is the day when he claimed the crown and the throne that was his from the beginning of creation. We don't want to take away from that reality, that truth. So, if this was only Palm Sunday, then we could step back and let the parade pass us by and let our role be one of waving branches and shouting for salvation, which is what "hosanna" meant originally – "save us." Many take that route, focusing all the energy on the Palm Sunday declaration and the festive potential of the triumphal parade. Yet somehow and somewhere within the time of worship on this day, there needs to be at least a pointer, a hint of what is to come. There needs to be an understanding of what this declaration cost the one we call the Prince of Peace.

When we create an event called Palm/Passion Sunday, then it becomes an event that tells the truth about us as clearly as it tells the truth about him. Where else could we in the space of one act of worship let collide our full-throated shouts of praise and our blood-thirsty calls for a painful death? “Hosanna” and “crucify him” should not be in the same week, let alone in the same hour, except for the condition of our souls and the ephemeral nature of our faith. And to declare that that was them and then and not us and now is to miss the point of the remembrance of the event. We were there. Or rather he is here, and this event is here. And one of the overriding questions for this day is, “Where do we stand?” On this parade day, where do we stand? In the place of judgment, where do we stand? When he stands before us, bloodied and beaten, where do we stand and what do we say?

I’ve never been in a parade. That doesn’t bother me all that much. I mean, who wants all the attention? The adulation of the crowds, the cheers and the waves, the throng lining the streets, wanting to be you. At that moment, you are the center of attention, the brightest star in the firmament, the man of the hour, the woman of the year. Who wouldn’t want to be in a parade?

Do you think that was why he did it? For the attention, for the adulation? Knowing what was to come, did he just want to soak up a little bit of honor before being subjected to the shame and suffering that was to be his lot? Who could blame him if that was the reason? And yet it doesn’t seem quite right, that even here on this threshold, the one who would soon be on his knees washing the dust of the city streets off the feet of those called his followers, would be so self-serving on that first Palm Sunday.

We’ve come around to the parade again. That odd little celebration marked by palm leaves and shouting in church. Maybe if you are one of that go-all-out kind of church, you even bring in a donkey to parade up and down the aisle of your sanctuary, while the trustees keep a wary eye on the trailing end, just in case.

So many questions come to mind as we read this story. Was this prearranged, or was it somehow mystical, or did the disciples commit grand donkey larceny? If the crowd was as large as Matthew says, then who was the “whole city” asking the identity question from the fringes of the parade? Or was this the first instance of a “preacher estimate”? And how did Jesus manage to sit on a donkey and its colt at the same time? Was the crowd drawn by some sort of divine balancing act? And did the homeowners lining the impromptu parade route complain about the crowd pulling branches off the trees?

More importantly, however, the real question was, “Did they get it?” This was a message Jesus was trying to send. Matthew got it. It may have taken him some years after the fact, but he got it. That’s why he dredges up Zechariah’s words to help us get the point. The king who comes, not on a war horse, but on a donkey of peace. Did they get it?

They shouted “hosanna”; that implies they got it. “Hosanna” translates as “Save us!” So maybe they got it. Matthew says the crowd was large. Maybe they got it or wanted to get it, anyway. But then the city was clueless, “Who is this?” And maybe the city and the crowd were marching side by side; maybe the crowd was large but was made up of followers and city dwellers, some who got it many who didn’t. Maybe they were

marching along waving their branches and shouting “hosanna” (which scholars tell us came to mean “hooray” or even “howdy” by that time, not the prayer of petition that it once meant. It is sort of like the word “goodbye,” which was originally a blessing — “God be with you”—but now is nothing more than a wave, a signal, a cipher). Their brows were furrowed, and they would turn to the one beside them and ask, “Why are doing this again?” And maybe the response would be a shrug. Maybe it would be, “That’s Jesus, the guy from Galilee.” “Oh, right” they would say, pretending to know who in the world Jesus from Galilee was.

Did they get it? It is hard to say. One thing Matthew is clear about is that disaster was right around the corner. If there was any hope that Jesus was using this event to soak up a little goodwill, it would be shattered by the very next verse. The parade didn’t end with handshakes all around and a few high-fives for a job well done. No, it trundled all the way from the gates of the city to the temple where Jesus turned over some tables and knocked over some dove cages. It ended with a rumble. The self-proclaimed king of peace engages in an act of violence that left them shocked and confused. What peace was he announcing? What peace was he bringing? And if you are going to strike a blow, why not strike against the foreign oppressors and not the economic machinery of our own people?

Especially when that machinery will strike back. Wouldn’t it have been better to keep a low profile? Couldn’t he have just left a note, made a speech, wrote an editorial for the *Sunday Jerusalem Times* about the proper use of the Temple? Wouldn’t that have been better? Safer, anyway? Why did he have to provoke?

All kinds of questions come to our minds when we pay attention to the parade on Palm Sunday. Questions that, perhaps in worship this weekend, you won’t even attempt to answer. This is, instead, a listening Sunday, an experiencing Sunday, not an answer Sunday. Somehow you need everyone to come and hear what the parade turns into. To come and hear what steps are taken once he dismounts that donkey. To come and pick up a branch and see if they want to walk along in this parade; to come and see if they have it in them to shout “hosanna,” or if the word gets caught in the throat. Or mixed up with another word, one of frustration and anger, one of despair and hopelessness.

The same crowd that shouted “hosanna” on Sunday began to shout “crucify him” on Friday. How much more human can we be? This is the day we are revealed. This is the day our hearts of hope are broken. This is the day that the Lord has made.



Current Community Food Pantry Needs for April:

Pineapple, Mandarin Oranges, Cinnamon Applesauce, Cake, Brownie and Muffin Mixes, Creamed Corn, Soda and Graham Crackers, Tuna & Chicken Helpers, Spaghetti Sauce and Spaghetti, Cereal, Shampoo and Conditioner, Toilet Paper



Join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross and beyond. During Holy Week, we will have prayer stations set up in the Church for you to come and prayerfully experience The Way of the Cross (more info and specific times to follow).

April 2 - Palm Sunday (with Communion)

April 5 - Midweek Bible Study: What it Means to Take up Your Cross

April 7 - Good Friday Service (6 pm)

April 9 - Easter Sunday

The Mission Cans will be available for donations to the UMCOR Ukraine Disaster and Recovery Fund, April 2, and April 9. These grants are providing humanitarian assistance in the form of food, clothing, water, shelter, and other necessary supplies.

One hundred percent of your giving will go towards this project. If you wish to give to another organization, please indicate on your check or place in an envelope.

This is an opportunity to express our love and support to the world.



The Way of the Cross

During Holy Week, journey with Jesus to the cross and reflect on what it means to take up our cross and follow. There will be prayer stations in the sanctuary walking you through the final moments of Jesus' life for you to engage with at your own pace and at your own time.

**The sanctuary will be open for prayer anytime during office hours and at the following times:

***Monday** (4/3)-5:00-7:00 pm

***Wednesday** (4/5)-7:30-9:00 pm

***Friday** (4/6)-3:00-5:00 pm