

Week 6: Celebrating the Passover

1. This week we celebrated one of our "Community Sundays." How did you experience the various ways in which we expressed community together (both during the service and afterwards at our potluck)? How would you like to get more involved in our community? What do you think you need to do to experience closer community? Is there anything that obstructs you, and how could we all help with that?
2. What stood out to you from the message this past Sunday? Was there anything that seemed timely or relevant to you? Was there anything that made you uncomfortable, or with which you disagreed?
3. This week was also Palm Sunday when we celebrate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem before Easter. Jesus came with his followers along with thousands of other pilgrims to celebrate the Passover, a festival where the Jewish people celebrate their liberation from slavery in Egypt. Read the story in Luke 19:28-48 and discuss the following:
 - What emotions do the crowds express and why? What do you think is their hope?
 - What emotions do the religious authorities express and why? What do you think is their hope?
 - What emotions does Jesus express and why? What do you think is his hope?
 - How do you relate to each of these expressions? How do they challenge you?
4. The 40 days of Lent are traditionally associated with Jesus' 40 days spent in the wilderness. Towards the end of this time, he underwent an intense period of testing. Read about this in Luke 4:1-13. What do you think each of these temptations represents? How might they have helped prepare Jesus for his eventual destiny in Jerusalem at the time of Passover? How do you experience these same kinds of temptation personally?
5. Read Luke 9:51-56 and Luke 13:31-35 (where Jesus repeatedly sets a resolute posture on his journey towards Jerusalem) and discuss the following:
 - What potential distractions from his purpose do you see here and how does Jesus respond to them?
 - What emotions does Jesus express and why?
 - What emotions do others express and why?
 - How do you relate to each of these expressions? How do they challenge you?
6. As we approach Easter in the coming week, take some time to look back over this season of Lent and our series "Food for the Hungry." We've experienced food as a source of community, support, and encouragement. We've reflected on food metaphors and stories in the scriptures as a way of embracing the challenge to pursue justice in our society. What has stood out most to you? In what ways do you feel most challenged? What change does this call for—how do you need to resolutely reset your "internal center" on Jesus and his

way? What sustainable change in your life and practice do you want to nurture and how will you go about this? After sharing, take some time to pray for one another.

Practice for the week: Centering on Jesus

As we approach Easter this week, take a moment each day to reflect back on the final discussion above and specifically how you need to resolutely reset your “internal center” on Jesus and his way. Sitting in quietness and solitude, consciously let go and surrender to God’s presence. Invite the Spirit of Christ to partner with you. Lean into that love and let it move you. On Friday, come experience our Good Friday stations based on the Last Supper (anytime between 6 and 8 p.m.) Then celebrate hope and resurrection at our outdoor Easter service on Sunday April 20.