

Another Word.. March 31, 2020

Dear First Christian Church,

We pray you are still safe, secure, and informed. Continue to keep in touch with each other by phone, and do remember if anyone needs groceries, medications etc. and can't get out, call and we will help. With the new directive to stay at home through April, Brian and I will continue to video church services and post them on our website and with links on our Facebook page. You may also Google "YouTube" and type in "First Christian Ashland Ohio". For those who don't have access to the internet, I will continue to send out these updates. Keep the "cards of encouragement" for those in our nursing homes coming. With the extension of the stay at home, our friends in all our nursing homes may be isolated until the end of May. I delivered our first cards and they were greatly appreciated. Your tithes and offerings may be mailed to the church, or you can visit our website and click on the "Give Now" button (PayPal) bottom right corner. Don't forget about our "give and take" shelves. Please call with prayer concerns and praises. We all need the strength and power that comes from praying for others. Stay connected and stay safe.

May we pray;

Holy and gracious God. We gather together in your calming presence. We pray that you silence the crashing storms of fear in our hearts, and in this world of uncertainties. Let us hear your promise to us that is in Christ's whispered words, "Be still." And in that stillness, may we know and be assured that you and you alone are our God and that you are always with us. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our savior who

taught us to pray, Our Father in Heaven, holy is Your name. May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those that sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory forever, Amen

This Sunday is Palm Sunday. Please read Matthew 21:1-11, "The Triumphal Entry." (I'll wait. Done?) This is a story we all know, and a story we love. We love waving palm branches and hearing the choirs sing. The great anticipation of Jesus' coming, and the ending of strife in the world. But there are other things we need to see in our story. Jesus is entering one of the most troubled and dangerous places in the world. A place of struggling, conflict, and violence. (then and now.) However, the most turbulent place on earth is not a location but it is in our hearts. It reflects our fears of an uncertain future, the loss of financial security, broken families, and diseases that disrupt our lives. Like entering the city, Jesus tries to enter our hearts, to calm us, to give us peace. Do we reach for Him, or do we get wrapped up in the screaming crowds that distract us and create turmoil, and leave us asking the same question as the city, "who is this?" Jesus came to offer us life, and life in abundance. The turmoil happens because we now must choose. Choose between a world of screaming crowds, or to follow the Son. His entry into Jerusalem begins Holy week. I pray that you will allow Jesus to enter your hearts, listen for His voice, and "Be not afraid." Follow Him who calls us to align our hearts with God's.

In His Peace,

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