



Church on the Cape Newsletter



March 2026

THE KING NO ONE EXPECTED



Sometimes we speak—or even shout—the truth without realizing just how right we are. That’s exactly what happened on the first Palm Sunday.

Jesus entered Jerusalem not on a prize-worthy stallion, but on a young, humble donkey. The crowd erupted in joy, shouting, *"Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!"* They waved palm branches, symbols of peace, and hailed Jesus as their king.

Was He a king? Jesus didn't deny it. When the Pharisees told him to silence the crowd, he replied, *"I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."*

Later, Pilate—the Roman governor—mocked the religious leaders by saying, *"Here is your king."* The chief priests bristled with anger, shouting, *"We have no king but Caesar!"*

When Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified, he made one last jab at the furious crowd. John 19:19 tells us he ordered a sign to be placed above the cross. Written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, it declared:

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

The chief priests demanded the sign be changed, but Pilate refused. *"What I have written, I have written,"* he said.

Was Jesus a king? The witnesses of His resurrection knew the answer. In Acts 17:7, the early believers were accused of "saying there is another king, Jesus." And the book of Revelation looks ahead to the day when all creation will know the truth:

"The Lamb will triumph ... for He is Lord of lords and King of kings." — Revelation 17:14

Source: Newsletternewsletter

From The Pastor's Desk

"Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely, he will not come to the festival, will he?" Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should let them know, so that they might arrest him." (John 11:55-57)

In the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of John, Lazarus dies and then Jesus raises him from the dead. It is a powerful story showing how Jesus can use the power of life to triumph over death. The authorities quickly realize how dangerous this is—that if Jesus has this kind of power it threatens their power, their positions and even the structure of the world in which they live. They decide that the solution is to arrest Jesus and put him to death. Thus, chapter eleven ends with the authorities issuing an arrest warrant for Jesus.

Perhaps you know what happens next. Mary, Martha and the resurrected Lazarus throw a dinner party to celebrate Lazarus' return to life. They invite all their friends and they invite Jesus. It is dangerous for everyone. If Jesus is seen in public, he faces arrest. If the people at the party are found with Jesus and haven't alerted the authorities, they too could face arrest and punishment. When we read this story, we may miss this important detail that this is an act of civil resistance. This party is a direct challenge to those in power.

It is a shocking story. Jesus gives the greatest gift most of us can imagine—the gift of life restored in the face of death. The story reveals two dramatically different reactions. One group decides that this power is so dangerous they must capture and kill the person who uses it. The other group throws a party and celebrates. Then,

in the midst of the celebrating group, a woman steps forward, shows her devotion to the live-giving-Jesus and reveals the paradox of the whole situation.

Mary of Bethany, sister to Lazarus and Martha, brings out a container of expensive ointment. She rubs it on Jesus' feet. Most of our Bibles say that she "anointed" Jesus' feet. The Greek word that is used here can also refer to embalming or anointing a body for burial. Jesus understands this when he says that Mary could keep this ointment for his burial. In her action of devotion, she alone reveals the truth. This is their last chance to show their love to Jesus, the giver of life, before he will die on the cross. She recognizes the paradox and the danger.

Of course, we know that the power of life in Jesus, the power that brought Lazarus back from death will rise from the post-crucifixion tomb. The death-wielding-power of the world succumbs to the life-giving-power of God in the resurrection of Lazarus and Jesus. For us, then, the question becomes which group do we join? Do we surrender to the threats of the ones who crucify Jesus or do we join the dinner party that risks everything to defy the threatening powers? Do we worship the Jesus who refuses to fight his opponents by joining Mary in anointing him or do we surrender to the ways of the world?

It took courage to throw a party. It took devotion to anoint Jesus' feet. It took faith to believe that life could defeat death. It took commitment to declare allegiance to Jesus when he was about to be executed. Do we still have that courage, devotion, faith and commitment? We've been invited to that party—let's go together.

Rev. Greg Smith

Scripture Readings for March Sundays



MAR 01 | 2nd Sunday in Lent (Purple)

- Genesis 12:1-4a.
- Psalm 121 (UMH 844).
- Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
- John 3:1-17

MAR 08 | 3rd Sunday in Lent (Purple)

- Exodus 17:1-7
- Psalm 95 (UMH 814)
- Romans 5:1-11
- John 4:5-42

MAR 15 | 4th Sunday in Lent; UMCOR Sunday (Purple)

- 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- Psalm 23 (UMH 754 or 137)
- Ephesians 5:8-14
- John 9:1-41

MAR 22 | 5th Sunday in Lent (Purple)

- Ezekiel 37:1-14
- Psalm 130 (UMH 848)
- Romans 8:6-11
- John 11:1-45

MAR 29 | Palm/Passion Sunday (Purple or Red)

Palm Lit:

- Matthew 21:1-11
- Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839)

Passion Lit:

- Isaiah 50:4-9a;
- Psalm 31:9-16; (UMH 764)
- Philemon 2:5-11
- Matthew 26:14-27 or 27:11-54

MAR 30 | Monday of Holy Week (Purple or Red)

- Isaiah 42:1-9
- Psalm 36:5-11 (UMH 771)
- Hebrew 9:11-15
- John 12:1-11

Holy Week Services, March and Early April

Experience the depth of God's love through
our Holy Week services:

Palm Sunday - March 29th, 10:00 AM -
Celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into
Jerusalem as we lift our voices in praise and
prepare our hearts for the journey to the
cross and the empty tomb.

Maundy Thursday - April 2, 7:00 PM

- Join us for a meaningful service of
Communion and remembrance of the Last
Supper.

Good Friday - April 3, 7:00 PM

- A solemn time of reflection and prayer as
we remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

Our Good Friday worship service will feature a
dramatic reading with seven different readers.
Pastor Greg would like to identify these readers
soon. We need people who are not in the choir
to volunteer for these parts.

Easter Sunday - April 5, 10 AM

- Rejoice in the victory of the Resurrection!
Worship with us as we celebrate the risen
Lord.

We will join other churches for an Ecumenical
Easter Sunrise Service at Middle Beach in
Kennebunk and begin at 6:00 a.m.

Source: COTC and Newsletternewsletter

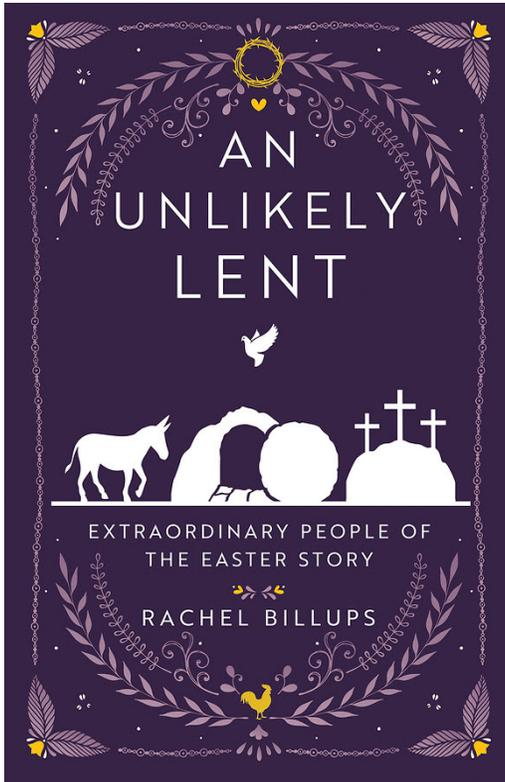
New Member Recognition Sunday

During worship on March 8, we will be receiving and recognizing new members of the church. If you would like to be part of the group who are joining the church, please speak to Rev. Smith soon!

Tuesdays 12-1 p.m. and Thursdays 6-7 p.m. The first date of the study is Feb. 24. The book will cost \$18. For those who have signed up already, the books are in the office. Please see Greg or Jen in the office.

Storm Closing Reminder

If the church is closed due to inclement weather, please tune in to NewsCenter Maine or go to: <https://www.newscentermaine.com/>



Committee Help Needed

We have several committees in the church that could use more members to help with their important work! One of those is the Staff Parish Committee, which is our personnel committee. This is a required committee and has a defined size of nine members. At present, we have three vacancies that need to be filled. If you would like to know more or would like to volunteer, please speak to Pastor Greg.

Video Streaming Announcement

In the past few weeks, we have been experiencing erratic internet speeds, which can cause streaming problems. In most cases, the problem will disappear after a few minutes, and the video will resume without the viewer needing to do anything except wait a few minutes. In other cases, we cannot stream. If that happens, we will post the full-service video on the same Sunday afternoon after about 2 pm. Note that these videos will appear in the "Videos" section rather than the usual "Live" section on our YouTube channel.

Lenten Study

Our group will read and discuss "**An Unlikely Lent**" by Rachel Billups. This study introduces us to the overlooked characters in the Passion narrative, from Mary of Bethany to the servant girl, Barabbas, and Simon of Cyrene. Billups helps us see how these unlikely voices reveal God's surprising grace. If there is enough interest, we will offer the same times we did during Advent:



February Sunday School News

It may be cold and chilly outside, but it is warm and sunny in Sunday School. As you sit in the sanctuary and listen to the beautiful music, and the inspiring sermons, you will also hear the delightful sounds of little feet going thumpity thump from above, and the muffled voices of children having a good time! Jake recently declared as he was leaving church, "I just love going to church!"

What a joy to listen to Zadie read scripture during the worship service. Thank you, Zadie, for sharing the gifts God has given to you, with all of us.

February has been a busy month in Sunday School. The children listened to the stories of 'salt of the earth' and 'light of the world'. The children learned that when we refer to someone as 'salt of the earth' we are talking about a person that makes things better, just like salt. The children tasted popcorn, salted and unsalted, and saltines. All decided the salted items were better. The children identified ways that we are salt of the earth – through kind actions, thoughtful words, and big smiles. We talked about a party with some people at it. The party was OK. Then Ben, Sophie, Isabella, Jake, and Winston arrived. That party got a lot better! 'Salt of the Earth' people make everything better. The morning after this lesson Sophie called out with real enthusiasm, "I am the salt of the earth", and Ben added, "things get better when more people arrive".

The story of The Transfiguration followed the week of salt and light. The children had a marvelous time making cabbage juice and then adding different liquids to it. Depending upon what liquid was added, the cabbage juice turned from a deep purple to blue, red, or magenta! The children then listened to the story of The Transfiguration of Jesus. They were quite surprised by the sudden arrival of three men in white robes, with Jesus glowing in a bright light. They created their own glowing pictures.

The last week of February re-introduced the children to the story of Adam and Eve. Zadie was very familiar with this story and easily answered all of Diana's questions! The children heard about the

bad serpent persuading Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. The children had fun decorating the class tree with forbidden fruit and creating bad serpents. God bless these Sunday School teachers. It is clear how much time, love, and preparation goes into each lesson.



The Beatitudes

The Beatitudes, which offer happy heavenly outcomes for certain earthly conditions, are from Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount," and serve as a guide for the journey to God's Kingdom. Please refer to pastor Greg's excellent February 1 sermon on this subject at churchonthecape.org "Latest Video Streaming." Here, Pastor Greg reverses the interpretation from a code of earthly behavior to that in God's kingdom.

BLESSED ARE YOU

The Beatitudes receive little attention, lamented novelist Kurt Vonnegut. "But, often with tears in their eyes, [Christians] demand that the Ten Commandments be posted in public buildings. And, of course, that's Moses, not Jesus. I haven't heard [anyone] demand that the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, be posted anywhere."

Jesus' Beatitudes have much to teach about selflessness, mourning, peacemaking, and more. Jim Berger, author of *Being Sermon on the Mount Christians*, explains that those teachings were once "viewed as a mandate for the faithful." Post-Reformation, they became less law-like and more of a "liberating directive." Berger writes, "For Jesus, being and doing are inseparable."

The Sermon is at once theory and praxis. It is not enough to read it or hear it. Jesus intends it to be how we live."

Source: Newsletternewsletter

The Beatitudes: Matthew 5:3-12 "Wesley Study Bible" Common English Bible

3 Happy are people who are hopeless, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

4 Happy are people who grieve, because they will be made glad.

5 Happy are people who are humble, because they will inherit the earth.

6 Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full.

7 Happy are people who show mercy, because they will receive mercy,

8 Happy are people who have pure hearts, because they will see God.

9 Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children.

10 Happy are people whose lives are harassed because they are righteous, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

11 Happy are you when people insult you and harass you and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of me.

12 Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. In the same way, people harassed the prophets who came before you.

Church on the Cape A United Methodist Church

We of The Church on the Cape represent various religious and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. We are young, old, middle-aged, single, married, widowed, divorced, parents, grandparents, and members of extended families.

Above all, we are people who take risks, make mistakes, confess, repent, and try again.

At the center of our community is Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection are the reasons we are together. The life and hope in this community have more to do with Christ's faithfulness to us than ours to Christ.

Whether you are searching for a faith community or just passing through, we want you to feel at home. Whoever you are, whatever your history, your scars, your gifts; You are among people like yourself.

Join us from wherever you call home. If you like what you see here, we post our virtual Hymn Sing and Sunday Worship Service on our website, www.churchonthecape.org.

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