

# Falls Fellowship



## Palm Sunday

**T**oday is Palm Sunday. The Gospel of John, as well as the other Gospels, tells us about the events of the day 2000 years ago. Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem and people gathered along the route to shout praises to him. According to John's Gospel, some of the people had palm branches they waved as Jesus rode on the humble donkey. "On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, and began to shout, 'Hosanna! King of Israel.' Jesus riding a donkey sat on it; as it is written, 'Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt' (John 12:12-15).

Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. I rather suspect Mary

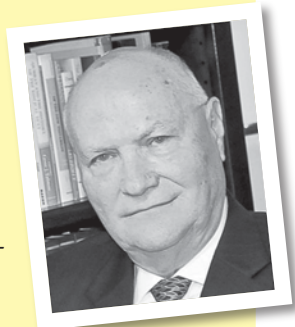
rode a donkey on the trip to Bethlehem where she gave birth to Jesus and she rode a donkey when she and Joseph and the baby Jesus fled to Egypt. Here in John's gospel a donkey is front and center again. Look at the back story.

In the previous chapter of John's gospel, chapter 11, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. The heart broken sisters, Mary and Martha, overwhelmed with grief, soon were ecstatic when Jesus stood before the tomb of Lazarus and shouted to Lazarus, "Come out!" And he came out with his shroud still on him. The story about Lazarus traveled over the land to Jerusalem. That miracle brought a large group of followers to Jesus. When he left Bethany, where Mary and Martha and Lazarus lived,

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## The Coronavirus and Falls

**T**he coronavirus has altered our way of ministry at Falls Baptist Church. We are not able to meet on Sundays and Wednesday nights.



That cuts right to the heart of who we are as the church—worship and fellowship are cornerstones of our identity. We enjoy gathering in the sanctuary on Sundays, singing the songs of our faith, reading the Bible, praying together and listening for a spoken word that has its origin in the grace and mercy of God. On Wednesday nights we gather around the tables in the fellowship hall and enjoy a well-prepared meal, fellowship at the tables, music led by the "River Strings" and again search the Bible for a current word from God. All of that has suddenly and dramatically changed.

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about two miles from Jerusalem, there was a crowd from Bethany along with the people who followed Jesus from Galilee. They were joined by the crowd from Jerusalem anxiously wanting to see Jesus. People were in Jerusalem for the Passover, the highest and holiest celebration among the Jews. From the far reaches of that ancient world Jews came to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. The Jewish historian, Josephus, sometimes given to hyperbole, said that perhaps two million descended on Jerusalem for Passover.

The enthusiasm of the crowd was no doubt fueled by the words of the prophet Zechariah written hundreds of years earlier: “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” (Zechariah 9:9).

The crowds shouted, “Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.” They quoted from Psalm 118:26, one of the Psalms that pilgrims to Jerusalem often quoted.

The scene is set for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; the crowds came to celebrate the Passover and now they celebrated the fulfillment of OT prophecies about the coming of the Messiah. Jesus, King of Kings paraded into Jerusalem headed to his throne which turned out to be a rugged cross. Palm Sunday is the opening scene in this drama. Scene two is the cross and scene three is the empty tomb where the angel said, “He has risen; behold, here is the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

Consider the people who saw this scene. There were some of the religious leaders in the crowd. They would be the ones who in a few days would demand

Jesus be executed as a common criminal. Jesus threatened their world; he didn’t measure up to their expectations for the Messiah so, later, they connived to have him crucified.

Some of the Roman soldiers also observed Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Perhaps they mocked this man riding a donkey into Jerusalem whom some called a king, and this was supposed to be his triumphal entry. Some of the soldiers remembered Roman generals who had triumphal entries into Rome after a great military battle. Banners were displayed, statues were erected to honor the general—now that was a real triumphal entry, but this man coming into town on the back of a donkey, that was nothing.

Others, like a group of Greeks, wanted to see Jesus because they wanted to see what all the fuss was about. The Greeks went to Philip and said, “We would like to see Jesus.” Why? They were curious: Was he a real superstar or was he a phony?

They all had their reasons for why they wanted to be in Jerusalem and see the parade on Palm Sunday.

This is a story from history 2000 years old. Yet it is relevant for us today for each of us must place himself in the story. Do we believe that Christ Jesus is the Messiah promised in the OT, that he is the Son of God as he said he was? Do we believe that he was a good man but mistaken about the claims he made about himself? Like some people, do we think he is just one option among many when it comes to religious revolutionaries? What do you believe about this person riding into Jerusalem 2000 years ago on a donkey with a crowd of people shouting and waving palm branches at him?

Here is a question born out of our current crisis: if you don’t believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died on the cross, was buried, rose from the grave

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## Event Calendar

April 5 — Palm Sunday

April 10 — Good Friday

April 12 — Easter Sunrise Service  
7 AM, Falls Community Cemetery

## April Birthdays

1	Ken Barham
8	Ruth Ann Long
26	Brandon Long



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## ***Virus continued ...***

Until further notice, we will not meet on Sunday and Wednesdays.

This, however, does not stop us from worshipping. Now we are using current technology to reach into your homes via Facebook and our web page on Sundays with a service which is recorded several days earlier. We are new at this. Frank Powell, Daniel Ripley, Kevin Barham and I collectively make up a “video” team. The first video went live on March 22 and the second on March 29. More than 400 people have watched, judging from the views for the first video, and I believe the number will grow. Kevin sends an e-mail each week with links to Facebook and our web page and the video goes live at 11:00 Sunday mornings. You can still find the videos on our sites if you miss the Sunday broadcast or if you want to watch again. We are learning. I had a radio broadcast when I was in college. Every week I devoted hours to recording the program, cutting and splicing audio tape and timing segments to the second. What we are doing now with video is lightyears from that primitive beginning in the use of media for me. Audio consoles powered by vacuum tubes, massive tape recorders and sixteen-inch turntables have been replaced by an iPhone 11. Technology has evolved in my life time with lightning speed. And now we are expanding our footprint in technology to continue our ministries at Falls. I hope you will join us each week; simply follow the link which comes to you in an e-mail or go directly to our webpage.

In addition, I will attempt to move our Wednesday night Bible studies to a video conference. If you have access to a computer or smart phone, you can join me. I will use a video conferencing platform called Zoom and you can join me with your computer or smart phone. If your computer has a camera, turn it on. That way, you can see me, and I can see you. Also, have your microphone turned on. In addition, you can join the conversation via your telephone and not use the video facilities. Look for an e-mail from the church with instructions. Perhaps we may be able to provide the teaching of the Sunday School lesson using this format in the future.

We are not meeting at Falls, but we are still the church and we are still ministering in the name of Christ. He is the foundation upon which our church is built, and we will be true to the foundation even in these difficult times. We are as close to each other as a telephone call or an e-mail. Let’s use all means available to us to stay connected with each other as the Body of Christ.

— Tom Jenkins

## **Tithes and Offerings**

**W**e really miss being able to gather as a church family as we take precautions against COVID-19. While we are seeking new ways to worship, serve, and study from a distance during this time, it is important to recognize the needs of the church continue to exist. We have ongoing financial obligations for utilities, insurance, salaries and other expenses. Your regular tithes and offerings are very important, even when we are not meeting together. Also keep the Annie Armstrong missions offering at Easter in mind.

Please consider mailing your contributions to the church, 9700 Fonville Road, Wake Forest, NC 27587, so we may remain current in meeting our church’s budgeted needs. You can also give through the church’s website.

Thank you for your continuous support of your church’s ministry.



## **Deacons**

<b>Linwood Barham, Chairman</b>	<b>919-418-1162</b>
<b>Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman</b>	<b>919-270-8765</b>
<b>Alan Watkins, Secretary</b>	<b>919-793-5548</b>
<b>Kevin Barham</b>	<b>919-618-4214</b>
<b>Brandon Long</b>	<b>252-903-4662</b>
<b>Mike Harris</b>	<b>919-746-5697</b>

## *Palm Sunday continued ...*

and today comes among his believers in his Spirit, then how do you deal with the multiple crises of life? How are you dealing with the coronavirus? Are you overwhelmed and weary? Each day we hear of thousands who have succumbed to Covid-19. Our own leaders say 100,000 to 250,000 may die from this disease in our country alone. How are you dealing with that thought? I hope you're staying home, frequently washing your hands, practicing social distancing and all of that, but in the deeper view of your soul, how are you dealing with it? How are you dealing with anxiety and uncertainty and just plain fear? Here's my suggestion: if you are a Christian, stay in the scripture and prayer and trust, yes, trust that the one who conquered death has all the power to take care of this crisis and to personally, and graciously and lovingly take care of you. In this life or in the next you are with him. If you are not a Christian, take this scripture verse to heart, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). When you are saved that's not just about eternity, like in eternal life, but it's the daily victories that you have over the problems of life. We serve a risen Savior and, as the old hymn says, "He walks with us and he talks with us." Jesus Christ is the risen Lord and he is among us in his Spirit.

In this crisis, the Living Lord comes among us to share our burdens. Amen.

— Tom Jenkins



## Newsletter articles needed

**W**e have had a newsletter each month for the past 2 ½ years.

But, we need news and articles from all our committees to let everyone know what you are doing and when you are doing it.

Our website is generating interest and bringing people into our church. Please bookmark it at [www.fallsbaptistchurch.org](http://www.fallsbaptistchurch.org). In addition, our mobile app is in use by 72 people in three countries at this writing. It is available for Apple and Android devices, so search for Falls Baptist in your App Store or you can use the link on our website.

Communication is very important, so send your news and articles to Frank at [fbpowell@mac.com](mailto:fbpowell@mac.com)

Thanks!



9700 Fonville Road  
Wake Forest, NC 27587  
[www.fallsbaptistchurch.org](http://www.fallsbaptistchurch.org)

Dr. Tom Jenkins, Pastor  
(919) 812-6675



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