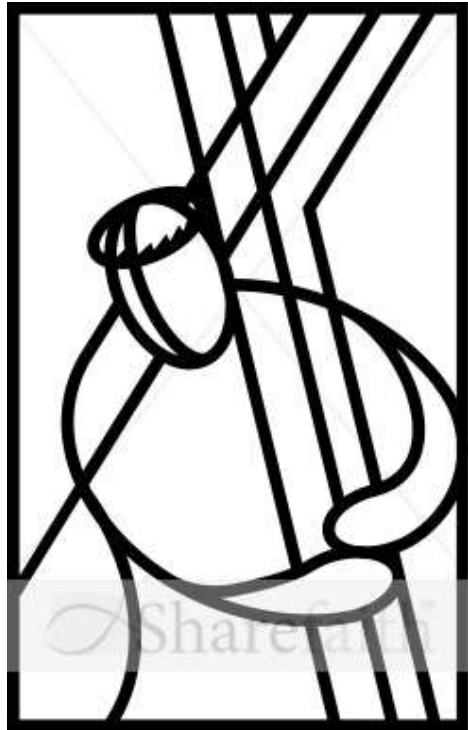


WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
March 24, 2013



COVENANT OF THE CROSS

“Keeping covenant means keeping covenant under a cross as well as by an empty garden tomb.”

FOCUS: Reformed theology is covenant theology – an expression of a unique relationship with God and others, first through Israel and now for us in Jesus Christ. Our Lenten journey will explore how this relationship has been lived out over the millennia. The readings are from the Lenten lectionary.

Gathering: *God of the foolish cross, tottering down the streets of Jerusalem on a donkey, **You are not the saviour we expect.** Your power doesn't look like the power we want our God to demonstrate. **Your wisdom makes no sense to us.** We are happy to join the crowd, waving branches, but not so sure we want to follow you into the temple courts into the upper room into the Garden of Gethsemane to the foot of the cross. Forgive our false assumptions. **Clarify our clouded vision.** Let us relax into the foolishness of your love, your grace. **Hosanna, hosanna. Save us, we beseech you!** (Joanna Harader)*

Hymn: Ride on, ride on

217

Prayer of Confession: *Though we have known hardship and pain, though life has not always turned out as we had hoped, we will stand here and say:*

God's steadfast love endures for ever!

Though life becomes more complex, the deepest questions remain unanswered, and the mystery of faith deepens, we will say:

God's steadfast love endures for ever!

And though the pain of the world often seems more than we can bear or address, we will stand firm in our faith and say:

God's steadfast love endures for ever!

Hymn: Behold the Lamb of God

525

Scripture: After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with

a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

Would we have been in the crowd shouting "Crucify him"? Would we have betrayed or denied him? Would we have hidden ourselves so that nobody would know that we knew him? Or would we have followed him all the way to the cross? We know where we'd *want* to be, but the odds would place us somewhere else. Most people who call themselves Christians love the excitement of Palm Sunday and the glory of Easter. It's Holy Week we're not so sure about:

***We have nothing against Jerusalem;
in fact, it's the place to be on a sunny Easter morning.
It's Golgotha that we fear;
and yet, we've been to church enough to know that the way to
Jerusalem leads through Good Friday.
Keeping covenant means keeping covenant under a cross as well as
by an empty garden tomb.
What we'd like to do, of course, is wave palms and shout Hosanna
and then rest up for the Hallelujah Chorus.
We dismiss the others as religious fanatics, who wallow in the woe
of Holy Week!
O Lamb of God, O Lamb of God, O Lamb of God, feed us!*** (Ann Weems)

Hymn: You are holy, you are whole

828

Invitation: All who have entered the covenant of the cross, who have freely chosen Jesus and his church as the center of their lives, come, remember and renew the covenant at the cross. Eat the bread and drink the wine of the new covenant.

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.*

(Continue in thanksgiving) **Come Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be opened, that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed, in one another. Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

Hymn: Our Father

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Communion

A reflection after Holy Communion

Hymn: Now let us from this table rise

556

We came to prepare for the holiest of weeks. We will journey through praise, with joy on our lips; we will travel through betrayal and death, cradling hope deep in our hearts. Jesus leads us through this week, and we will follow, for he is the life we long for, he is the Word who sustains us. We wave palm branches in anticipation, we lay our love before him, to cushion his walk. Setting aside all power, glory, and might, he comes: modeling humility and obedience for all of us. Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is the One who brings us the kingdom of God. (Tom Shuman)