



Good News

A Publication of Emanuel Lutheran Church
Volume XLIV No. 4
April 2019

**Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Emanuel's mission is to witness
to the good news of salvation through Christ to individuals, the community
and the world through discipleship and service.**

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus!

I really love Christmas! I decorate every exposed surface in my house, sing carols as often as possible and bake hundreds of cookies. It's just a great time of year. But as much as I love Christmas, I love Holy Week and Easter more. That's because, without the cross and the empty tomb, we wouldn't even know about the birth of Jesus.

Another reason for my love of Holy Week and Easter is that the world hasn't claimed it. Secular Christmas has become such a big business that it's almost impossible to concentrate on Jesus. Thankfully, Madison Ave. has shown little interest in Holy Week.

During Holy Week, the Church gathers to remember our story. Because Jesus' Last Supper was a celebration of the Passover Seder, our remembering intersects with the remembering of our Jewish brothers and sisters. While the dates are usually slightly different, the sense of this being a universal season of Holy Remembrance remains.

The type of remembering that the Church and the Children of Israel observe during this time is different from simply thinking and talking about an event that occurred in the past. This Holy Remembering calls on the shared memory of the community. When we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, his arrest, trial, crucifixion and burial, the entire Body of Christ witnesses those events through the eyes of the people who were there. Because we're all part of the Body of Christ, we are as present as those who ate at the table and stood at the foot of the cross. And, on Easter Morning, when Jesus greets Mary Magdalene, we all join her as witnesses to the Resurrection of Our Lord.

Holy Week and Easter are too powerful to be experienced with our eyes and ears only. To remember well, we need to immerse ourselves in the story, using all our senses. That's why we wave our palms, taste and smell the bread and wine. It's why we sing Hosannas followed by laments. It's why we gaze at the stripped altar and wooden cross on Good Friday and then smell the flowers at Easter Dawn.

Please plan to attend all or some of our Holy Week services. The joy of Easter Morning is made complete only when it follows the grief of Good Friday. May God richly bless the remainder of your Lenten Journey and fill you with Easter joy. – Pastor Beth