

THE NEWS
of
East Washington Heights Baptist Church

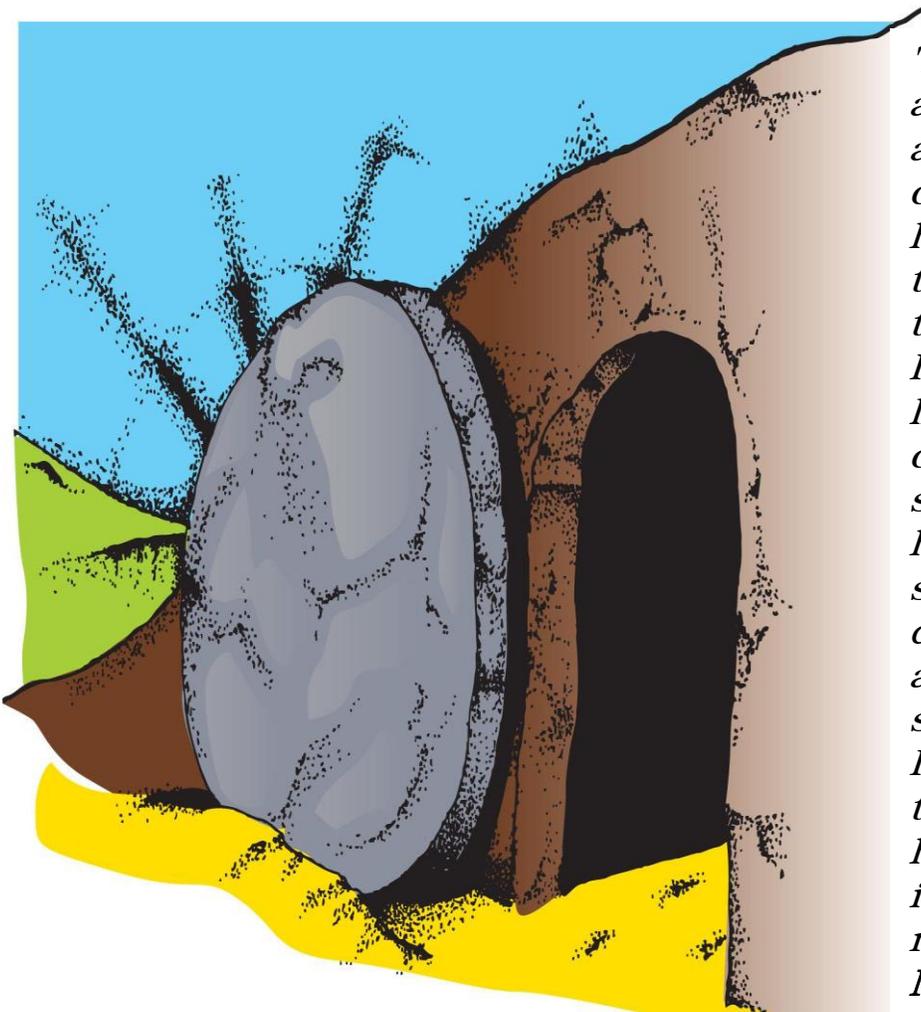
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Reverend Kip B. Banks Sr. Pastor

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*"And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow; and for fear of him the watchers shook, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said to the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus who has been crucified, He is not here for he is risen, even as he said."
Matthew 28: 2 - 6*

THE NEWS

The Pastor's Message

Don't Let the Rocks Cry Out

This month, on Palm Sunday, we'll celebrate the beginning of Holy Week, the most important time on the Christian calendar. It is during this week that we begin the final leg of our spiritual sojourn in preparation for Resurrection Sunday. It's during this time that we should be walking more closely with Jesus. It's during this time that we should be sharing at his table and washing each other's feet. It's during this time that we should make our way to our own personal garden of Gethsemane. It's during this time that we should take-up our cross and follow Jesus, and crucify our sinful nature. It's during this time that we should experience resurrection and walk in newness to transform this world with the power of God's love!

What does it mean for Rocks to Cry Out?

On Palm Sunday, however, Jesus says to us that if we as his disciples keep quiet that the very rocks will cry out. But what does it mean for rocks to cry out? Is this literal? Is Jesus talking about a choir made up of rocks that look to see if we his disciples are silent and if they are then break-out singing?

Perhaps not, but if you think about it, rocks do cry out. For example, if you've heard a mud slide, then you've heard rocks cry out. Also if you lived in California and experienced an earthquake then you've experienced rocks crying out. Furthermore, if you've ever gone to Niagara Falls in New York or Great Falls in Virginia and heard the sound of the water, joining together with the rocks to create an unending symphony of praise, then you've heard the rocks crying out. Therefore, God is able to make the rocks to cry out, but a more relevant question for us is what must we do to during this holy season to prevent the rocks from crying out? There are answers in the text Luke 19:28-40.

Understand that the Lord has Need of You

In the first instance, to prevent the rocks from crying out, we must understand that the Lord wants to use us. In this text it says in v. 30 that Jesus told his disciples to go and to untie a donkey and that if anyone asked why they were doing so to tell them, "The Lord's needs it." Now you may not be a donkey, but all the same the Lord has need of you! The Lord needs your witness. There's something that you're going through right now, but the Lord is keeping you through the situation and he wants you to testify about how it is that you're making it over. Furthermore, once you've been delivered he wants you to testify about his delivering power. The Lord also needs your time and the Lord needs your talent. You've got some abilities that he's uniquely given to you and they are needed in our church. The Lord needs your resources. God has blessed you financially for the very purpose of being a blessing to someone else.

Walk in Humility

In order to prevent the rocks from crying out, we also must walk in humility. Here Jesus was the King of Kings of Lord of Lords, but as he entered into Jerusalem he did so humbly. He didn't come riding on a big shining white horse symbolizing conquest, but he came riding a lowly donkey, a symbol of peace and humility.

The way we *begin* something has a lot to do with how we'll *complete* it. Here Jesus is beginning the final leg of his earthly journey and he knew what lay ahead. He knew that he had to face death and destruction. He knew that he had to face doubting disciples and irreverent roman authorities. He knew that he would have to endure the cross and so he began with an attitude of humility.

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It is our attitude that determines our altitude and this is why the Apostle Paul said:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

George Washington Carver, the scientist who developed hundreds of useful products from the peanut was a great symbol of humility. When he was young he said, "God, tell me the mystery of the universe." But God answered, "That knowledge is reserved for me alone." So I said, "God, tell me the mystery of the peanut." Then God said, "Well, George, that's more nearly your size." And he told me."

Praise Him with a Loud Voice for What He Has Done!

Finally, in order to prevent the rocks from crying out, we must praise God for all the miracles that we've seen. The crowds were there to welcome Jesus because of the great works and miracle that he had done. Some of the folks in the crowd had been healed from various diseases. Others in the crowd had been fed and still others had seen His miracles. Some had listened to Jesus and their lives had been changed. The crowd, on both sides of the road were waving palm branches and praising Jesus for all of the miracles that they had seen.

In my minds-eye, I can see there in the crowd the couple who's wedding Jesus saved, they were at the reception ready to do the Wobble, but they ran out of wine, but Jesus turned the water wine. I can see in that crowd the woman who had an issue of blood, the doctors couldn't help her, but she said if I can but touch the hem of his garment, I will be made whole. I can see the man laid by the pool at Bethesda, he had no man to put him in the pool, but Jesus told him take his bed and walk. I can see the Gerasene Demoniac, he was strung out on heroin and crack, but then he met Jesus and he was found clothed and in his right mind!

All of these people and more praised Jesus for all of the miracles that they had seen. Have you seen any miracle in your life? Then you ought to praise the Lord! Did the Lord wake you up this morning? Then you ought to praise the Lord because life in and of itself is a miracle. Is the blood running warm in your veins? Praise him! Has he healed your body? Praise Him! Has he put food on your table? Praise Him! Has he put clothes on your back? Praise Him! Has he made a way out of no way? Praise him? In fact, you ought to go back and sit down and make a list of all the ways that God has blessed you over your life and then Praise Him! And praise Him not just for what he's done, but also praise Him for who is. He is our triumphal king of kings and lord of lords. He is our Lord and Savior. Don't let the rocks cry out because he's worthy to be praised!

Easter Joy

Joy is prayer. Joy is strength. Joy is love. Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls. God loves a cheerful giver. One gives most who gives with joy. The best way to show our gratitude to God and people is to accept everything with joy.

A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of the Christ risen.

___Mother Teresa

Happy Birthday to all who were born in March!

THE NEWS

Deliver us

We sing and say “hosanna” every Palm Sunday but hardly ever in between. So what does that word mean?

That first Palm Sunday, crowds spread their cloaks before Jesus as people had before Jehu to proclaim him king (2 Kings 9:13). They waved palm branches in greeting . . . a traditional sign of celebration (Leviticus 23:40). And, of course, they shouted, “Hosanna!”

This was an exclamation of “a people in distress [addressing] their king or their god,” explains Bible scholar William Barclay. Drawn from Psalm 118: 25, *hosanna* is Aramaic for “save now.” By the time of Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Barclay says, *hosanna* may have “become to some extent only a cry of welcome and of acclamation, like ‘Hail!’; but essentially it is a people’s cry for deliverance and for help in the day of their trouble.”

“Hosanna!” is the plea of an oppressed people to the one they recognize as their true king: Jesus, their Savior.

Special Dates in March 2016

- World Day of Prayer, Friday, *March 4*
 - Fourth Sunday in Lent, *March 6*
 - Girl Scout Sunday, *March 6*
 - Fifth Sunday in Lent, *March 13*
 - Daylight-Saving Time Begins, Sunday, *March 13, 2:00AM*
 - Holy Week, *March 20-26*
 - Palm/Passion Sunday, *March 20, 11:00AM*
 - First day of Spring, Sunday, *March 20*
 - Maundy Thursday, *March 24, 7:00PM*
 - Good Friday Service, *March 25, 12:00 Noon, Ryland Memorial United Methodist*
 - Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, *March 26, 3:00PM*
 - Easter Sunday, *March 27, 7:00AM Sunrise Service; 11:00AM Worship Service*
-

Happy to help

The International Day of Happiness is observed on March 20 (also the first day of spring this year; coincidence?). Jesus said we’ll be happy (or “blessed”) when we’re meek, merciful, pure and so on (see his Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12). In other words, happiness results from putting others’ needs above our own.

Research confirms that helping others boosts people’s self-esteem, forges strong friendships, offers a sense of belonging and purpose, decreases stress, increases gratitude and sparks others to “pay it forward.” In fact, University of Texas researchers found that the “activism cure” is a great way to overcome bouts of sadness. So get helping — and get happy!

THE NEWS

Taking up the cross

“That’s her cross to bear,” it’s said of someone’s hardship or inconvenience. The challenge might be as serious as poverty or as trivial as crabby neighbors. However, when Jesus called people to “take up their cross,” he didn’t mean it that way. Nor was he referring to anyone imposing suffering on another.

When Jesus said, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24 and parallels), he spoke of a radical new way to engage a society that more often called people to take up swords and fight for self-preservation. He called people to peace, not violence — and from being self-focused to following him.

That is also Jesus’ call today. The cross isn’t a euphemism that lets us dismiss someone’s suffering. We don’t appoint someone else to bear it. When we choose the cross, we do so for ourselves in response to Jesus’ invitation that, one way or another, ultimately leads through death to new life.

Said three ways

In Scripture, the number three is thought to symbolize completeness — above all, in the Holy Trinity. Dating back centuries, Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week are, in some Christian practices, called *Triduum*, or The Three Days.

How appropriate, then, to allow three Christ-followers from different time periods to remind us of the wonder God enacted during those three days:

“God put the wrong on [Christ] who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God.” __St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 5:21, *The Message*

“Through this blessed exchange, in which Christ changes places with us (something the heart can grasp only in faith), and through nothing else, are we freed from sin and death and given his righteousness and life as our own.” __Martin Luther

“Nails didn’t hold God to a cross. Love did. The sinless one took on the face of a sinner so that we sinners could take on the face of a saint!” __Max Lucado

Easter possibilities

The message of Easter is not only that Christ is risen, not only that suffering is not the last word, not only that God gives new life, but this: Nothing is impossible with God. __The Rev. James Martin, S.J.

Happy Anniversary to all who were married in March!

THE NEWS

The King

Sometimes we speak or shout the truth without realizing just how right we are. That happened during Holy Week, first when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The palm-waving crowd hailed Jesus as their king ... though he wasn't the earthly king they wanted.

Days later, during Jesus' trial, Pilate taunted the Pharisees, saying, "Here is your king." Furious, they protested, "We have no king but Caesar." Pilate turned Jesus over to them. But still wanting to needle the insistent persecutors, he wrote a sign reading "The King of the Jews" and had it fastened above Jesus' cross (John 19:19).

Was Jesus a king? Witnesses of the Resurrection thought so. The first Christians were accused of "saying there is another king, Jesus" (Acts 17:7). The writer of Revelation envisions the day when the whole world will understand that the risen Christ isn't only Lord and Savior but also "Lord of lords and King of kings" (Revelation 17:14).

The origin of "Easter"

It's not certain where the word *Easter*, which never appears in Scripture, originates. In some places, the day is called Pasch, which comes from "Passover," the festival during which Jesus was crucified. Others call it Resurrection Sunday.

Some scholars think the church absorbed the word *Easter* from pagan roots, because the goddess of spring, Eostre, was celebrated about the same time as Passover.

Others suggest the word derives from an old Latin phrase referring to the white robes traditionally worn by people being baptized on the Sunday that celebrates Jesus' resurrection.

Did You Know?

On March 4, 1956 (sixty years ago) East Washington Heights Baptist Church dedicated the newly constructed Sanctuary and fellowship hall (named after the founder of the East Washington Heights Baptist Church, David C. Fountain).

The addition of the Sanctuary and Fountain Hall completed phase 3 of the home of the East Washington Baptist Church Family. Phase 1, the Many Chapel, named after the Rev. James W. Many (pastor for 32 years), was built and dedicated on November 25, 1934. Phase 2, the Education building was completed and dedicated on April 27, 1941.

Give your all

There are plenty to follow our Lord halfway, but not fully. They will give up possessions, friends, and honors, but it touches them too closely to give of themselves. Commit your life in unreserved obedience to God. **__Meister Eckhart**

THE NEWS

Facing the music

The late United Methodist Bishop Gerald Kennedy told the story of a boy who accidentally broke the glass of a street lamp. When he asked his dad what he should do, his dad said they must go to the city's headquarters, find out the cost and then pay to replace it.

That was more than the boy really wanted to do. He whimpered, "I thought that all I had to do was ask God to forgive me."

God does indeed forgive, but that doesn't mean we can avoid the consequences of our sin. When we mess up, life can be a problem for a while. But thankfully, our gracious God doesn't hold our sins against us.

Buckle on the straps

A cowboy once offered this sensible notion of living the Christian faith: "Lotsa folks who'd really like to do right think that serving the Lord just means shouting themselves hoarse praising his name.

"Well, I'll tell ya how I look at that. I'm working here fer Jim. Now, if I'd sit around the house here telling what a good fella Jim is, and singing songs to him, and getting up in the night to serenade him, I'd be doing just like a lot of Christians do. But I wouldn't suit Jim, and I'd get fired mighty quick.

"But when I buckle on my straps and hustle among the hills and see that Jim's herd is all right and not suffering fer water and feed, or being off the range and branded by cattle thieves, well then, I'm serving Jim the way he wants to be served."

Other witnesses about Christ

There is much historical evidence, besides the Bible, that Jesus did indeed live and that his life, death and resurrection were the foundation of Christianity.

One famous non-Christian historian named Flavius Josephus lived about A.D. 37. He focused primarily on Jewish history but also wrote the following words: "Now there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man ... a doer of wonderful works. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles."

The writings of Josephus provide important extra-biblical information about the people, customs and geography during Jesus' time. Origen, a Christian author who wrote around the year 240, said Josephus "did not accept Jesus as Christ." But by mentioning Jesus in his history texts, Josephus added credibility to the Lord's earthly life.

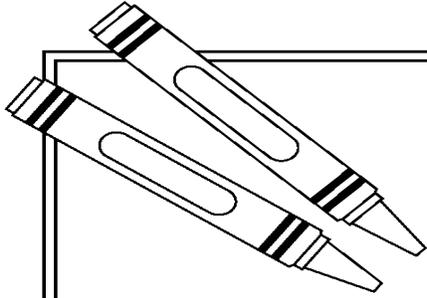


Donations needed

for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt
on Saturday, March 26, 3:00PM

Contact the church office (202) 582-4811 for more information.





Just for **KIDS**

A FAMILY OF PRAYER

The book of Acts tells about a man named Cornelius. He was a Roman centurion from Caesarea who worshiped God. Through his encounter with Cornelius, Peter learned that God accepts everyone who fears him and does what is right.

Use the code below to see the example set by Cornelius and his family. Solve the math problems by using the grid. Then use the key to find the letter that matches each answer. Write the letter on the blank.

| GRID | |
|------|---|
| A | B |
| 2 | 4 |
| C | D |
| 6 | 5 |

KEY: a=7 e=8 i=10 o=9 u=11 y=6

"H e ___nd ___ll h___s f___m___l___
 A+C A+D A+D B+C A+D B+C A+B

w___r___ d___v___ ___t ___nd
 A+C A+C A+C B+D C+D A+D

G___d-f___ ___r___ng; h___ g___v___
 B+D A+C A+D B+C A+C A+D A+C

g___n___r___ ___sl___ t___ th___s___ ___n
 A+C A+C B+D C+D A+B B+D B+D A+C B+C

n___ ___d ___nd pr___ ___d t___ G___d
 A+CA+C A+D A+D A+B A+C B+D B+D

r___g___l___rl___." ___cts 10:2, NIV
 A+C C+D A+D A+B A+D

Answers:
 "He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2, NIV