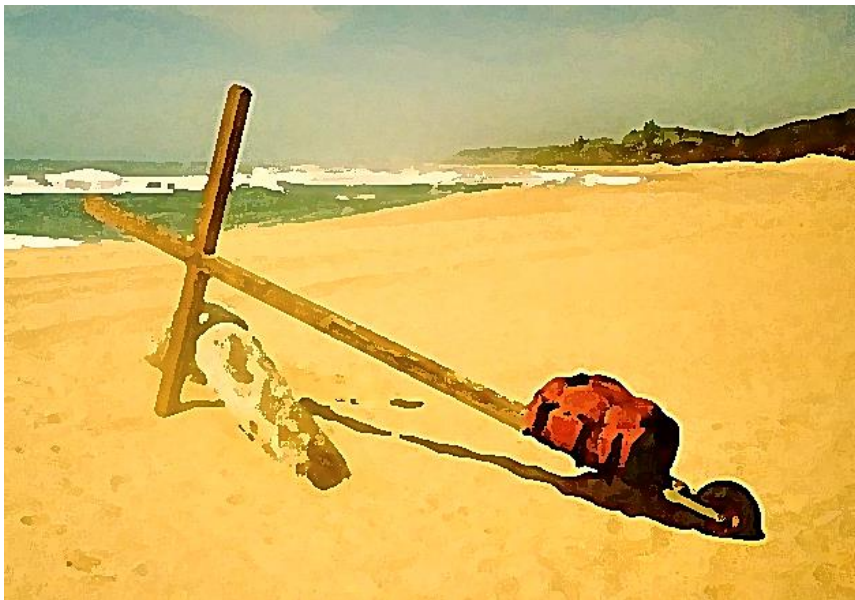




CHURCH OF CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE

Lent Meditations – Week Six

WILL YOU COME AND FOLLOW ME...



Through the weeks of Lent the invitation is there to take a journey with God and with others as we follow the steps that took Jesus to the cross and through the cross to resurrection life. The journey is from where we are now to where God is leading us. We don't always know where the journey will take us, so we can't get the tourist guide book out and pick and choose the sights we want to see. We may take the time to follow where others have led and look at what has been important for them, but more importantly we can take up the invitation to look again at what it means to take that journey as disciples, those who are learning from God and one another as we go.

Will you come and follow me....in your worship and prayer?

Palm Sunday- a day when the world came out to watch.

But crowds can change....

What's Worship

All eyes look to the Victory Gate and

Worship the hero with songs of praise.

Give thanks for mercy, for eternal love,

Give thanks for the seeds of hope.

Jesus stands in the silent temple,

Ready now for what lies ahead.

Lord, my Deliverer, here would I stand, trembling, beside you.

AMEN

Psalm 118:1-2, 19 – 29

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures for ever. Let Israel say: 'His love endures for ever.' Open to me the gates of victory; I shall go in by them and praise the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the victors will enter through it. I shall praise you for you have answered me and have become my deliverer. The stone which the builders rejected has become the main cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day on which the Lord has acted, a day for us to exult and rejoice. Lord deliver us we pray; Lord, grant us prosperity. Blessed is he who enters in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God; he has given us light. Link the pilgrims with cords as far as the horns of the altar. You are my God and I shall praise you; my God, I shall exalt you. It is good to give thanks to the Lord for his love endures for ever.

- **The psalmist speaks of great processions, of coming together to celebrate. In a society based on the worship of God, this can be how it is, whatever people's individual beliefs and lifestyles.**
- **For the psalmist, everything, good or bad, is the Lord's doing. Other psalms speak of calamity and struggle, but this speaks of victory and joy. What times in your life and in the life of the nation or the church feel like this? Do we do enough celebrating? Do we recognise God in all of our lives?**

Mark 11: 1-11

They were now approaching Jerusalem, and when they reached Bethphage and Bethany, close by the mount of Olives, he sent off two of his disciples. 'Go into the village opposite,' he told them, 'and just as you enter you will find tethered there a colt which no one has yet ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you why you are doing this, say, "The Master needs it, and will send it back here without delay."' So they went off, and found the colt outside in the street, tethered beside a door. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders asked, 'What are you doing, untying that colt?' They answered as Jesus had told them, and were then allowed to take it. So they brought the colt to Jesus, and when they had spread their cloaks on it he mounted it. Many people carpeted the road with their cloaks, while others spread greenery which they had cut in the fields; and those in front and those behind shouted, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father, David which is coming. Hosanna in the heavens!' He entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. He looked around at everything; then, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

- **There are some echoes between this procession and the one experienced in the psalm. What are the things that are the same? Where are the differences between this procession and the psalmist's**
- **This was clearly an intentional act by Jesus. The donkey was ready. The preparations were made. What statement do you think Jesus was making by coming in this way?**
- **If you read the gospels, until this point Jesus often does things quietly and tells people not to speak of it. What has changed here?**

Take time to consider

- **Worship in both these readings is exuberant and focussed towards God. Does our worship reflect this? Should it do so more?**

- **Both these readings are about crowds coming together and building one another up in their praise and their excitement. But crowds can change. What for you is the importance of being caught up in the experience? Is there a difference between this and quiet, reflective time with God and others?**
- **On Palm Sunday the crowds came out to welcome Jesus. We know that by the end of the week their shouts of praise turned to shouts of 'crucify'. What does that say to you about the nature of worship and prayer?**
- **The journey to the cross is almost done. Is your worship and your coming to God in prayer just for the good times, or does it lead you to follow in every part of Christ's journey? (This is perhaps the hardest question to consider so be gentle with yourself and one another if you are in a group. Jesus was, after all, gentle with those of his disciples who couldn't quite stay with him all the time.)**

If you have time to consider this:

What resources would we need as a church to be able to better support people in their worship and prayer?

You may choose to consider these questions as a group, with friends or on your own. If you want to discuss and aspects further, either talk with your group leader or contact the ministers.

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