

HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 4/8/2022

Dear Friends in Christ,

Sunday is Palm Sunday and marks the beginning of Holy Week. Thursday is Maundy Thursday, Friday is Good Friday, and the week culminates on Sunday with the Resurrection of Our Lord. Though it seems like three separate services, each with unique qualities, the three worship experiences from Thursday to Sunday are actually one service spread over three days and called “The Three Days.” It covers the whole of Christ’s passion from His last meal with His disciples, to His arrest, trial, torture, death, and resurrection. It has been said that there is no resurrection without a crucifixion and Easter becomes far more meaningful when you’ve walked the entire journey of The Three Days with Christ.

Maundy Thursday’s service includes Holy Communion as we, Christ’s disciples today, share the meal of His body and blood together before we celebrate it again on Easter. The service focuses on His command (“maundy” comes from the English form of the Latin word for “command”) to “love one another as I have loved you.” That love is demonstrated by Jesus washing His disciples’ feet. The service ends with the stripping of the altar which signifies Jesus’ arrest and being stripped of His dignity.

Good Friday is centered on Jesus’ death on the cross. This year’s service will include the seven last words Christ spoke from the cross with a brief meditation on each of those sayings. Except for the prelude on Maundy Thursday and the postlude on Easter, each service begins and ends and silence, as they are, again, one service over three days.

Of course, Sunday is Easter and the Resurrection of Our Lord. It begins in somewhat subdued light as the women go to the tomb to care for Jesus’ lifeless body, only to discover and hear the announcement from the angel that He is risen. The joy of that message is captured in the music, the readings, and the message. What a tremendous contrast from Thursday and Friday to the Sunday celebration!

I strongly encourage you to take part in this entire service, from Thursday to Sunday, if you are able. You will more fully understand Jesus’ sacrifice for us and feel the joy His followers felt then and now over the good news and promise of that “He is not dead; He is risen!”

In Christ's love,
Pastor Jeffrey