

First Presbyterian Church Portsmouth, Ohio

The Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor
Elder Betty Kennedy, Liturgist
Ms. Michele Imes, Director of Music
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist/Musician

“Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”—Matthew 21:9

This is the week we remember once again the moment when Jesus enters Jerusalem, moving with intention and deliberation into what waits for him there.

In some respects, the final stretch of Jesus’ path has been laid out for him. We know what will happen to him after he enters the city. We know the terrible road he will walk to the cross. Yet Jesus is no helpless victim here, no passive participant. He is not dragged into Jerusalem, nor does he slink into the city on the sly. Jesus does not cease to make his own road as he chooses to walk with courage and clarity.

This week invites us to consider how we are moving through our own journey—through Lent as well as through life. Are we allowing ourselves to be swept along by circumstances, traveling our road by default? Or are we seeking to walk with intention and discernment, creating our path with some measure of the courage and clarity by which Christ walked his, even in the midst of forces that may lie beyond our control?

There is a time for stillness, for waiting for Christ as he makes his dancing way toward us. And there is a time to be in motion, to set out on a path, knowing that although God is everywhere, and always with us, we sometimes need a journey in order to meet God—and ourselves—afew.

This is a week to ask, how do we meet God in motion? How do we move toward the One who is already making his way toward us? Whatever circumstance we may find ourselves in, how do we participate in creating our path? What road is calling to us and has our name written on its stones? Will we go?

Jan Richardson, The Painted Prayerbook

Gathering Around the Word

Welcoming the Community

Elder Betty Kennedy

Announcements & Celebrations

Elder Kennedy

Prelude

Dr. Phillip Roberts

**Call to Worship*

Elder Kennedy

On Palm Sunday so many years ago, the people saw Jesus and asked,

Who is this?

In worship, we respond. In worship, we declare:

Jesus is the alpha and omega.

Jesus is our teacher and preacher.

Jesus is a miracle worker and healer.

Jesus is our source of love.

Jesus is our path in the wilderness.

So may we lay down our hearts like they laid down their coats and palms.

Let us worship God!

**Prayer of the Day*

Elder Kennedy

Proclaiming the Word the Word Together



The Wilderness Journey from Palms to Passion



Sunday: Proclamation of the Entrance into Jerusalem

Matthew 21: 1-11

Rev. Lisa R. Eye

**Hymn #196*

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

GTG

Opening Litany

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil asking,

Who is this?

One heard that he was a carpenter's son.

One heard he was from Nazareth.

Some asked, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

Who is this?

One heard that he knew John the Baptist.

One heard that he was related to John the Baptist.

One heard that he could heal people.

One asked, "Do you think he can heal me?"

Who is he?

One heard he talks to gentiles.

One heard he talks to children!

And women! And even tax collectors!

Who is this?

One heard that he's the Son of David.

One heard that he's the Son of Man.

One heard that he's the one we've been waiting for.
One heard that he was born of a virgin.
Another heard that he was born in a stable.

Who is this?

One asked, "Why is he riding on a donkey?"

Another asked, "How does he have so many followers?"

Still another asked, "Do you think Caesar knows that a man from Nazareth has been welcomed with such a large parade?"

Who is this?

One said, "I don't know who he is, but I've heard he's gracious and kind."

One said, "I heard he fed five thousand."

Another said, "I heard he survived the wilderness."

Yet another said, "I heard he helped the blind man see."

One asked, "Do you think he sees me?"

One said, "I heard he walked on water! Is that even possible?"

Another said, "I heard he can save us."

Still another said, "I heard he can save all of us."

Who is this?

Who is this?

Call to Confession

Elder Kennedy

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Gracious God, on Sunday the city of Jerusalem cheered for you. They laid down coats and palms for you. They shouted, "Hosanna!" and called you king. But on Friday they abandoned you. On Friday they yelled "Crucify him!" On Friday, you were back in the wilderness alone. O God, we want to be Palm Sunday Christians, but we know all too well that we are also part of the Good Friday crowd. We want to be the disciples who will follow you to the end, but we have been overwhelmed by this wilderness journey, and our steps and our faith falter. So today we ask for forgiveness. Forgive us for the moments when we deny you and your message of love. Forgive us for preventing the spread of the gospel. Forgive us our sins, O God. Amen. (silent prayer)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Rev. Eye

Response: Hymn# 441, verse 1

Hear the Good News of Salvation

GTG

Monday: Tables Turned

Matthew 21: 12-17

Dramatic Reading: The Woman in the Temple

Tuesday: Authority Questioned

Matthew 21:23

Dramatic Reading: A Pharisee

Wednesday: Anointed

Matthew 26:6-13

Dramatic Reading: The Woman with the Alabaster Jar

Invitation to the Offering

Elder Kennedy

Offering Instrumental

Dr. Roberts

*Thanksgiving & Dedication (unison)

Elder Kennedy

O Lord, take our gifts offered in gratitude. No matter how great or how humble, our gifts are never completely adequate compared to the gifts you have given to us. But in your grace, we pray that they will be blessed, multiplied, and used to show your love, compassion, and care. May the resources you have entrusted to us and freely given to you, make visible here and now Jesus' mission of justice, mercy, and new and abundant life. Amen.

Wednesday: Betrayal

Matthew 26:14-16

Dramatic Reading: Judas

Thursday Evening: The Last Supper

Matthew 26:17-47

Dramatic Reading: A Disciple in the Garden of Gethsemane

Responding to the Word

*Hymn#215

What Wondrous Love Is This

GTG

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

Rev. Eye

...Receive all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, as together we pray as Jesus taught his disciples to pray, saying, **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 sin 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.**

Closing Litany

Who is this man?

Who is he?

On Sunday he was everything—the center of the parade, the center of our attention. His arrival was holy and unexpected and beautiful.

Who is he?

On Monday he turned the world upside down. He flipped the table while he flipped the script. We've never seen anything like it before.

Who is he?

On Tuesday he was a teacher. But he wasn't like the other teachers. He sat and they sat. He spoke and they listened. What they don't know is he hasn't had to earn his place.

Who is he?

On Wednesday he pulled a woman from the wilderness. He gave her the gift of new life, so she gave him all she had. People may have stared and talked, but newness does that to people.

Who is he?

On Wednesday he was nothing more than a man worth thirty pieces of silver.

Who is he?

On Thursday he was the body broken for us the blood shed for us,

Who is he?

On Thursday he was betrayed. He was arrested. He was treated like a criminal. On Thursday he was alone, and we were asleep.

Who is he? Who is the One we greet this Palm Sunday?

This is the question everyone is asking. This is the question of Holy Week, and it's the question of our entire lives. In order to answer this question, we have to walk through all of Holy Week, through the wilderness of betrayal and death, through the wilderness of the tomb and surprise endings. Let us continue to walk through the wilderness of faith—the good days, the bad days, everyday—step by step.

Following the Word into the World

**Hymn*

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

The Presbyterian Hymnal

*Jesus walked this lonesome valley,
He had to walk it by Himself;
O, nobody else could walk it for Him,
He had to walk it by Himself.*

*We must walk this lonesome valley.
We have to walk it by ourselves.
O, nobody else can walk it for us.
We have to walk it by ourselves.*

*You must go and stand your trial,
You have to stand it by yourself,
O, nobody else can stand it for you.
You have to stand it by yourself.*

**Congregational Charge & Benediction*

Rev. Eye

**Sending Song#204 (sung twice)*

Stay with Me

GTG

*Stay with me; remain here with me;
Watch and pray. Watch and pray.*

Acolyte Recessional

Postlude

(Please be seated for the postlude.)

Dr. Roberts



Today's worship liturgy has been adapted and used by permission from: *Wilderness: Lent 2020*, A Sanctified Art | sactifiedart.org

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We are glad you are here and want you to feel welcome as you share in worship!

*The asterisk indicates that worshippers are invited to rise in body or in spirit, as able.

Bold text indicates that the congregation is invited to speak.

GTG refers to *Glory to God*, the hymnal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

THE PRAYER LIST IS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE EDUCATION ANNEX

Let us pray for our ability to be faithful disciples, family, and friends; our church, pastor, the session, deacons, committees, lay leadership, our ministry, outreach, and stewardship; the Boney Fiddle community and its churches, schools, the city of Portsmouth and its leadership, state and national leadership, and those who are incarcerated.



Help flower the cross on Easter Sunday. This is a Christian Easter tradition, dating back to the 6th century, where a barren wooden cross is covered with flowers to symbolize the transformation from Good Friday's death to the new life of the Resurrection. Everyone is invited to bring flowers to worship next Sunday to be added to our cross.



Presbyterians have participated in the One Great Hour of Sharing since it began in 1949 following World War II, when leaders of several denominations made appeals for relief and reconstruction in areas devastated by the war. Today, OGH is the largest of the three church-wide special offerings in the PC(U.S.A.). As we celebrate the season of Lent, Presbyterians respond to Christ's call to ministries of compassion for the most vulnerable around the world who suffer due to disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration. The offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need by providing them with safety, sustenance and hope. You can find "fish" coin boxes to collect your gifts, offering envelopes, and more information about how the gifts will be used on the table in the hallway. Thank you for prayerfully considering how we can *do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God*. **The offering will be received on Easter Sunday.**

Armbrust Student Program Applications Are Open! The Armbrust Student Loan Program is gearing up for a new school term, and applications are now available! Persons interested may download the application from the church website and get ready for an exciting year of learning and growth. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Building Update: The first phase of the sanctuary work – the structural repair – has been completed! Worship will continue to be held in the Fellowship Hall while the second phase – ceiling restoration, painting, and cleaning – takes place. Please stay tuned for more updates.

The Annual Yard Sale is April 23, 24 & 25. Table set up will take place after worship on Sunday, April 19 with organization of donations on April 20, 21 & 22 beginning at 9:00 am. Come when you can and work as long as you can. Lunch provided.



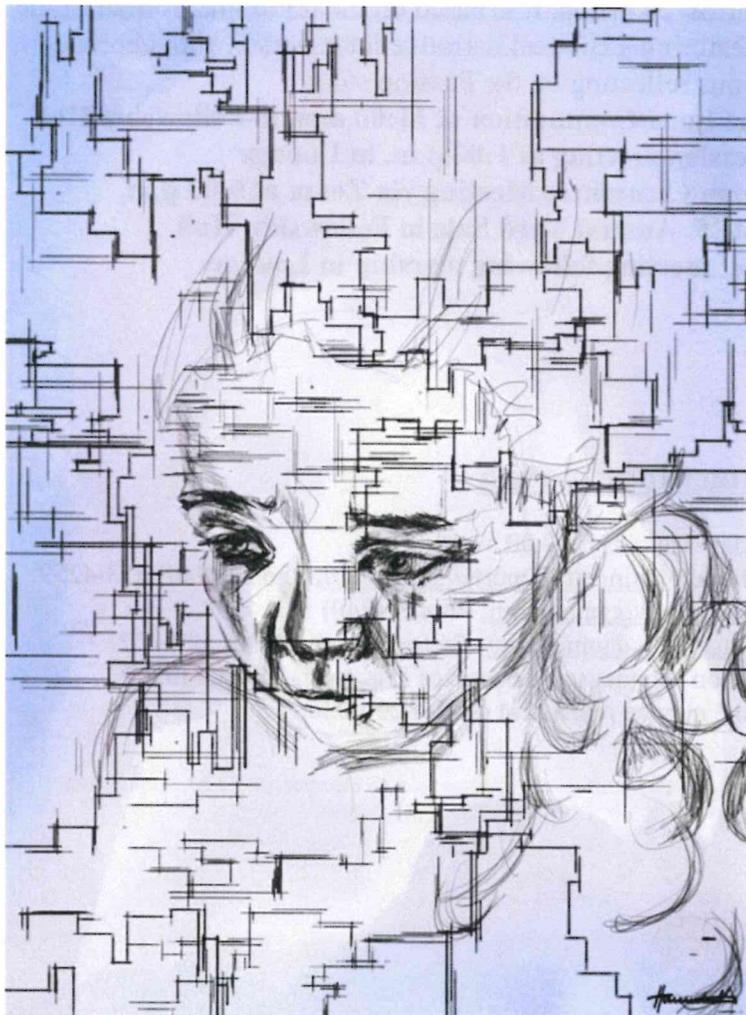
The FPC Food Bank will reopen beginning Thursday, May 14 from 12 to 2 p.m.!



Wilder + ness "state of the wild"

Lent begins in the wilderness. The Spirit guides Jesus into the wilderness where he comes face to face with temptation and struggle. Yet, in his forty days of fasting, resisting, and wandering, Jesus is shaped and formed for ministry. Similarly, through the wilderness of Lent, we are invited to surrender to the wild leadings of the Spirit. We rarely enter the wilderness willingly, but hopefully through our wandering we remember who we are and whose we are. The wilderness can become sacred even if it remains dangerous. There is no wilderness space too harsh or threatening for God's love. Welcome to the wilderness journey.

Palm/Passion Sunday



Daughter of Zion

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Matthew 21:1-11 | Graphic Image | sanctifiedart.org

Artist Statement: Jerusalem is the daughter of Zion. In her we see overlaid intricacies of architecture and city planning. The beauty of her people. The layout of her family tree. The importance of her lineage. The repetition of her ancient stories. The importance of her prophets. The telling of true, right, and good. The incredible way that we live into our story, into God's story.

Here in Matthew, as Jesus prepares to arrive in Jerusalem to lay down his life for God's children, he harkens back to the past. He recalls a simple prophecy, repeated over the generations, taught, and retaught. He must have the donkey and her colt in order to fully live into the story that had been prepared for him by God.

In this image, I drew repetitive angles as a layer of architecture, a suggestion of lineage, as the repetition of a path through time. I imagine that the architecture of a city and lineage of a people are related. Jesus quotes the prophets and acts on their words. Behind the patterns of prophecy is a daughter. I portrayed her in a pose of listening, memorizing, preparing to retell the story. I drew her as thoughtful and contemplative, aware that her future role is to pass the narrative. She will tell of a peasant king's call to love and fearlessness.

The journey to the cross continues in Matthew...

Later Thursday night

26:47-56 Jesus is betrayed and placed under arrest.

26: 57-66 Jesus is falsely accused before the high priest.

26:69-75 Peter denies Jesus.

Friday

27:1-26 Jesus is handed over to Pilate

27:27-31 Jesus is taken away by the soldiers.

27:32-56 Jesus is crucified and dies.

27:57-66 Jesus is buried.

Saturday

All was silent.

Church & Community Calendar

Wednesday, April 1: MCL Meeting at 4p.m. in Lounge

Thursday, April 2: Shared Maundy Thursday Worship at Second Presbyterian Church. 6:00 pm
this communion service is designed to commemorate Jesus' new commandment to love one another as he has loved us and to remember his "last supper" with his disciples; Rev. Lisa Eye preaching

Friday, April 3: Good Friday Service at Second Presbyterian Church at 6:00 p.m.;

The Chancel Choir & Friends (including members of First Presbyterian) directed by Dr. Stanley Workman will perform "The Crucifixion – A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer," an oratorio for soloists, choir and organ, composed by prominent English composer, John Stainer, in 1887, with text by Anglican priest, W. J. Sparrow Simpson. It is based on the traditional format of the great Passions of Johann Sebastian Bach, featuring a Biblical narrative interspersed with choruses, solos & duets, and hymns reflecting on the Passion story.

Sunday, April 5: Easter Day/Resurrection of the Lord/Communion at 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, April 8: Regular Session meeting at 1:00 p.m. in Lounge

Thursday, April 9: Armbrust Student Loan Committee Meeting via Zoom at 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 23 – Saturday, April 25: Annual Yard Sale in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, April 26: Regular Deacons' meeting following worship in Lounge

Church Contact Information

Church Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Virginia M. Stinnett, Admin. Aid/Church Secretary—Email: vstinnett.fpcport@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259

Bev Phipps, Treasurer—Email: bevphippstpres@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259

Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor—Email: leyefirstpresportsmouth@gmail.com; Pastor's Study: (740) 529-7177

Rev. Eye ordinarily works from her home study on Mondays and observes Fridays as sabbath time.

In case of pastoral emergency, she may be reached at (859) 329-9026.



First Presbyterian Church

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