

## The Story of Easter

### Hebrews 10.16-25

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds," <sup>17</sup>he also adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

<sup>18</sup>Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

The theme for Holy Week is *The Story of Easter*. Last night we talked about the story of the Passover. This story is repeated every year as a remembrance of God's protection of the Hebrew people while in slavery in Egypt. The story gets expanded when Jesus institutes the Last Supper by saying, "this is my body, this is my blood, broken and poured out for you – for your forgiveness of sins."

Tonight, we do not remember the Last Supper. Tonight we remember a vigil. We remember the loneliness. We remember how our Christian ancestors were mourning the great experiment. You see, tonight, we remember those followers of Jesus that were so disappointed. They believed – they really believed – that this Jesus was different. They believed he would change the world. They believed that this man would overthrow the government, would give them peace, and would stop all the ugliness in the world. They believed he could never be killed. Tonight we remember these Christian followers who were mourning. Mourning what they expected, mourning their dreams, mourning their hopes.

We remember these followers because their story often is our own. How often have we expected something from God, something from our Savior, something from our church, our pastor, our Christian leaders, and it simply did not materialize? We have been hurt. We have been disappointed. We have been let down. It is easy to make the passion story our story for it is easy to mourn those failed hopes and failed dreams.

Listen to this scripture again, "Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet

together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

It was like a bad dream; everything was shadowy and dim. Outlines of the strange apartment did not reveal anything that looked like a light switch. He was sorry he had promised to feed his aunt’s cat while she was in Florida for a week. He was allergic to cats, though he liked them; and this one was very friendly. He should have had dinner with her before she left, so he could have seen the layout of the apartment. Then he felt the switch and flipped it; nothing happened. Up, down; up, down; but no lights. He felt along the wall for another switch; found one; flipped it. Still no lights. Now the cat was rubbing around his ankles, tripping him unexpectedly.

None of the switches worked; that meant finding the fuse box. Even if he could, he didn’t know enough about electricity to figure out what was wrong, without hurting himself. He felt his way back along the wall to the door; the hall light shone through when he opened it. The cat continued to beg at his feet; he stroked and reassured it. Then he closed the door, locked it, and headed for home. “I’ll come back tomorrow, when I can see.” That seemed the best solution.

Tonight is a night we are supposed to feel disappointed. We should not expect things to go our way. The Easter story becomes our story because our lives are filled with disappointments, with failures, with moments when we can not get the job done. Tonight is a night of mourning. But just like the man in his aunt’s house we are asked to come back. There will be a tomorrow! There will be an Easter! I can guarantee you that your story is not complete for Easter has not happened, yet! Come back so you can see! Amen.