

# WELCOME!

***Please Sign-In:*** If you're feeling tech-savvy, open your phone's camera app and point the camera at this qr code to get the link to our sign-in/health-screening form. Jenna will also be happy to fill in the form for you inside the sanctuary.



## Suggestions for the Promenade

*Here are a few suggestions for how to get the most out of your walk today:*

- Silence your phone
- Quiet your heart and begin by simply listening to nature around you.
- As you notice God's creation, begin also to notice the presence of God, who is always with us.
- Begin to pray. As you pray, attune yourself to the Holy Spirit.
- Make sure to allow for times of quiet listening. Do you hear any words or see any pictures as you pray?
- When you conclude your walk, jot down anything you heard or saw from God in a journal or the notes app of your phone.

*As you start this walk pick up a pebble or leaf and put it in your pocket.*

*You might need it later.*

# Station 1:

Palm Sunday is the day we commemorate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. This Palm Sunday is filled with grief and longing because we still can't meet together. And yet, times of "shaking" (see Matthew 21:10) like this can awaken us to ask God to renew our faith.

Pause and take a moment to silently ask God,

"How are you waking me up?

How are you deepening my faith and my intimacy with you?

Is there an opportunity or an invitation for me in the midst of this crisis?"

Then, as you move on from this station, listen and wait for God to bring something to mind—either immediately or during the following days of Holy Week.

# Station 2:

*“To become attentive to beauty, we need to rediscover the art of reverence. Our world seems to have lost all sense of it.”* So wrote mystic John O’Donohue.

Find something nearby which you feel points to the sacred. Give yourself a moment to focus your attention on it.

# Station 3:

David starts Psalm 69 with a raw prayer: *"Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck."* He feels overwhelmed. But toward the end of the Psalm, David joins with the rest of God's creation in offering praise—*"Let heaven and earth praise God, the seas and everything in them."*

Without denying your feelings of grief and anxiety, start noticing signs of God's glory and goodness in creation. Even small things—a bird singing, a tree budding, sunshine, a cloud moving overhead—can declare God's power and presence. As you walk, to the next station, quietly thank God for the beauty of creation.

# Station 4:

In Psalm 12:5, the Lord says, *“Because the poor are plundered, because the needy groan, I will now arise...”*

At the last station, you noticed the beauty of God’s good creation. Psalm 12 tells us that God notices (and of course wants us to notice) the brokenness in God’s good creation—in particular, the way the poor have been “plundered.”

As you walk to the next station, spend time praying for the poor, the unemployed, refugees, prisoners, or the siblings in minority congregations and around the globe who have been hit hardest by the economic impact of COVID-19.

# Station 5:

*“When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” 5 Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”” (Exodus 3:4-5)*

Imagine: The ground beneath your feet right now is suffering from low self-esteem. Why not compliment the ground? Go on, give it a little pep talk.

# Station 6:

Ironies in the gospel stories of holy week abound. Poignant among them is the fickle nature of the crowd which changes its cry in one short week. Even more heartbreaking is the turn of events that ended in a very dark day indeed. Yet we know something about walking through a day or week that quickly shifts from celebration to grief. A Thanksgiving celebration interrupted by heart pains becomes a trip to the emergency room and bypass surgery. A car ride from the ballgame turns into a devastating wreck and then a funeral when someone drives drunk. A march for peace becomes a riot and a jail sentence when demonstrators are mistaken as criminals. The Highway of Hosannas turns into the Via Dolorosa – the way of suffering.

N.T. Wright asks the following question,

*“Are we going along for the trip in the hope that Jesus will fulfill some of our hopes and desires? Are we ready to sing a song of praise, but only as long as Jesus seems to be doing what we want? The long and dusty pilgrim way of our lives gives most of us plenty of time to sort out our motives for following Jesus in the first place. Are we ready, not only to spread our cloaks on the road in front of him, to do the showy and flamboyant thing, but also to now follow him into trouble, controversy, trial and death?”*

As you walk to the next station, think about a time in your life where you stayed true to an interest, cause, or friend, even when the tides of popularity and support had turned.

What was that experience like for you? What gave you the courage to stay true?

Have there been times in your life when you downplayed your faith or church involvement for fear of being judged? How did that feel?

*Prayer: O God, there is a wideness in your mercy. Make room for me there.*

# Station 7:

*The next day the great crowd that had come for the Passover festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"*  
(John 12:12-13)

## Meditation

The crowd shouted "Hosanna" – "save us, help us, free us."

*If you could welcome Jesus today, what would you shout out?*

People waved palm branches to welcome and honor members of the parade or promenade.

These actions are similar to actions we may experience today. On Independence Day in America, many parade participants and spectators wave American flags to honor the day. At the pride parade many participants and spectators wave rainbow flags and wear rainbow colored clothes to celebrate pride.

In Jesus' day, the crowds welcomed royalty – Kings and Queens – by waving palms, even placing them at the feet of the Kings and Queens. The Bible suggests that the people viewed Jesus as a King, the "King of Israel."

*If you could welcome Jesus today, what sign or symbol would you want to wave?*



# Station 8:

## *Palm Sunday Poem for meditation*

*When fishes flew and forests walked  
And figs grew upon thorn,  
Some moment when the moon was blood  
Then surely I was born.  
With monstrous head and sickening cry  
And ears like errant wings,  
The devil's walking parody  
On all four-footed things.  
The tattered outlaw of the earth,  
Of ancient crooked will;  
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,  
I keep my secret still.  
Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fierce hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet.  
G. K. Chesterton*

Jesus may have surprised a lot of people by entering Jerusalem on a young donkey, rather than a horse. Kings and Queens usually arrived on horseback or in a horse pulled chariot. Donkeys were reserved for carrying heavy loads in caravans and transporting harvested crops from the fields to the threshing floors.

If Jesus entered Brookline today, how might he come?

# Station 9:

In 1997 Philip Yancey wrote a book called *'What's So Amazing About Grace?'* Right now, it's understandable to feel worn out and disappointed about certain important things that didn't happen during these CO-VID months, but **take a moment to breathe** and ask yourself, 'What's so amazing about grace?' How has grace touched your life in 2021?

# Station 10:

Take in a deep breath or read this poem:

*Sometimes holding on  
Does more damage  
Than letting go.*

Are you holding onto something you need to let go of? If an answer comes to mind don't share it with anyone. Just quietly drop your pebble or leaf as a symbolic gesture of intention.