

**WHAT THE DONKEY KNEW PALM SUNDAY**  
**Palm Sunday –April 9, 2017 –Luke 19: 28-40**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

A good friend in this congregation said to me one Palm Sunday as I was about to enter the Covenant Center: “You know, Stu, you are a lot like a donkey.” So I was going to have some fun with this -- O, pray tell, how is Pastor Stu a lot like a donkey? I think he knew the moment he said it he was in trouble. So you’re saying I’m a lot like a dumb animal, is that it? No, no. that’s not what I meant. So you’re saying that Pastor Stu is a jackass, is that what you’re saying? No, no. I’m trying to say that you carry a lot of weight around here. O, I see, so now you’re saying I’m fat! I have never let the poor man live it down ever since. I learned my cross-examination skills not in law school but from my Mother! And the irony is and I believe I am remembering this correctly, that the name of the donkey that year was “Stuart”. Stuart, the donkey.

Over the years we’ve had donkeys that didn’t move; I referred to them as *Presbyterian* donkeys. “I shall not be moved”. And we’ve had donkeys that were pregnant. And we’ve had donkeys that were compliant. Every donkey has the letter “J” on its back, inscribed I think for the Messiah *Jesus* always waiting to ride into a city or temple, a town or church, or a human heart for that matter, where invited.

There is a beautiful symmetry to Jesus riding into Jerusalem astride a donkey. For it is His creation that is carrying its Creator into the Holy City of God and to reclaim the temple of God for Himself. Creation bears Creator to glory that day. All of creation rejoiced that day. As the scripture suggests, “the trees clapped their hands”. The palm trees themselves rejoiced. The mountains and the hills around Jerusalem “broke out in singing” suggests the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 55: 12) If those around Jesus that day had remained silent then even the stones themselves would have cried out. The little children recognized Him first. A little girl whose family is joining church next Sunday was skipping out of the session meeting Monday and declared: “Jesus is coming! And they even have a donkey!” Yes, little one, we must enter the Kingdom as a little child. O, that we crusty old adults could be more like that! The WORD of God had come to take

up residency in the human heart! Jesus as The Word went forth from God and would not return void and it would accomplish the very thing for which the Lord had purposed it, and prosper the people to whom it was sent! "I have come that they might have life" says Jesus, "and have it abundantly". (John 10:10) That's what the creation knew; that's what the donkey knew...Its Creator had come to save its Creation...

Creation knew who Jesus was and is. Little children knew who Jesus was and is. Even the donkey knew who Jesus was and is. But even so, there were some who missed Him. They missed their moment. They missed their Messiah. Some missed the time of their visitation. Some did not know the things which made for peace; the Prince of Peace making peace through the blood of His cross. Even the stupid donkey knew who Jesus was...even the donkey...

This donkey on Palm Sunday was special. Jesus tells His disciples: "*You will find a colt tied on which no one has ever yet sat.*" (Luke 19: 30) Another weisenheimer a couple of years ago suggested that I should ride the donkey on Palm Sunday. No, no. Only Jesus can ride the donkey on Palm Sunday. No one has ever yet ridden this donkey. It is reserved for Jesus. We are the ones who bear Jesus into our town and into our church. Jesus has come and through His Holy Spirit taken up residency in our hearts. We are the God=bearers. We are the Carriers of Christ. He rides in our hearts on Palm Sunday. He comes to reclaim us and make us His home. He comes to reclaim our church and our town and to make them His home. It was the donkey, don't you see, that bore Jesus into the Holy City. It was the donkey who brought Jesus to the Temple.

Maybe, just maybe that guy several years ago was right. Maybe on Palm Sunday we are the ones who are the donkey, the bearers of Jesus from heaven into our world. That's what the donkey knew Palm Sunday. Do we? Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant,  
Washington, PA*

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