

## For the Sake of Tiny Resurrections

We took the kids to the beach,  
a herd of children lathered in sunscreen.  
We spent most of the day building sandcastles,  
swimming in the shallows,  
wiping sand off their eyelashes and noses.  
Things changed  
when a small fish washed up on shore.

The children saw it first—  
a little body gasping to survive.  
They cried out—  
*Quick! We have to save it!*  
We grabbed our buckets.  
We sprinted to the waterline.  
We scooped up the dying fish  
and returned it to the waves.

The kids sagged with relief as the fish jolted to life,  
a tiny resurrection in front of our very eyes.  
Full of pride, I said to them—  
*You did something good.*  
*Today, you saved a life.*

A seven-year-old with sun-kissed cheeks  
took the bucket from my hands and said,  
*I'd like to save some more.*

He spent the afternoon patrolling the waves,  
hoping to dole out mercy to any shore-washed fish.  
He carried his bucket around all day, because  
love inspires love.  
Love will make you want to  
patrol the shoreline,  
sing *Hosanna*,  
witness a resurrection,  
save some more—  
one bucket of water at a time.

Poem by  
Rev. Sarah Speed

Read Mark 11:1-11

Commentary | Rev. Dr. Brian Blount

### You Better Recognize!

You better recognize! You better pay attention and respond as if lives depend on it.

Attend to the truth: Jesus is Lord. The prophet Malachi (3:1) declares that the Lord whom the people seek will suddenly come to the Temple. As Jesus does. Entering Jerusalem, in word and deed, he identifies himself as Lord. He has prophetic foreknowledge about the location and state of a colt. He possesses the regal authority to requisition that colt for his royal purpose.

At Passover, pilgrims were expected to walk into the city. No doubt Jesus' followers expected him to do exactly that, since he always walked wherever he went. This time, he chooses instead to ride the kind of colt a king in a processional would ride, one that had never before been ridden. In so doing, he brings to realization the prophecy of Zechariah: *Your king, Jerusalem, comes to you triumphant, riding on a colt* (Zechariah 9:9).

Appropriately, the people respond. The disciples throw their cloaks onto the colt. Their draping is a makeshift throne. The people suddenly crowded around Jesus follow suit. Jettisoning their cloaks onto the ground along with leafy branches, they lay before him a makeshift red carpet. And they sing the Hosanna of the Hallel Psalms<sup>23</sup> (see Psalm 118:25) that celebrates the coming of their Davidic King.

Jesus is that King. But in an astonishing way. We know that he is ultimately on his way to the cross. His kingship, symbolized by his station upon a humble colt, is one of sacrifice and service. And yet, as Lord, he is not a helpless victim. He is in charge. He is working out God's plan in this demonstration of royal authority. Even in the process of letting go of his life, he is in charge of the liberation of God's people. He puts our lives before his own life.

Our calling, having recognized Jesus' Lordship, is to emulate his regal imperative. To live our lives as he lived his, in service to—and perhaps even in sacrifice for—the lives of God's people.

### Reflect

How might we emulate Jesus through acts of service and sacrifice?

<sup>23</sup> Psalms 113-118 are known as the Hallel (meaning "praise") Psalms. They are often recited for significant holidays like Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, and Hanukkah.



Palm Sunday Was a Protest | Nicolette Faison  
12"x24" Acrylic, marker, paper on canvas

## Passion / Palm Sunday

*the good news is...* inspiring us to act

Read Mark 11:1-11

Artist Statement | Rev. Nicolette Faison

*Palm Sunday Was a Protest* is a sister piece to *LL Cool J* in that the inspiration was also stained glass. Unlike *LL Cool J*, *Palm Sunday Was a Protest* contains a bit more detail emphasizing the hectic energy that is found in movements. Each segment is meant to capture the eye but the central subjects are in black and white, contrasting the brilliant color palette.

The order of colors is intentionally a rainbow as a nod to the Queer community. The piece contains a sunrise behind the iconic Palm Sunday donkey, which is an ode to the Sunrise Movement.<sup>24</sup> Accompanying the donkey are crowds of people with fists raised in the air, a common sight at any protest. The phrase, "No Justice, No Peace" sits around a "power to the people fist" symbolizing resistance. This symbol was first utilized by labor and liberation movements in the early 1900s. I personally associate the fist with the Black Power movement of the 1960s. Along the bottom of the piece, the grassroots of the image, are palms, a nod to the biblical story.

*Palm Sunday Was a Protest* is an ode to modern movements. This piece visually aligns how Palm Sunday is talked about with the active work happening today. Resist fascism. Resist occupation. Do justice.

## Look

*As you scan the image, notice the contrast between vibrant colors and black and white. What does this contrast convey to you?*

<sup>24</sup> The Sunrise Movement received increased attention at the end of the 2010s into the 2020s as a movement for young people committed to stopping climate change. [sunrisemovement.org](https://sunrisemovement.org)