

Dear Friends,

This month, we attend to the story that is the foundation for our identity and for our life together as people of God. It is one story told in two parts.

On Palm Sunday, April 14, we hear the first part of the story, how Jesus entered Jerusalem to the acclaim of the crowds, who welcomed him as Son of David. The religious and political authorities, however, saw Jesus as a threat. On the night of Passover, after Jesus had shared a final meal with his followers, the authorities arrested him, condemned him and sentenced him to death. Jesus was brutally beaten, led away outside the city walls, and crucified. The authorities fully expected that such a shameful death would be the end of Jesus and his movement forever.

We celebrate the second part of the story on Easter Sunday, April 21. The authorities were wrong! God raised Jesus from the dead. The power of the religious establishment and the Roman governor, even the power of death, was not sufficient to silence Jesus and his message of compassion and forgiveness. Not even the cross and the grave could stop God's work to bring healing to the human family. God's faithfulness and love is stronger than the worst humanity is capable of doing. God has overcome human sin and the power of death, opening a new future for all of creation. Through baptism, we have been drawn into that new future.

This story is foundational for our identity. We are who we are, not simply because Jesus was a good teacher or moral example, but because he died and was raised to new life. Jesus has led the way for us through death into a new life. We live with a spirit of hope and freedom, trusting that what God has accomplished through Jesus means we can live without fear, without judgment or condemnation. We trust that for Jesus' sake, God has forgiven all our sin, and that God's love for us is stronger than death. We are set free to be agents of hope, living with compassion and justice. In our life together, we share this great, glad news and strive to be a visible sign of the new life God gives.

I invite you to share in hearing the story of Holy Week—the story that helps us understand who we are and how we live. As we journey from Palm Sunday, through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and finally to Easter Sunday, we travel to the heart of what it means to be God's beloved people.



Pastor Aaron

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 14

Worship with Holy Communion at 11 AM,
Dramatic Reading of the Passion

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 18

Worship with Holy Communion at Noon and 7 PM
Bean Soup Supper at 6 p.m. supports Lift Urban Portland Food Pantry

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 19

“Symbols of Christ’s Passion” Tenebrae Service at 7 PM

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Worship with Holy Communion at 11 AM
Breakfast, 9 AM, Egg Hunt 10:30 AM