

## ***Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood, Mar 20, 2016***

### ***Palm Sunday***

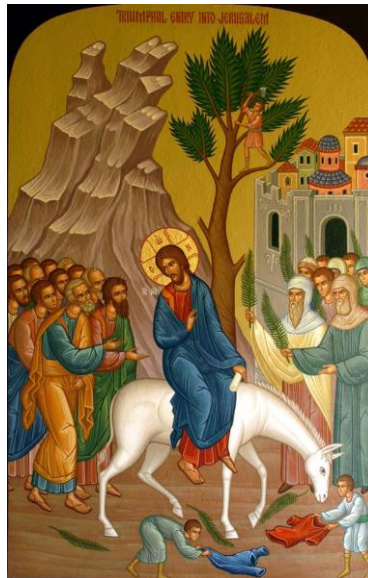
#### **Notes for the sermon on What Kind of Leader?**

**Luke 19:28-40 – Sermon Text = Luke 19:35**

***Then they brought it to Jesus:  
after throwing their cloaks on the colt,  
they set Jesus on it.***

**[Hymns = 214, 217, 220]**

**Key focus = in the picture this morning, Jesus seems hesitant and reluctant – even his disciples, after three years of conversations in community, have distorted expectations of the substance and style of his leadership – rather than hierarchical, domineering, and prescriptive leadership, Jesus offers collaboration and co-creation as a new way of participating together in the Commonwealth of God**



#### **The Reluctant Lord**

- Of all the artistic renderings of Palm Sunday, this one intrigued me most – the disciples seem to be urging Jesus on – the inhabitants of Jerusalem seem devout and welcoming – and Jesus seems hesitant, reluctant, worried
- Not just the dangers that he faces, the almost certain death that awaits him from the powers that he has been challenging so powerfully in his work and witness

Sermon notes of Rev Dr Brian Fraser,  
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- There might be a hint of the reason for this hesitation on Jesus' face in the last line of our text this morning – “they set Jesus on it” – maybe I'm reading too much into this line, but I think it is significant – again, a note of reluctance, even with the donkey colt as a symbol from Zechariah of the Lord coming in humility (Zech 9:9) bringing the SHALOM of God's steadfast love (Zech 9:10 & Ps 118:29) – is all the excitement and adulation of Palm Sunday focused on the right thing? – do we, like them, get carried away with our desire for leaders who will do it for us rather than with us? – do we submit to tyranny for the sake of security?

### **For Us rather than With Us**

- Been reading David McCullough's biography of John Adams, the American revolutionary statesman who became the second President of the United States – Adams and his wife, Abigail, maintained an amazing correspondance throughout their lives – in the midst of the debates among the revolutionaries around the Declaration of Independence, John wrote to Abigail:

*I believe there is no one principle which predominates in human nature so much in every stage of life, from the cradle to the grave, in males and females, old and young, black and white, rich and poor, high and low, as this passion for superiority. (p.170)*

- we either want superiority for ourselves or we want to entrust our lives to those we think superior – better suited to run things – we're willing to surrender our freedoms for our perceived security – we want our leaders to do it for us

### **A Different Kind of Leader**

- Taking a course in leadership at VST – working on my paper – focused on the core principle of Presbyterian polity since the 1500s – “to take away all occasion of tyranny” – to put that in proper positive terms, “to create occasions for full participation” – Jesus turns the hierarchical and domineering models of leadership of his day and ours on their heads – he invites us all to participate in a fellowship of the friends of Jesus in which we all have equal voice, equal responsibility, and equal support
- not the way the politics of the world works these days – but the church can be an alternative – modeling a different way – taking seriously God's call to humility in the service of peace – inviting everyone into the conversation about how we best contribute to the Commonwealth of God – recognizing that each person has gifts to offer and together those gifts generate a strong, resilient community of witness to the redemptive grace of Jesus Christ – the way God, in his steadfast love, has chosen to save the world –
- Faithful to the Lord who called us to be his friends when we participate fully in the conversations through which we co-create the church and its witness – requires a discipline of participation and contribution – for the flourishing of Brentwood