



*Easter Reflections 2019*

## ***Palm Sunday***

- 8:45 a.m.** The Well Worship in the Family Life Center Gym
- 8:45 a.m.** Traditional Worship in the Chapel
- 9:45 a.m.** Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 a.m.** Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m.** Spanish Language Ministry Worship in the Chapel
- 11:00 a.m.** Portuguese Language Ministry Worship in Spence Hall
- 2:00 p.m.** Nepalese Language Ministry Worship in Spence Hall

## ***Sunday, April 14***

### ***Matt. 21: 1-17 (also Zech. 9:9 and Psalm 118:26)***

Glorious in its simplicity, the triumphal entry of Jesus to Jerusalem began as He approached the city and sent two of His disciples ahead to find a donkey. Riding this lowly animal into Jerusalem He made public His claim to be the Messiah and King of Israel and to demonstrate meekness, not greatness. This was a fulfillment of the words of the prophet Zechariah that the king would come - gentle, and mounted on a donkey.

The back of the donkey was covered with the cloaks of the disciples and the path in front of Him was covered with cloaks and palm branches. As Jesus rode, multitudes came out to shout hosannas and praises to the Son of David.

Upon His arrival, Jesus went into the temple and drove out those who were buying and selling and overturned the tables of the money changers. Don't think that our meek, gentle Savior was without passion for His Father's glory!

In the temple, He healed the lame and blind that came to Him and turned away the indignance of chief priests and teachers when they asked about the shouting of hosannas.

Jesus Christ came not to conquer by force as earthly kings, but by love, grace, mercy, and His own sacrifice for His people. His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor, but of lowliness and servanthood. He conquered not nations, but hearts and minds. His message to us is one of peace with God, not of temporal peace. If Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there in peace and love. As His followers, we exhibit those same qualities, and the world sees the true King living and reigning in triumph in us.

***Delight Booker***

***Monday, April 15***

***Matt. 21:23-32***

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus deftly turns the manipulations of His persecutors on their heads. Whether answering with a question of His own or drawing out the interrogator's own answer with a parable, Jesus masterfully challenges the crowds to rethink their motivations and their masters. When the chief priests and elders ask Him on whose authority He teaches, He recognizes that their intent is to trap Him. He cuts to the heart of their malicious motivations with a question of His own. Caught in their own web, the chief priests and elders concede by pleading the fifth.

Once Jesus has their full attention, and ours, He reverses expectations again with His parable of the two sons in the vineyard. Both are intended to beg the question "Is that me?" In one son, we watch our stubborn, initial disobedience eventually give way to the Father's will. In the other, our image-conscious tendency to say "Yes" loses out to our true intention: what we really mean is "Maybe" or even an outright "No." The first son resists authority at first, but eventually does the right thing, while the other is all show and no follow-through. Neither depiction is particularly appealing, but that's the point. Jesus seems to say, "I am not interested in yes-men." He has come for the very people we are so quick to judge and cast off as disobedient, or even damned. These people are all around us, today's "tax collectors and prostitutes."

After His parable, the chief priests and religious elders answer Jesus' question rightly, but therein lies His masterstroke: *You know the right answers, but what keeps you from **living** them?*

Here's the thing. How much of the real Jesus do I miss when I follow in the footsteps of the chief priests; when I give in to the latent temptation to catch Him off-guard, outsmart Him, or exploit some loophole I think He missed? And how much do I stand to gain from His immeasurable goodness and mercy today, when I resist the urge, pick up my cross, and follow Him today?

***Stephen Griggs***

**12 Noon** - Worship in Powell Chapel, Rev. Ben Brown

***Tuesday, April 16***

***Matt. 26:17-30***

What would you do if you knew you only had a few days left on this earth? I think a lot of us would want to have a good meal with our closest friends.

And Jesus does just that in what is known as the Lord's Supper. But the Lord's Supper wasn't on some random night. It was on the night of the Jewish holiday of Passover. Passover celebrates the time when God freed the Israelites from Egypt using plagues. The last plague was a particularly dark one in that it killed the firstborn children unless a specific ritual was performed. That ritual involved sacrificing a perfect lamb, eating it, and marking their doorways with its blood. By doing this, the Israelites were spared death.

Communion and Passover have many similarities and this is not a coincidence. Jesus became the new Perfect Lamb sacrificed for us to save us from the death of sin.

The bread symbolizes His body and the wine symbolizes His blood. When Jesus instructs His disciples to eat the bread, He does so with brief instruction. For the wine, He gives more explanation: *This is My blood, which seals God's covenant, My blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in My Father's Kingdom.* Not only does this foreshadow what is about to happen to Him, but it gives us a promise that His blood will protect us from the death of sin, so we can be with Him in Heaven.

We remember His promise when we take Communion and receive the Lord's Supper. His death on the cross also freed us from rituals and in order to be saved we only need to believe and invite Him into our hearts.

***Adam Melton***

**12 Noon - Worship in Powell Chapel, Dr. Darden Battle**

***Wednesday, April 17***

***Matt. 26:36-56***

Gethsemane is a lovely garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. After the Lord's Supper, Jesus led His disciples there to pray. He asked Peter, James, and John to go with Him deeper into the garden. Jesus shared that He was depressed, anxious, and felt death was near. Watch and pray with Me, He asked. Three times He prayed alone. He asked of the Father that the cup of suffering be taken from Him, but that God's will be done, not His. Each time He turned back to His disciples, they had fallen asleep. Jesus was facing alone the biggest challenge of His life and probing to see if there was another way. He came to accept God's plan to be His dying for the sins of man.

The disciples were also anxious and upset, not understanding God's plan. They had hoped for an earthly kingdom and now things seemed to be going totally wrong. When they awoke, they found Jesus resolute - He told them the time was at hand. The peace was disrupted by an angry crowd, Judas' kiss of betrayal, Peter's wielding a sword, Jesus healing the stricken man while asking why their peaceful group was confronted by a crowd with weapons. He was arrested and taken away.

This amazing story follows the writings of the prophets. God inspired those writings. Our part is to read, believe, and accept God's Word: God loves us so much that Jesus was sent into the world to die for us.

Remember the words of Jesus in John 14:6, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*"

***Dottie Price***

**12 Noon - Worship in Powell Chapel, Rev. Welford Orrock**

***Thursday, April 18***

***Matt. 26:59-66, Matt. 27:1-2; 11-26***

We have all seen famous movies about trials that include a cavalcade of A-list actors and actresses. In true Hollywood fashion, some originally uncalculated thought pops into the mind of the protagonist just in the nick of time to achieve the acquittal or the pronouncement of guilt called for by the plot.

One doesn't have to be a lawyer to know that when someone is accused of a crime, an opportunity for justice results. At the end of a trial, somebody goes free or receives punishment.

The Son of God went on trial for His life in Jerusalem at the height of His ministry not once, but twice in the same day. Unlike His fictitious counterparts, Jesus stood tall before the religious authorities and the occupying Roman government not to entertain, but to pay the price for our transgressions.

Our Savior endured trumped up charges, death threats, physical abuse, and character assassination in both trials.

In the first kangaroo court before the entire Sanhedrin, Jesus largely remains silent until the very end of the trial when He informs His accusers that He is indeed the Son of God and that they would see Him sitting at the right hand of God the Father.

In the second trial before Pontius Pilate - the Roman Governor General - Jesus is even more on the silent side. As in the first trial, He doesn't mount a glorious and dazzling defense. He has every opportunity to secure His release from condemnation in front of a sympathetic (and amazed) judge. Simply written, Jesus accepts His fate and becomes the victim of the worst miscarriage of justice in recorded history.

The Son of Man prophetically accepted man's judgment (twice) to become the living sacrifice on a hill called The Skull, to amend what the weight of sin had irreparably broken. His condemnation, capitulation, and ultimate resurrection paved the way for our salvation. There was no justice in any of it yet He did what He did with love, grace, mercy, and peace in His heart. Thank God that He suffered for you and for me.

So, if you were put on trial for your Christian faith, would there be enough evidence to convict or would you be acquitted?

***Thomas Gaskins***

**7:30 p.m. - Maundy Thursday Worship** in Sanctuary, includes the Lord's Supper

## ***Friday, April 19***

### ***Mark 15:25-39***

In Biblical scholarship, it's likely that Mark was the first gospel in composition. Mark as an author seems to be in a hurry, and he tells the story at a quick pace. The exception is in the description and details of Jesus' crucifixion. As scholar M. Eugene Boring notes in his commentary on Mark, "The months turn to days, and then to hours. Time seems to slow down at Christ's crucifixion" (Mark: A Commentary: The New Testament Library, Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

It's early in the morning, and we share the point of view of those in attendance seeing the inscription nailed above the cross reading, "The King of the Jews." This sign was meant to taunt Him and discourage others from standing in opposition to Roman rule. For the charge against Jesus is blasphemy, which can mean either slander of humans or blasphemy against God. The cries from religious leaders, passersby, and spectators are a Markan double entendre: "... they who are insulting a human blasphemer are themselves guilty of blasphemy against God" (M. Eugene Boring). The robbers on each side of Christ echo these taunts.

Time passes into the afternoon, and we hear Jesus quote Psalm 22. Prophecies from the Psalms, Lamentations, and Isaiah are fulfilled that Jesus would be mocked, that His garments would be gambled over, and bandits would flank Him at death. As the curtain of the temple is torn in two, we are challenged to look into the face of Christ crucified. Sour wine is on His lips as Jesus cries aloud and breathes His last. Is this what it looks like for God in flesh to die? How long can we stand the sight? The scoffers' cry echoes in our ears: He saved others; He cannot save himself. Is this the end? In the cosmic darkness of the mid-afternoon, we look away.

***Ben Brown***

**Good Friday Worship** - noon, Powell Chapel, Seven Last Words

Rosa Crump – ***Father Forgive*** – Luke 23:34

David Moore – ***Today in Paradise*** – Luke 23:39-43

Todd Mawyer – ***Here is Your Son*** – John 19:26-27

Vickie Ritter – ***I Thirst*** – John 19:28-29

Darden Battle – ***My God, Why?*** – Matthew 27:46

Thomas Gaskins – ***Father Into Thy Hands*** – Luke 23:46

Linda Morrisette – ***It is Finished*** – John 19:30

***Saturday, April 20***  
***Matt. 26:47-50, 27:3-10***

As we move through the darkest weekend of the Christian year, from Good Friday to Easter Sunday, the betrayal of Judas looms overhead as a single identifiable sin directly against Jesus. It led to the cross and direct physical pain inflicted on the innocent.

Here in 2019, as I reflect on this from suburban Richmond, I can't say that I personally have marked someone for death a la Judas, but I surely have sinned against Jesus. I may not have personally beaten or caused physical torment or death upon anyone, but my words and actions have fallen short, far short, of the lofty ideal of being a follower of Christ. But these failings are not the end of my story precisely because of Judas, Jesus and the magnificent gift of grace.

I do not have to be perfect. I cannot be perfect. Instead, I am only called to believe. I proudly proclaim that Jesus is Lord, that He died and was raised from the dead. I too have died with Him, being reborn anew a follower, a disciple of Christ. This Easter, as a Christian, I reflect on how the resurrection is the beginning of the end of the story of Jesus the man, the preacher and son of a carpenter, which started in a manger in Bethlehem, but it is just the beginning of the story of Jesus Christ and His impact on our world.

Every day in this broken world I find myself sinning, being guilty before the Lord, failing to live up to all that I could be. Each sin against the Lord is another kiss on the cheek of Jesus, no matter how small or inconsequential I may think it is. But behold! With the unearned and undeserving gift of grace I continue on, striving to be another point of light, a beacon in the darkness. Will you join me?

***The Jonathan Ray Family***

**Easter Worship**

**7:00 p.m. - Arabic Language Ministry Worship in Spence Hall**

***Sunday, April 21***  
***Matt. 28:1-20***

He is not here; for He has been raised, as He said. What He said was true! Who He is, is true! The Word of God came to life, and this life was the light of all people.

The resurrection echoes the very beginning. The Word of God, spoken over the darkness and chaos. "Let there be light!" And with that there would be life and with life there would be love. Let there be beauty and wholeness and harmony. From the birds in the skies to the creatures that crawl along the ground; the monsters that swim in the deep to the microbes that congregate along a thread.

And God created us. And we too were created to sing God's "I love you!" song. And with that song came a promise, a covenant, just for us. "I will be your God and you will be My people."

For generations we doubted and we sang. When the promise seemed a distant memory, as if a myth from an ancient time, we doubted and sang with hope that it would be true. When the promise seemed close, through a revelation of divine beauty and truth, we sang and thought we would never doubt again.

And then He came. The One. The Word. He was the song. He lived the song. He taught the song. The world could not hear it - the world could not receive it and tried to silence it. And when it seemed that all hope was lost, all doubt had won, that the song was quieted forever ... the stone began to roll.

And the Word, the One who has been singing from the beginning, the One through whom and for whom all things were made, steps out of the darkness of the tomb alive. As He steps into the light of the world He created, the world He loves and He has redeemed, Jesus invites us all to sing. Christ is risen! He is alive! We sing God's "I love you" song!

***Welford Orrock***

## ***Easter Sunday***

- 8:45 a.m.** The Well Worship in the Family Life Center Gym
- 8:45 a.m.** Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary
- 9:45 a.m.** Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 a.m.** Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m.** Spanish Language Ministry Worship in the Chapel
- 11:00 a.m.** Portuguese Language Ministry Worship in Spence Hall
- 2:00 p.m.** Nepalese Language Ministry Worship in Spence Hall

## ***Ministering With You***

Dr. Raymond L. Spence, Jr., *Pastor Emeritus*  
Reverend William L. Miller, Jr., *Minister of Music*  
Reverend Kathi Traficanti, *Minister of Adult Education*  
Reverend Ben Brown, *Minister of Students*  
Reverend Katie Vance Lucas, *Minister of Children*  
Mrs. Susan Hill, *Director of Creative Learning Center*  
Mrs. Ainsleigh Gaskins, *Assistant Director of Creative Learning Center*  
Reverend Louis C. Orsatti, *Pastor, Spanish Language Ministry*  
Reverend Agayby Shehata, *Pastor, Arabic Language Ministry*  
Reverend André Amaral, *Interim Pastor, Portuguese Language Ministry*  
Reverend Joseph Pradhan, *Pastor, Nepalese Language Ministry*  
Mrs. Hilliary Larsen, *Music Associate*  
Mrs. Judy Mawyer, *Children's Choir Coordinator*  
Dr. Mary Beth Bennett, *Organist*  
Mrs. Virginia Moore, *Director of Recreation Ministry*  
Mrs. Kathy Driver, *Office Manager*  
Mrs. Patty Dimowski, *Administrative Secretary*  
Mrs. Griendora "G" McDowell, *Financial Administrator*  
Mrs. Joanna Landrum, *Communication Administrative Assistant*  
Ms. Olivia Freeman, *Communication Administrative Assistant*  
Mr. Adam Schumm, *Director of Food Services*  
Mr. Danny Belanger, *Facilities Manager*  
Mr. Billy Petruska, *Lead Custodian*



## **Second Baptist Church**

A loving community transformed by Christ  
for unbounded service

9614 River Road  
Richmond, VA 23229

804.740.7101 Voice  
804.740.7049 TIM  
804.740.2270 Fax

[www.secondbaptistrva.org](http://www.secondbaptistrva.org)