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A Donkey's Tale: The Gospel of Palm Sunday

By Dr. Michael A. Milton

As we reflect on Palm Sunday, we are reminded of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The Scripture that refers to the Lord telling His disciples to get the donkey is found in Matthew 21:1-3:

"As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.'"

Let's hear about Palm Sunday from one who was there. All the children waved palms and sang Hosanna. I could never forget! It was the high mark of my life. I know: I have heard the jokes that you've made. It is interesting that you never use the King James version except when you're talking about Baalom's donkey (Numbers 22:28). Our kind knows all about the jokes. But it was no joke on that Sunday. Now, I can't talk like Balaam's creature, but I have something more. I have a donkey's tale.



There are several things about that day that stand out to me. Every so often, I feel like I just want to rear back on my hind legs and bray at the beauty of those moments with the One called Immanuel. What do I remember? Well, they were at least three special moments that come to mind, and these memories may have something to say to you.

Firstly, Jesus chose me. I remember that the Galilean chose me to fulfill Scripture. I did not belong to the Galilean, but I belonged to a man from Jerusalem. But on that day the Galilean sent his disciples and told my master that "the Lord hath need" of me. Do you know what that means? Do you know how it feels to be the bad end of a joke all the time? I don't have to do anything and yet people immediately see me as stubborn and mean. Not Jesus. He did not choose me out of pity. He did not select me to be his supporter because of any other reason than this: in the secret councils of Almighty God, he set his love on me. If only I could have talked! Do you know how it feels when God chooses you despite your reputation? Yet, Jesus chose me.

Jesus used me. By saying that Jesus "used me," I don't mean that he took advantage of me. To the contrary! He gave me a part in the greatest story ever told. What do you think about that? Do you still want to call me stupid and mean and stubborn? I may be all of those things, but for one brief shining moment, I carried the King of Kings

and Lord of lords on my back. And I can never get over how God uses a simple little creature like me to bring about so great a salvation.

Others overlooked me. In the midst of all the hosannas and all the waving palms and palm branches thrown at my feet, I knew the cheering was not for me. I knew the palm branches did not form a veritable "red carpet" for the Prince of donkeys. No. I knew they were welcoming Jesus as the promised Messiah. But just as they overlooked me and my important part — the role that changed our species — in that great Palm Sunday story, many overlooked the Scriptures. For that glorious King who wrote on my back was not a political figure. He was not riding into Jerusalem to overthrow Rome. He was riding into Jerusalem to go to the cross. And I can never forget that. The Scriptures declare that we creatures know more about God than some of you. Job 12:7-10 says:

"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you, or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?"

So many misunderstood. But I knew why he chose me. I knew why he used me on that glorious day. And I could see what many overlooked. The King of Kings and the Lord of lords came into Jerusalem as the Prince of peace. He was on his way to die for the sins of the world, to give his life as a substitutionary atonement for sin. He lived the perfect life so that whoever believes in him is covered in the righteousness of Jesus. And what did he get? He got our sins. He took our pain. But he gave us his life.

I'm just one of God's creatures. But on that special day, that Palm Sunday, my life and, indeed, my kind were changed forever.

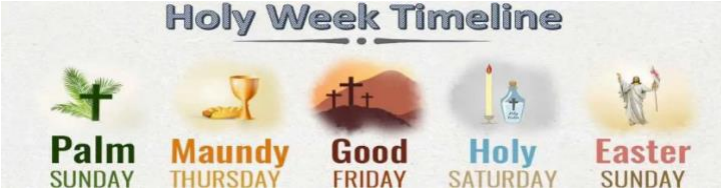


Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Now is the time to join if you would like to be a part of our new blended worship service. For more info, contact: Gerry Nielson (321-652-5361 gerry Nielson@gmail.com)

Giving Through Our Website

Go to <https://chairesmethodist.church> and just click the blue GIVE button and you will be taken to the church REALM site. The church secretary can help you set up your account.

Pastor Kerry and Tiffany will be going on vacation April 21st through the 28th. During his absence, we will have pastor Mike Shockley on standby should a spiritual emergency arise. Mike will also be delivering the sermon on April 27th. Should you need pastoral services, please contact Susan Capelouto and she will get in touch with pastor Mike Shockley.



April 17th (7:00 pm) Maundy Thursday Service- This will be held in the historic sanctuary and communion will be served. This also has a reader’s theater that will need volunteers. *If you would like to be a part of the reader’s theater, please see sign up on the back table of the multi-purpose sanctuary.*



April 18th (7:00 pm) Good Friday Service- This will be held in the historic sanctuary and will be a retelling of the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. *Following the service, we will need volunteers to blacken the sanctuary for the Black Saturday prayer vigil.*

April 19th (9:00 am – 9:00 pm) Black / Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil- We will be hosting 12 hours of prayer in the historic sanctuary and will be asking members of the congregation to sign up for 30-minute time slots. *This prayer vigil will be for personal reflection and the lifting up of our Easter service on April 20th for the movement of the spirit of God in a mighty way.*

If you would like a phone call or visit from Pastor Kerry, please let him or Susan Capelouto, the secretary, know. Pastor Kerry Cell: 305-407-7040



Core52: A Fifteen-Minute Daily Guide to Build Your Bible IQ in a Year

Think of *Core52* as a fast-pass to biblical literacy, calling for 15 minutes a day, 5 days a week, for 1 year. Just a reminder: If you are keeping up with doing the Core 52 reading with the congregation, this week we are on **Chapter 14 (Wisdom) and the key memorization scripture is: Proverbs 1:7**

Resurrection Cross

April 20th (10:00 a.m.) Easter Service- We will be celebrating the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. Prior to the service, we will be decorating our All-Saints Cross and converting it to a Resurrection Cross. We are asking members of our congregation to show up a little early and bring flowers to help with its decoration. We also need volunteers to help prepare and decorate our cross. *If you would like to be a part of the decorating team, please see the pastor’s wife, Tiffany Foote.*



Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast



Looking ahead please mark your calendars for our special Easter Sunrise service that will be held **on April 20, 2025 @ 6:45 am** on the property of Johnny & Penny Petrandis. There is a sign-up sheet located in the multipurpose sanctuary for people to bring various dessert for breakfast following the service. *Please bring breakfast items by 6:30 am.*

Inviting your friends. We are encouraging members of our congregation to invite their friends and family members to our Sunrise service. Given that it is being held at someone’s private residence. We are hesitant to advertise by flyers or newspaper. However, if you have friends or family members that you would like to invite, please take 1 or more of the invite postcards that are provided on the sign-up table in the multi-purpose building.



Members

Marion Lollie / Family of Alice Simmons / Debbie Pahl / Margaret Boyette / Jean Lombardi / Mary Alice Linzy / Pete Peters / David Matthews / Franklin Chaires / Martha Fletcher / Bobbie Harrison / Casey Friel

Friends and Family

Rebecca & son, Dominic (Donna Wheeler) / Thomas & Rebecca Stumbaugh / Family of Rod Strickland, Family of Aunt Linda (Diane Matthews) / Abby (Tiffany Foote) / Etta Young, Sheila & Al Godwin (Terry Hatcher / Floerke Family (Carolyn Floerke) / Ronny Wagner (brother of Pat Alley) / Jones and Strickland Families (Frances Chaires / Family of Drew Hubbard (friends of Dale Thompson)/ Stevie Hubbard (son of Edie Hubbard) / Martha Capelouto (Susan’s mother) / Family of Tobin Dykes (cousin of Frances Chaires) / Bob Brady (friend of Marion Lollie) / Hazel Oliver (sister of David Matthews) / Barbara Brandt (friend of Mary Alice Linzy) / Frances & R.L. White (brother & SIL of Debbie Pahl) /Family of Cathy Katz (Tiffany Foote’s aunt) / Gary Applewhite (bother of Cathy Lee) / Eddie Doerr (Sheila Novak) / Family of Kelsie Brown / (friend of Terry & Mike Hatcher) / Verlie LaBounty /(mother of Paula Davies / Family of Jerry Mulder / Family of Brent Roddenberry (Bobbie Harrison’s daughter’s FIL) /Elsie Carter (sister of Edna Matthews) / Rodger Gorman / James Martin / Sandy Shockley / Chad Craig (Janet Cayson) /Goram Family (Franklin & Frances Chaires)/ Noah Messer (Diane Matthews)/ Family of Aunt Fran McCurdy (Tiffany Foote)

A praise...Kelly’s mass has shrunk and no cancer is detected.
(Mary Alice Linzy)

<u>April Birthdays</u>	<u>April Anniversaries</u>
Messer, Wanda 1 Lightfoot, Gordon 9 Wood, Jeannette 14 Pahl, Debbie 15 Palmer, Barbara 17 Chaires, Franklin 23 Stallings, Mike 28	Pahl, Michael & Debbie 9 Thompson, Dale & Susan 11

