

Dear Friends,

Holy Week is, at least, a five-act play. (Yes, I am going to sound like a curmudgeon in this message). To go from the first Palm Sunday which celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem being welcomed in high fashion and then skip to the last act of resurrection would be like watching Stars Wars: A New Hope up when Luke and Obi-wan escape on the Millennium Falcon and then skipping to Return of the Jedi when the second Death Star blows up and there is a celebration. You completely miss the Empire Strikes Back, which in my opinion, is the best of them all.

Anyway, I'm supposed to be scolding you all. So, the five acts are Palm Sunday with Jesus entering with a parade and a hint that not everything is OK. The second act is Maundy Thursday that brings the disciples and Jesus to celebrate the Passover, the institution of the Last Supper/ Communion, Jesus washing the disciples' feet (which most take as a metaphor), and the new command to love each other as Jesus loves us (which is Maundy 'commandment'). The third act walks us through Jesus' betrayal, abandonment, trial, beating, and death. It is the hardest and at the center of the story. The fourth act is the Easter Sunrise service that brings us hope, maybe even surprise (though we know how the story ends), and the lingering fear and grief that his mother, his disciples, and friends felt. The fifth act is then the full-on celebration of resurrection. That death has not won. That nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Most know the story, but there is a difference between remembering the outline and walking through it, letting each part soak in and unsettling us. This year, probably because of the pandemic, we are only having the Maundy Thursday service. I hope that in the coming years we can walk through this Holy Week play and enmesh ourselves and connect it what is happening our lives and our world today.

Peace

*Pastor Enno*