

We're so glad you're here today!

Is this your first time here? Welcome! Stop by the Info Spot before or after the service. We'd love to meet you, answer any questions you have, and give you some helpful information. For kids and students, we offer great programs specially tailored to their ages. The Westwood Kids team is happy to help you get them connected. For more info on the great things happening here, check out westwoodcc.org.

Grow your faith with Life Transformed

Life Transformed is an interactive 4-week gathering taught by Westwood pastors that will encourage your faith. It is the perfect starting point for getting involved at Westwood. The next session begins Sunday, April 28 at all campuses. Register online.

Easter Baptism Celebration

Baptism is a joyous celebration of new life in Christ. Join us for the Easter Baptism Celebration on Sunday April 21, 7pm at the Chanhassen campus. If you'd like to declare your personal decision to follow Christ through baptism, register on our website.

Easter RSVPeeps!

Celebrate our living hope! Easter services are at all three campuses. Check out the service times and RSVP for the service that works best for you on our website. **And don't forget to invite your peeps** (find more invitations at the Info Spot).

CONNECTING THE DOTS PREPARING THE WAY

After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. ²³Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. ²⁴(This was before John was put in prison.) ²⁵An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. ²⁶They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him." ²⁷To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. ²⁸You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.' ²⁹The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰He must become greater; I must become less."

John 3:22–30

Palm Sunday – preparing the way into Holy Week

John 12:12–16

- Palm branches (Revelations 7:9-10):
- Riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9):

John the Baptist – preparing the way for the Messiah

John 3:22–30

- Shared ministry of _____:
- Resists the temptation of _____:
- Defines his life in relation to _____:

Connecting the dots – defining our life in relation to God's story

Bible Reading Plan

Join us in reading the Bible together. The Bible Reading Plan is a way to incorporate reading the Bible into your week. Each day read a passage and take a few moments to reflect. These verses are chosen by our staff and designed to complement the Sunday message.

Reflection questions:
What does it say?
What does it mean?
How can I live this out today?

- John 3:22-26
- John 12:12-16
- John 3:27-30
- Zechariah 9:9
- John 3:31-36

CONNECTING THE DOTS

You make ministry happen

Thank you for your financial giving! It allows the ministries at Westwood to continue throughout the year. In addition to our giving envelopes, here are some convenient ways you can give a one-time gift or set up recurring giving:



Online: A convenient and secure way to give is through our website. You can give a one-time or recurring gift.



Westwood App: Text westwoodapp to 77977 to get a response with a link to download the app.



Giving Kiosks: Small giving kiosks are located on the Chanhassen campus at the Info Spots.



Text To Give: Text the keyword "westwoodbsl", "westwoodchn" or "westwoodmtk" to 77977.

Connecting the Dots: Preparing the Way

Laura Gilbertson

April 14, 2019

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Today is Palm Sunday, when we remember Jesus's "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem. Read together the description of this in John 12:12-19. What stands out to you?
 - a. The crowd in awe of his miracles, expecting him to be victorious over their enemies (remember, the palm branches are a symbol of victory)
 - b. Jesus riding on a donkey (remember, it is significant that Jesus didn't ride on a war horse of an expected military victor, but instead rode on a symbol of humble peacemaking)
 - c. The disciples who didn't fully understand at this point
 - d. The religious leaders who felt threatened and out of control by the peoples' response to Jesus

2. Instead of being threatened by the success of Jesus, John the Baptist describes feeling the fulfillment of joy. (John 3: 22-30).
 - a. When are we tempted to compete with others? What are the emotions at the heart of this, if you've experienced it?
 - b. Can you think of a time when you felt genuinely joyful because of someone else's success? If so, describe the situation and why it was meaningful to you. If not, explore what has prevented this from happening.

3. John shares powerful words about his relationship to Jesus in verse 30: "He must increase, but I must decrease," (John 3:30, NIV). Reflect on those words.
 - a. What did this mean for the ministry of John the Baptist?
 - b. What might this mean for us today, individually and as the community of Christians?

4. John the Baptist understood his life's purpose in relationship to the mission of God. His joy came from knowing he was part of helping others find their way to true life. How is your life related to the big story of God's kingdom? You may want to think of scenes from your life story that serve as a testimony to God's faithfulness, or you may think of particular ministry opportunities that God has provided for you to join in God's activity in the world.

5. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week, where we reflect on how we are reconciled to God through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. What is on your heart after a season of reflection (Lent)? Pray with each other over those things that God has stirred in you.

6. Would your group like to meet together at a Maundy Thursday service this week? Would you like to meet at the baptism celebration on Easter Sunday – or even celebrate someone from the group choosing to become baptized? Consider making plans to share these things together in the week ahead.