

Community of Christ
Fairbanks Congregation Happenings
April 5, 2005

The theme for this Sunday is “Approaching the Cross” (**Palm Sunday**)

Carried and
Rested on
Our
Shoulders
So others too may know

The cross can mean different things to different people at different times. How about that for a very definite opening thought! But think about it. In the English language it is a verb and a noun. What do you think of when you see the word cross? Do you see it as a verb meaning that you are going to the other side – like crossing a bridge? Do you see it as a verb meaning that you are being thwarted – like being crossed on an issue? Do you see it as a verb meaning that you are upset – like being cross at a person? Do you see it as a noun – like a cross pendant – a piece of jewelry? Do you see it as two pieces of wood traversed – like a wooden “cross”? Do you see it plain or with Jesus crucified? Is it a crucifix or a cross? Is it a symbol of hope or a symbol of death to you? A simple 5 letter monosyllabic word at first glance, but a word that can have complex ideas and theology associated with it.

The cross is a meaningful and recognized symbol throughout the world bringing varying thoughts and emotions. The cross has been carried in crusades from ancient times to the present. It is worn sometimes as a badge of honor – a symbol to the world that “I am a Christian” or a symbol of valor (military honors). It boggles the mind to think of all of the different variations that exist of cross designs – i.e. the celtic cross, the various military crosses, the orthodox cross, etc.

What do you see when you see the “cross”? Is it a burden that you carry that is unresolved yet you continue to shoulder it? Is it a symbol that reminds you that Jesus paid the ultimate price for your salvation? This Sunday theme is “Approaching the Cross”. How do you approach the cross? Jesus entered Jerusalem and was jubilantly proclaimed “King” by the crowds. He knew however that he was really entering into His last days on earth, yet He rode into town knowing what He knew. Have you ever experienced a situation that you knew would be unpleasant but “rode into it”? Why? Where did you draw your strength?

Do you approach the cross only in times of trouble or despair? Do you approach the cross in times of joy and thanksgiving? Do you ever approach the cross? The cross is a powerful symbol - a reminder of God’s great love for us, Jesus’ ultimate gift to us and a reminder that we too will be raised to join the Father in everlasting life. So – why not approach the cross – why not approach the cross in faith – why not embrace the cross and carry it forward so that all will know.

This Sunday observes the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that was marked by the crowds, who were in Jerusalem for Passover, waving palm branches and proclaiming him as the messianic king. The Gospels tell us that Jesus rode into the city on a donkey, enacting the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, and in so doing emphasized the humility that was to characterize the Kingdom he proclaimed. The irony of his acceptance as the new Davidic King (Mark 11:10) by

the crowds who would only five days later cry for his execution should be a sobering reminder of the human tendency to want God on our own terms.

Traditionally, worshippers enact the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem by the waving of palm branches and singing songs of celebration. Sometimes this is accompanied by a processional into the church. In many churches, children are an integral part of this service since they enjoy processions and activity as a part of worship. This provides a good opportunity to involve them in the worship life of the community of Faith.

This Sunday is also known as **Passion Sunday** to commemorate the beginning of Holy Week and Jesus' final agonizing journey to the cross. The English word *passion* comes from a Latin word that means "to suffer," the same word from which we derive the English word *patient*. In most Protestant traditions, the liturgical color for The Season of Lent is purple, and that color is used until Easter Sunday. In Catholic tradition (and some others), the colors are changed to Red for Palm Sunday. Red is the color of the church, used for Pentecost as well as remembering the martyrs of the church. Since it symbolizes shed blood, it is also used on Palm Sunday to symbolize the death of Jesus. While most Protestants celebrate the Sunday before Easter as Palm Sunday, in Catholic and other church traditions it is also celebrated as Passion Sunday anticipating the impending death of Jesus.

Increasingly, many churches are incorporating an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus into services on this Sunday as a way to balance the celebration of Easter Sunday. Rather than having the two Sundays both focus on triumph, Passion Sunday is presented as a time to reflect on the suffering and death of Jesus in a Sunday service of worship. This provides an opportunity for people who do not or cannot attend a Good Friday Service to experience the contrast of Jesus' death and the Resurrection, rather than celebrating the Resurrection in isolation from Jesus' suffering. However, since Sunday services are always celebrations of the Resurrection of Jesus during the entire year, even an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus on this Sunday should not be mournful or end on a negative note, as do most Good Friday Services (which is the reason Eucharist or Communion is not normally celebrated on Good Friday). Above excerpted from:
<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyholyweek.html>

Palm Sunday is also known as Flower Sunday (Pascua Florida) because flowers used to be blessed on this day, and thereafter, the entire Holy Week became known by the name "Florida." It is because Ponce de Leon landed in Florida on Easter Sunday that the State of Florida got its name.

Announcements:

The copier has been repaired.

We will be collecting new men's underwear and baby receiving blankets to donate to LBJ hospital. Please bring the items to the fellowship. We will be collecting until Easter Sunday.

Second and fourth Sundays of each month – Coffee Talk and Continental Breakfast- Warm hearted conversation and loving each other is the purpose of the gathering. Got an idea for the future of Fairbanks? This is your opportunity to express yourself. Coffee Talk is scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Give yourself a treat and be there!

April 9th- Pancake Breakfast 8:30 am- Please **bring breakfast meat or fruit** to share. We will invite the community.

April 16th- Easter Sunday - Easter Brunch and Egg Hunt 9:30 am

Fairbanks Happenings

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See Mission Center web page for more information

April 22- 23rd - Sionito Work Party

April 28th – 30th – Texas Men’s Retreat – Livingston Mission – John Wight – Guest Ministry

May 25th – 29th – Young Adult Reunion – Sionito- Contact Diane Solario.

The following is a schedule of those that are currently scheduled to deliver the message for the 1st quarter. This is not the “official list” and is for informational purposes only. Please refer to the worship schedule in the fellowship hall for changes.

April 9th – Doug White

April 12th – John Reimer

The nursery schedule cannot be posted in the family center for January through March 2006. Please contact Andrea if you are interested in volunteering in the nursery this quarter.

Nursery Schedule:

We need volunteers for the nursery. Please see Andrea Watson.

Please review the prayer list in the Sunday bulletin. If you have added someone to the list please update Leo Caesar with any new information and current status of the prayer concern. Please contact Leo Caesar if you wish to add/remove someone from the list.

Calendar & Mission Center News:

The Coastal Bend Mission Center is proud to announce that the Coastal Bend web site is up and running! You can visit the site at www.coastalbendmc.org

The Coastal Bend Mission Center (CBMC) has established a Youth Campership Fund to assist youth attending summer youth events. This program is not tied to any local congregational campership program. Any youth, member or friend of Community of Christ, residing within CBMC, may apply for one (1) campership per youth event (Sionito Youth Camp, IYF or Spec). Each eligible camper will receive up to \$50 per event, depending upon demand for camperships. To receive the campership, the youth must complete the application information shown below.

Please complete the application information by April 30, 2006 and forward to the Mission Center President and Financial Officer, Mark Euritt.

The options for completing and forwarding the application are:

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| 1) online using the website form |
| 2) send a copy you can get HERE via mail to: |
| |
| Mark Euritt, Coastal Bend Mission Center
311 West Annie
Austin, TX 78704 |

I will be sending out periodic e-mails letting everyone know what is “HAPPENING” at Fairbanks. Please let me know if your e-mail or other contact information changes.

Mark your calendars and **participate, enjoy, reach out!!!!!!**I pray that everyone have a safe and happy week.

Martha Romig