

Following the Way

February 17 – April 1, 2021

“Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart” – Joel 2:12

God promises to be with us, to be our God, over and over again. And over and over again we find ourselves turning away from God. We allow ourselves to be tempted by power and wealth, by ease and comfort. We pursue paths that take us far from God's calls. In this season, let us turn onto a new road, leave our old paths, and step into God's way.

February 17 – Ash Wednesday

“Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart” – Joel 2:12

Isaiah 58:1-12; Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

We have turned from God. We have been scared to follow and happy in our complacency. But God sees and knows us. God is calling us to come back, to turn and follow. To confess and repent.

February 21 – A Dangerous Road

“I will remember my covenant that is between...every living creature of all flesh” – Genesis 9:15

Genesis 9:8-17; Mark 1:9-15

In times of darkness and chaos, in the wilderness, God is with us. God promises to be in relationship with us. Yet we turn away. God gives us good words and promises, a covenant of hope, God's hope for us. We don't always listen. God is near, the kingdom is coming. Will we turn and follow?

February 28 – Incomprehensible Directions

“let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” – Mark 8:34

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Mark 8:31-38

The word that God speaks is often impossible to imagine. It might even be unbearable to hear. The disciples don't want to hear the Jesus must die. It is too horrifying. Sarai doesn't want to hear the news of a child she can't imagine bearing. It is too painful. Yet, these are words of hope and possibility. Jesus will stand up for what is right no matter the cost and so should we. God can work miracles with us no matter who we are. This is God's promise.

March 7 – Byways and Highways

“I am the LORD your God...you shall have no other gods before me.” – Exodus 20:2-3

Exodus 20:1-17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

God is our God and we are God's people. This is God's promise to us. A promise that leads us into places and relationships that will look strange to the world around us. For God calls us not to be like others but to be as God would have us. This is foolishness to those who see only with eyes toward power and wealth, but it is life in God. It is faith and justice and love.

March 14 – Checking Our Blind Spots

“God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” – John 3:17

John 3:14-21; Numbers 21:4-9

God's promise is great. God's love is overwhelming. But still, we see only what we don't have rather than what we do. It is our curse and our pain to not see the love God has for us and for the world. The promise embedded in every covenant. Because we fail to see we live in darkness, staring at the shadows and thinking they are light. Let us instead look at what is real and live.

March 21 – A New Road

“I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” – Jeremiah 31:33

Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 12:20-33

No matter how often we fail to follow, how often we turn away and seek other gods, God is still with us. God calls us to follow. We will be changed by this promise. It is written on our hearts and we are transformed. The lives that we held will die and we will live anew. We will stand for God, for justice and for love. We will lose all the world values, but we will save all that matters.

March 28 – Following the Way

“Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!” – Mark 11:9

Mark 11:1-11; Mark 14:1-15:47 (selections)

Change is coming. We celebrate God's chosen one entering in triumph into Jerusalem, but will we be able to remain true as the difficulty of following this one is revealed? He does not walk an easy road but stands firmly against all of our worst impulses of power and violence, of greed and superiority. We will risk our standing if we follow. We will see betrayal, denial, and death. God's promises are with us and in the world. Will we proclaim them when everything is at risk?

April 1 – Maundy Thursday

“Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” – Mark 14:25

As we share a meal, we recite Jesus' promises to us. He is with us in our darkest hours. God is with us. We walk with him along his final journey. We see what the world can do to those who minister with passion and truth the promises of God's covenant love.