



April 14, 2019

The Road of Passion

Today we stand with Jesus and his disciples at the Mount of Olives and we look down the road to Jerusalem preparing for our descent into the Holy week in the life of the church. As we look down the road from Bethpage to Jerusalem, we see two roads. One road is named Palm, the other is named Passion. They are two different roads that begin at the same place and end at the same place but what lies between the beginning and the end is different as night and day.

The road we most often travel on this day is the road called Palm. It is a day in the life of the church where we enter the courts with singing and there are shouts of loud hosannas. It is a day that we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem where he will be crowned the King of Glory. Today is a festive day, as well it should be.

But you have to be careful when you travel this road called Palm. Sometimes when we travel the Palm Road we are tempted to speed right by the cross to the empty tomb. We must not forget that there is another road named Passion.

Today is also known as Passion Sunday in the life of the church. The road we know as passion leads us straight down the path of the pain and suffering of Jesus Christ. The street named Passion is paved with the blood of Jesus, it is littered with a crown of thorns and the remains of a torn and bloody garment once worn by Christ. You should not expect to make good time on this road called Passion for it turns and twists through the evil deeds of a religious bureaucracy that sought to destroy an innocent man. It is filled with potholes of weakness perpetrated by a spineless governor named Pilot. And it is blocked time and time again by pedestrians who shout, "crucify him, crucify him," drowning out the hosannas and trampling the fronds of palm beneath their feet.

It is very tempting to take the first exit we see off of the street named Passion back to Palm Street. Just like a daily traveler on the Schuylkill Expressway who has just gotten word of yet another accident bringing traffic to a complete standstill, it is tempting for us to find another way around the carnage that waits for us down the road, the carnage we call the cross. Yet we must resist.

We must resist for it is the passion of our Lord that gives power to his resurrection. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, and the reason he did so was a sign of his humility. Jesus rode into Jerusalem not as a war hero that some had expected, not as a political opponent that some had hoped for, but as a lamb ready to be slaughtered. His victory would not be in his defeat of the Pharisees. His victory would not be in his successful challenge to the Roman government. His victory would come over death itself. And it cheapens his victory when we do not take the time to consider the cost, to consider the pain, to consider the road that Jesus chose to travel on our behalf.

The road taken by Christ reminds us of our Christian journeys as well. It would be nice if we never had to encounter the blind corners of life's unknown, or the road rage of life's cruelty. It would be nice when the road we travel becomes rocky and rough, that we could simply turn off of Passion onto Palm and enjoy a smoother ride. But that is not the case, and the fact of the matter is, to reach our destination of personal healing and wholeness, to remain faithful to the demands of the Gospel, it may require us to endure our personal passions.

Our journeys begin this day, brothers and sisters. Where the personal paths of our life's journey will lead us, we do not know. Let us find strength and courage for the journey in the experience of the passion of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

—Rev. Sharon Morris, PSEC Associate Conference Minister

Budget & Finance Committees Seeking Members

The PSEC is looking for a few new members for the Budget and Finance Committee. The Committee is an important component of the Financial Operations of your Conference organization. Following is a description of the duties of the Committee:

- Attend 6 regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings as required.
 - The meetings are usually held at the Conference office near Pottstown.
- Review and approve Conference Financial Statements in advance of the bi-monthly Consistory meetings.
- Review and approve the Conference's annual budget. This is done once annually in advance of the Fall Meeting.
- Recommend Conference financial policies to Consistory.
- Other duties as necessary.

We are looking for folks with some financial background. If you are interested in serving in this important role within the PSEC leadership, please send an email to Rob Stilwell, describing your qualifications and a resume if available. His email address is laurel.mountie@comcast.net.