

Dear United Church Congregation,

As we've all heard more than a few times, the number 40 in the Bible is symbolic of "a long time" (among other things). Lent, of course, is also known as a 40-day journey. It doesn't seem that long when you look at it from the beginning or in relationship to the 365 days of a year. But when you live through it, it's a long time. Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14), seems like a long time ago to me because of all the experiences I've lived through each day since that day. I sure I'm not alone in this.

Well, guess what? The end of the 40-days of Lent is this Sunday! And this Sunday is Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday wears a couple of hats: it is the 40th day of Lent, but it's also the 1st day of Holy Week. How appropriate for Palm Sunday to be a doorway to Holy Week as we remember and celebrate when Jesus approached and entered the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem on this Sunday. Holy Week still has that Lenten feel to it, which only intensifies as we move closer to Good Friday, but is also a beginning.

Our reading this week is Mark's account of Palm Sunday. If you are able to read the passage before Sunday (or before it's read in worship on Sunday), pay close attention to the roles that the people have on this day. It's hard to miss the leafy branches and the Hosannas being shouted, but what else did they do? Would Palm Sunday still be celebrated if Jesus had slipped into Jerusalem by himself and unnoticed? Maybe... but it would be different. So I think the people also have something to say to us about Palm Sunday. May we experience a little of what they experienced this Sunday. But may we enter into this week as fully, if not more fully, than they did this gateway Sunday!

Join us for worship this Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (no 8 am worship service) Scripture Reading: Mark 11:1-11

Sermon: "It Is Enough"

There will be a meeting of the congregation at the end of the 9:30 a.m. service to receive a report and recommendation from the Building Committee.

Our prayers are with those going on the Mexico Mission Trip tomorrow, and with those families who are traveling.

Grace and peace,
David