

Grace and peace be with you - and Happy Palm Sunday!

Be well! Be courageous! Be loving! Be the Church! Everyone loves a parade...unless it is raining. We are a fickle lot, you and I. Capable of cheers and jeers. Capable of waving palms one moment and our fists the next. Capable of loving Jesus and hating him. Capable of so much... but certain of so little. Are you willing to stay the course following Jesus, no matter how uncomfortable the journey may be at times? Are you willing to follow Jesus even through the darkest valleys and into the green pastures of His promises? Read and reflect upon Psalm 23 & Matthew 21:1-11 this week.



In The Strong Love of Christ,
Pastor Brian King

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!
Matthew 21:9

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Effective until at least April 13, the Nazareth building will be open only from 9:00 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday. The building will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays. We have also reduced staff hours. Thank you for your patience as we take these precautions to keep our team and community safe! For the latest Covid-19 updates, please go to www.naz.org/coronavirus.
- ◆ Naz Kidz Ministry has been connecting with families via email and distributing faith-focused activity packets! BIGhouse, CHAOS AND BASIC - ministries with junior high, high school, and college students - have been using Zoom, Instagram, Facebook and Youtube to connect as well! Email questions to:
 - ◆ kim.albertsen@naz.org for Kidz
 - ◆ kristin.sauerbrei@naz.org for CHAOS
 - ◆ kristina.mcburney@naz.org for BIGhouse
 - ◆ sara.sladky@naz.org for BASIC
- ◆ The Blessed Beginnings Learning Center is seeking donations of bleach and/or vinegar at this time. Please deliver donations to Door #1 during office hours.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

As we deeply desire to continue to do the ministry God has called us to here at Nazareth, your continued generous support – of prayers, service, and financial gifts – is so important. **Even while we are apart physically, giving is still possible online at www.naz.org/give. You can also mail your donation to the church office or use the free GIVE+ Mobile App (by searching “GIVE PLUS CHURCH” in the app store).** We truly cannot do this without you and are deeply grateful for your continued partnership!

CONNECT WITH US

Address: 7401 University Avenue, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613
 Phone: 319-266-7589 Email: info@naz.org
 Website: www.naz.org
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/MyNazareth
 Instagram: www.instagram.com/mynazchurch

SUNDAY’S WORSHIP SERVICE IS ONLINE!

Each week, our Sunday Worship Service will be posted online at 9:00 a.m. You can watch by going to our Facebook page or by clicking the “WORSHIP ONLINE” icon at www.naz.org.

FIND NAZ WORSHIP SERVICES ON TV!

Nazareth’s Online Worship Services (from the previous Sunday) will now be rebroadcast on Cedar Falls Public Access Channel (Analog Channel 18 or Digital Channel 95.5 on CFU) on Saturday evenings at 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m.

**WE ARE FAMILY.
MAKING CHRIST KNOWN.**

As a family of faith, so many individuals and teams have stepped up - each in their own special way - to respond to others in need. Nazareth’s Kits and Quilts team has been making face mask covers for Peoples Community Health Clinic - extending the life of the clinic’s medical masks. THANK YOU to all who are serving in the name of Christ!



Do you know someone in the Nazareth family of faith who is making Christ known? Tell us about their story so that we can share it with others! Email your story (and photo or video) to info@naz.org.

NAZARETH HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

April 9 - Maundy Thursday

Nazareth Online Worship Service - 6:00 p.m.

BASIC Online Student-Led Worship Service - 7:30 p.m.

April 10 - Good Friday

BIGhouse Online Student-Led Worship Services – 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

April 12 - Easter Sunday

Nazareth Easter Online Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.

Go to www.naz.org/lent-and-easter/ to learn more!



Holy Week is upon us! And, while we may not be physically sharing the same space as we worship this week, it continues to be a blessing to gather with you - our Nazareth Family of Faith. Please join us for worship online this week! And, take a moment to read and reflect upon this 2016 letter from ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as we journey - together - through Holy Week:

They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:40-42)

Holy Saturday. A pause. A space between Good Friday and Easter. A full tomb and, except for the guard, an empty garden. Still. Silent. We don't pay a lot of attention to Holy Saturday other than as our day of preparation for Easter Sunday. We, of course, live after the first Easter. We do know how the story turns out, and it would be contrived to be in Holy Saturday as if we didn't know about the resurrection. But we are given this one holy day to pause. We are given this holy space to grieve, to be empty, to realize that life, as we know it, is over.

This is deeply uncomfortable in our culture. We see this on the news when people start to speak about closure immediately after a tragedy. This could be a well-meaning attempt to relieve the pain, but it doesn't heal. There is danger in moving too quickly from grief. It is important to resist the urge to usher the afflicted to "closure."

Grief from ... tragedies cannot be rushed. None of the Good Fridays in our lives can. The resurrection came after an actual death. The crucifixion was not a metaphor. A heart stopped beating. He breathed his last. A son died ... But Holy Saturday is more than the necessary and holy space to face death without denial and to grieve without the dulling anesthetic of sentimentality. There is something much deeper going on. It is an invitation to accept that life, as we know it, is over. All of our plans, all of our willfulness and all of our good intentions are over. On Holy Saturday we are invited to shed our life and enter the tomb. Our effort and righteousness as much as our sin bind us. Our effort to save our lives binds us. This is true as much for the church as it is for each member. I'm grateful for the faithful innovation and hard work of our people and congregations. I'm not so far removed from parish ministry that I don't remember its struggles as well as its joys. There is something noble and dear about saints who come week after week, year after year to hear and receive the gospel and, as a response to grace, participate in God's reconciling work in the world. But there comes a time to take to heart Jesus' teaching: "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25).

The day between Good Friday and Easter can be seen as empty, a void, something to be resisted at all costs, something to be filled. It is the same reaction that many in our culture have to silence. It's as if sound and activity prove that we still exist. But I think the space between crucifixion and resurrection — truly terrifying and truly compassionate — beckons us from our life to life in Christ. After all, it wasn't all the noise and fireworks that got Elijah's attention, but the sound of sheer silence (1 Kings 19:11-13).

When we shed our lives and enter the tomb, when silence is all around, then we see that Jesus is already there ahead of us, anticipating us, welcoming us to be still and to die in him and find our life in him. Rest, dear church.