

A note from Pastor J:

What has been on my mind as we've made our way through Lent toward Holy Week and Easter is that our liberation from death isn't *only* about the promise of being held in eternity by God so that death isn't our defeat or our end. The resurrection that overturns death also shatters the primary weapon that is wielded by the spirit of Empire, which is fear. If the threat of death is no threat because of the resurrection, then there is no threat Empire can use to force us into passivity, compliance, or silence. If death is overturned, then we may devote all of our power to what is good for life rather than maintaining safety. We can devote ourselves and our lives to justice and the peace it brings, to feeding the hungry and welcoming the stranger, and to learning war no more, even if it leads to the cross. Because we have no reason to fear Death, and its servant Empire, they have no power to compel us into injustice, hatred, or violence. We serve and follow the power of God's gracious love, and "there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18).

Holy Week is the time in which we remember how Love stares down fear and doesn't blink. Love feeds and purifies, love offers peace while facing arrest and death, love uses the tomb as a gate to rescue all souls bound away from the God who loves them. Pastor Nikki and I hope that the special services being offered during Holy Week will add depth of meaning to your celebration of Easter's joy.

During Holy Week we will host these special services:

- **Maundy Thursday**, join our pastors for a soup and bread drop-in from 4-6 pm. We'll share a light meal and trade table blessings as we remember the last supper of Christ and his companions.
- **Good Friday**, two special service opportunities. **At noon**, join us at our church for the ecumenical Good Friday service, including area pastors and congregants. **At 6 pm** join us for Stations of the Cross.
- **Holy Saturday**, we'll have a prayer vigil from 10 am to 12 pm in the Chapel in the Garden. Use the signup sheet on the bulletin board to claim a 15-minute increment of prayer as we get closer to this event.

On **Easter Sunday**, we'll have a sunrise service at **6:45 am** in the Chapel, an Easter Egg Hunt and morning coffee and muffins before service at **9 am**, and Easter worship at **10 am** with lots of music, including the bells and chancel choir, as well as special music.