

“Who Comes First?”

Philippians 2:10

March 16, 2008

I don't know if you noticed them out in the hallway when you were lining up for the parade to follow Pastor Easton in this morning? They seemed to be on their worst behavior! The big argument seemed to be who should be in the lead.

“I should go first cause my name is above yours in the alphabet.” said Barabas.

“No, no!” said Elizabeth. “Ladies before gentlemen! Let Running Chairs and me go first, and I'll go before you Running Chairs cause I know more about church than you.”

“That's not fair. I'm too short and can't see from back here!” shouted Sam.

Na, na, na, na, na, na” chanted Haman to Polly in a sing-song voice. “Your new hat looks silly!” And Polly stuck out her bottom lip.

“Listen!” said Barabas. “I am the tallest AND my name starts with a 'B', so I should go first.”

“Like, only if you go by like you know, your first name!” said Running Chairs.

“Get a life!” Barabas said in a mean voice to Running Chairs.

Elizabeth didn't like this kind of behavior. But she just couldn't figure out how to stop the others or how to stop herself. She couldn't resist saying “You are all a bunch of cry babies!”

“You are standing too close to me!” Polly whimpered to Haman. “Your hand is touching my hat!”

“Like stop it Running Chairs.” said Sam. “You are tickling me with that stupid palm!”

This is NOT how the Palm Sunday parade should start is it? Not with bickering and fighting. Palm Sunday is when we remember the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. All the people were praising him and placing their coats and palm branches on the road ahead of him, as if Jesus were a King. And in fact Jesus IS a King, except that his kingdom is not here on the earth, it is a kingdom in heaven. And that makes all the difference. The kingdom in heaven has NO fighting or bickering.

Do you suppose there were children in the parade when Jesus came into Jerusalem? I expect there were. And there may have been some bickering and fighting. It's too bad when we behave this way. In fact, God wants us to do better.

Actually, there were probably children who saw Jesus on the cross when he was crucified. (Place crucifix on table.) THAT sight would stop the bickering and fighting. Sometimes we forget that Jesus was on the cross for our sake.

And so it does not matter if Barabas or Elizabeth or whoever got to come first in the parade this morning. For Jesus Christ is above all names, Jesus comes first. And so it is that ALL knees shall bend and all heads should bow at the name of Jesus.

The children looked at the figure of Jesus on the cross. The fighting stopped and each of them bowed their head.



When your family comes up to receive Communion, maybe you will want to bow your head in the direction of the cross here on the platform. It is a way to say thank you to Jesus, the one who shall always come first. THE END