



## Knox Presbyterian Church

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*"Christ caring for People  
through People"*

March 28, 2010

Greetings and Joyful Blessings: (See How Your King Comes)

*<sup>12-15</sup>The next day the huge crowd that had arrived for the Feast heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem. They broke off palm branches and went out to meet him. And they cheered: Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in God's name! Yes! The King of Israel! Jesus got a young donkey and rode it, just as the Scripture has it:*

*No fear, Daughter Zion: See how your king comes, riding a donkey's colt. <sup>16</sup>The disciples didn't notice the fulfillment of many Scriptures at the time, but after Jesus was glorified, they remembered that what was written about him matched what was done to him. <sup>17-19</sup>The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, was there giving eyewitness accounts. It was because they had spread the word of this latest God-sign that the crowd swelled to a welcoming parade. The Pharisees took one look and threw up their hands: "It's out of control. The world's in a stampede after him." (John 12: 12-19 The Message)*

Jesus was truly 'something special'. The crowds that welcomed him to Jerusalem recognized this. He healed the sick, he raised the dead, he fed the multitudes, and he taught with a confident authority that no other teacher had ever shown. Word spread and crowds gathered. And on this day when he entered the holy city it became a parade of singing, dancing and cheering. Those in authority could feel their control slipping away. For them it was truly a fearful feeling. Their rank, their respect, their ability to control the masses, this was their whole life. Any political party, any social group, any congregation, indeed any individual fears change. Indeed I have been minister to congregations that were quite content not to grow. Newcomers make us uncomfortable. After all they are 'strangers'. Who knows what they might want to do that is different. And we all fear the unknown. It makes us uncomfortable. We are more like the Pharisees than we might like to admit.

But let me share a little secret with you. Any minister who wants to introduce something new to a congregation, to break through the natural reserve and even resistance can always start with the children. When little ones do something that would otherwise be outside our comfort zone, we smile and say together, "Isn't that cute." I wonder sometimes if that's why Jesus loved the little children so much. I wonder if that why he once said, "Whoever wants to enter the kingdom of God must do so with the simplicity of a child." Children love new things. And we love children. And everybody loves a parade.

I remember one Palm Sunday our Church School decided to parade into the sanctuary. A certain minister, (who shall remain nameless ... chuckle) wanting to liven up the party decided to provide helium filled balloons tied to each little wrist, and some to hand out to the adults. Thankfully we turned off the ceiling fans so the strings of any that got loose wouldn't get twisted around them. More than a few balloons escaped (from the hands of the adults of course). The hearts and minds of some of our members raced as they wondered how in the world we would ever get them down from our high ceiling. We did all lift up heart and voice, and eyes that day as we sang our hosannas. (By the way, the wayward balloons lost their ability to fly by the following morning when the custodian and I collected them from aisles and pews.

I hope that you will find the simplicity and joy to let your hearts and praises soar this week as we remember that first Palm Sunday and HOLY WEEK when our salvation for all eternity was secured. Lift up your hearts and make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Join the raucous crowd, join the stampede. And fear not. Come with the simple trusting faith of a child, let go of your adult cares and worries, for you are invited to a wonderful eternal party. Come as you are. And you don't need to bring potluck this time. God has and will provide in abundance.

Amen.

(Rev.) John McGurrin

