

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jamestown Cub Scout Pack 53 is holding a chicken & biscuit dinner this afternoon from noon to 4 p.m. at the Lion's Community Center. This is a great way to support our local Cub Scouts.

The Lenten devotional "40 Days to Easter" is available in the annex. This devotional includes daily readings in the Old and New Testament to help gain knowledge and appreciation for God's carefully-orchestrated plan to redeem the world through Christ's death and resurrection.

Our next community dinner will be on Saturday, March 19, 2022. We are in need of cookies. If you are able to provide a couple dozen cookies, please sign-up on the sheet in the Annex. Thank you!



JAMESTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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March 13, 2022
Second Sunday of Lent

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP HIM

Worship Leader today: Cindy Loveridge
Organist today: Don Elliott

March Sunday Duties:

Close-Up: Mike Henegan
Counting the Offering: Janeen Mihoci

Deacon for March - Linda Lorigan If you know of anyone in the hospital or in need of assistance, please contact Linda at 724-932-5072

03/19 Nila Bush
03/21 Mark Collins
03/22 Robin Ward
03/25 Betty Wester
03/25 Lucas Fisher
03/26 Doris Leary
03/28 Paul Thompson



Prelude "Beautiful Savior" Paxton

Welcome and Announcements

To prepare our hearts and minds for worship, let us observe a moment of silent prayer.

Call to Worship (based on Psalm 27:1,4-5):

One: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
All: **One thing I ask of the Lord, that I will seek: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. For he will shelter me in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.**

*Hymn

"How Firm a Foundation"

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Call to Confession:

Trusting in God's love for us in Jesus Christ,
let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Silent and Personal Confession

Unison Prayer of Confession: **Gracious God, we confess that we have been thoughtless and disobedient children. We have taken for granted your goodness ... strayed from your path ... squandered your gifts ... and sought to blame others for our own wrongdoing. Have mercy on us, O Lord! Forgive our sin, correct our misplaced desires and help us live and love and serve in the ways that honor you best; through Christ we pray, Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon:

One: Friends, God is for us and not against us! For this very reason, God sent his Son into the world:

All: Not to condemn the world, but that through him the world could be saved.

One: Rejoice and be glad, for God's mercy is great:

**All: In Jesus there is forgiveness, healing and peace.
Thanks be to God!**

*Response of Faith

"Gloria Patri"✠

*Affirmation of Faith: The Apostles Creed

#137

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

Prayers of the People, ending with the Lord's Prayer in unison

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Dedication of our Tithes & Offerings

*Response of Praise

"Doxology"

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH HIS WORD

First Scripture Lesson:

I Corinthians 12: 1-7, 12-20, 27

Ordination and Installation of Officers

Second Scripture Lesson:

Luke 13: 31-35

Message:

"O, Jerusalem!"

Pastor Sue Nageotte

GOD SENDS US FORTH TO SERVE

*Hymn

"A Shelter in the Time of Storm"

#117

*Benediction

*Closing Refrain:

*God be with you 'til we meet again; by His counsels
guide, uphold you. With His sheep securely fold you.
God be with you 'til we meet again.*

Postlude

"Grand Triumphal Chorus"

Guilmant

* Those who are able please stand

“O, Jerusalem!”

Luke 13: 31-35

[begin by reading the entire passage; at last verse, note that indeed, in Luke’s gospel, Jesus does not enter the gates of Jerusalem until Palm Sunday]

As our Gospel reading begins this morning, we find Jesus in the region of the Galilee, four or five days’ journey north of Jerusalem. That’s the area in which he grew up ... where he called his inner circle of twelve disciples ... where he spent most of the first three years of his earthly ministry. It was in the Galilee, also, where the Holy Spirit gave Peter the astounding revelation that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. Jesus warned his disciples not to tell anyone about it yet; it was still to be kept secret. And *“as the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.”* (Luke 9:51).

But he didn’t make a bee-line for the city. Instead, he took a meandering route through the towns and villages, preaching and teaching and healing people as he went. And in every town and village, crowds of people came to hear and see him, and the Pharisees and the religious experts (teachers of the law) didn’t like it one bit.

Knowing this, we might well have been surprised to hear that a group of Pharisees came to warn Jesus that Herod wanted to kill him. Why would they do that?

It’s possible, of course, that this was a genuine warning. Not all Pharisees were Jesus’ enemies. Two notable examples are Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Both members of the Jewish ruling council, they were also secretly followers of Jesus who, after Jesus’ body, saw to it that his body was properly buried in a new tomb (John 19: 38-42)

Most of the Pharisees, however, were violently opposed to Jesus. SO violently, that not so very far ahead in Luke’s gospel they will pay Judas to betray Jesus. But that’s getting ahead of the story. The Pharisees aren’t at that point ... not yet.

It’s doubtful whether this group came to warn Jesus out of any sincere concern for his well-being. It was THEIR interests they were worried about! Most likely, they were hoping that if Jesus thought his life was on the line, that he would do the sensible thing: turn around, go back home, keep his head down and do his best not to call attention to himself. If he did that, then maybe – just maybe – Herod would forget him.

Did Herod really have plans to kill Jesus? It wouldn't be surprising if he did. Extra-biblical sources (that is, writings outside the Bible) tell us that King Herod made a practice of ruthlessly eliminating rivals. Under ordinary circumstances, Herod wouldn't have considered a rabbi to be competition. But the Gospels record many times when *thousands* of people came together around Jesus. Crowds like that – and influence like that – would surely have gotten Herod's attention, and he may very well have decided it would be best to get rid of the troublesome rabbi from Nazareth.

Regardless of any plans Herod might have had ... regardless of what motivated these Pharisees to come to Jesus ... their warning failed to have the desired effect.

He didn't run. He didn't go into hiding. In fact, he doesn't even seem to be concerned about the threat to his life. Why? Because he knows he is safe, in a way they could never imagine. Safe, because he is already on his way to die – in accordance with God's perfect plan, at God's perfect timing.

In response to their warning, Jesus tells those Pharisees to go back and tell Herod that he's not going to stop in his work; he is going ahead anyway. Twice in this passage Jesus refers to a three-day span of time. Some people take this to be a reference to his resurrection. There may be a hint of that here – like a “teaser” -- but that's not really his point.

For Hebrew peoples, “today, tomorrow and the next day” was a way of expressing the commitment to see something through to completion “as long as it takes.”

Basically, Jesus is saying that no one -- not Herod, not the Pharisees, nor anything else — will ever turn him aside from God's purposes. He will not stop, he will not turn back; he *WILL* go on to Jerusalem, for that is where the plan comes to completion. It's a plan that will require his suffering, rejection, even death ...

And also a plan for our healing, our acceptance, and our eternal life.

“O, Jerusalem!” Jerusalem was the center of Jewish religious life and society. And Jesus mourns for it, mourns that through its history “Jerusalem” had killed so many of the prophets sent by God. Despite its history, what is the cry of Jesus' heart? It is a deep outpouring of compassion and the desire to protect. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings!”

The well-known preacher Barbara Brown Taylor asks a pertinent question.

“How do you feel about that image of [Jesus as a hen]? If you are like me, it is fine in terms of comfort; but in terms of protection, it leaves something to be desired.”

Taylor – and others -- might have preferred if Scripture had given us the imagery of Jesus as a rooster. Anyone here ever had a full-grown rooster? The kind that's faster than a rabbit and meaner than a junkyard dog? A rooster will defend his territory and his ladies with all the ferocity he can muster. A rooster will use wings and beak and the spurs on his feet to overcome his opponent.

Sometimes we want that kind of protection; and God is perfectly capable of fighting for us that way – *when* it suits him to do so.

But the thing is – the biblical record shows us that God is not, at heart, aggressive. Jesus looked upon that troubled city of Jerusalem ...

He looks upon our troubled world ...

And he offers his own body for shelter and nurture.

It was, and is, his nature to want to protect and love God's children. That's why he went to the cross. And Jesus never stops calling God's little ones to come to him and shelter under the wings of his grace and salvation. He never stops.

Yes, there are plenty of foxes in this world of trouble. But we do not need to fear the "foxes" or their helpers, who would try to frighten us into hiding.

Jesus, who did not turn away from the cross, will not turn away from us. Today, tomorrow and until he comes again, there is plenty of room under the wings of Jesus.

So my prayer for you and for me and for all the church, is that we would look upon the world with Jesus' eyes of compassion and do all that we can to ensure that Jesus' loving invitation is clearly heard by our neighbors, our co-workers, our family and friends.

Amen? Amen.