Reign of Christ – 2015 Sunday, Nov 22, 2015

Memorize & Ponder Text – Mark 11:7 (Full Reading – Mark 11:1-11) Week of Nov 15-22, 2015

Not What They Expected

Mark 11:7 (NRSV)

Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it.

Throughout 2015, the Christian community at Brentwood Presbyterian Church will be considering how to be the church in Jesus Christ, guided by the wisdom of Pastor Paul. We invite you to **listen** for what the Spirit is saying in the text, then **question** how those insights might change the ways you see things and act in the world. Share your thoughts during the week on the meaning the Spirit creates for you in this text by posting a comment on our website – www.brentwoodpc.ca.

A Provocative Pondering

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us provoke one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together ... (Hebrews 10:23-25a)

Mark's readers would have read great significance into this simple story of Jesus getting on a donkey.

They would have remembered these words from the book of the prophet Zechariah (9:9) in the Hebrew Scriptures:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

This king, in Zechariah's prophesy, would command peace to the nations and establish his dominion from sea to sea. Prisoners would be set free for flourishing in goodness and in beauty. Jesus, Mark believed, was this king. All of that is symbolized by this simple story of Jesus getting on a donkey.

By the time Mark wrote his gospel, it was pretty clear that this kind of king disrupted and disappointed the expectations of a lot of people longing for the freedom God had promised through the prophets.

I suspect the same is true today, though in very different circumstances.

Are we ready for a prince of peace, or do we want vengeful protection?

Are we ready for goodness and beauty, or do we feel more secure by repaying evil with evil?

And are we ready to follow the king that Jesus is?