



Expect the Unexpected

by Pastor Alan Felton

Jesus was greeted by a palm-waving crowd shouting “Hosanna!” as he triumphantly entered Jerusalem at the start of the last week of his life. This greeting was what was expected for a king coming to claim his throne. The crowd was excited—they had been waiting for this day for a long time. Things were about to change.

And change they did—but not in the way the crowd assumed. By Friday of that holy week, the same crowds again drew near to Jesus, but instead of praising him, their voices now mocked and condemned him with screeches of “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

The adoring crowds expected Jesus to undermine the Roman occupiers and restore the throne of David in Jerusalem. But when it became clear to them that Jesus was on a mission of another sort, celebration turned to rage, and Jesus was welcomed not to a plush throne but to a bloody cross.

That is the way our expectations work. We are on board if things unfold as we hope—but once something changes and a different outcome becomes apparent, one that is not exactly what we envisioned, we are disappointed. Sometimes we even become angry. We begin to look for someone to blame.

Instead of looking outward for scapegoats in such circumstances, perhaps we should look in the mirror. Many times, when our expectations are not met, it is not because someone has conspired to thwart them—it is because our expectations were wrong in the first place. Maybe we expected too much, or we wanted the wrong

thing. Perhaps we want what we want so badly that we refuse to believe it won’t happen. We are to blame for many of the disappointments we experience.

The crowds greeting Jesus as he entered Jerusalem expected the wrong thing—an earthly king to restore their nation. If they had just listened to Jesus as he ministered across Galilee, they would have known to expect something else—a Savior who would die on a cross but rise to life three days later. But the people wanted what they wanted and did not listen.

Jesus doesn’t always deliver what we want—but Jesus always gives us what we need. If we have the right expectation, we find joy in God’s grace. Had Jesus restored the Davidic throne in Jerusalem, it would be rubble and dust today—but because Jesus climbed a cross, he made possible life in the Kingdom of God. How wonderful! We won’t be disappointed if we expect Jesus to bring the unexpected. ■



Benson Memorial United Methodist Church, 4706 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh, NC 27612
Open office hours: M–Th 9AM–1PM | Available by appointment: M–Th 9AM–4PM / F 9AM–1PM
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facebook.com/bensonmemorialumc/ | instagram.com/bensonmemorialumc/

You're invited!

Easter Egg HUNT

**SUNDAY, APRIL 13TH, 2025
12:00-1:00 PM ON THE LAWN**

Bring your basket! We'll supply the eggs!

**FACE PAINTING! FREE LUNCH!
EASTER PHOTO BOOTH! 1000+ EGGS!**

Free and open to the public!

**VISIT [BENSONMEMORIALUMC.ORG/EASTER/](https://www.bensonmemorialumc.org/easter/)
Benson Memorial UMC, 4706 Creedmoor Rd., Raleigh, NC**

BENSON MEMORIAL UMC

HOLY WEEK & EASTER



Palm/Passion Sunday | April 13
8:45 and 11 a.m. services in the Sanctuary



Easter Egg Hunt | April 13
12-1 p.m. in the courtyard and front lawn



Holy Thursday | April 17
12 and 6:30 p.m. services in the Sanctuary



Stations of the Cross | April 18
10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall



Good Friday | April 18
7 p.m. service in the Sanctuary



Easter Sunday | April 20
8:45 and 11 a.m. services in the Sanctuary

Invite your friends and family to our Holy Week events!

Celebrate Easter and Holy Week with us!

Visit BensonMemorialUMC.org/Easter/ for all the details.



Always be Inviting!

Easter is fast approaching, and we ask everyone to pick up an invite card in the narthex or office and share it with a neighbor or friend. Studies have proven that someone is much more likely to visit a church service if they have been *personally invited!* You may extend a warm invitation over the phone, by text, or in person, and we hope these invite cards will help you as you welcome them to Benson Memorial's Easter services on Sunday, April 20. Offer to pick them up and take them out to eat before or after the services for an extra-special invitation!



Campus Beautification and Accessibility Update

Our workday on April 12, from 9 a.m. to noon, is dedicated to preparing the campus for Easter. We will be spreading mulch in the courtyard and around the grounds. Please consider coming out on Saturday morning to assist in this effort—your help will go a long way toward improving the appearance of our campus.

In addition, the location for the new handicap-accessible walkway has been selected and is marked by white flags near the covered walkway by the Fellowship Hall. Construction is scheduled to begin later this month.

FEMA Grant Status

Our request for the first grant rebate is in process per the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). We continue to monitor activities at the North Carolina state and federal FEMA levels as we await the completion of the grant rebate process. Meanwhile, we have requested updated quotes from the contractors working on the Sanctuary Phase 2 project.

Upcoming Bible Study Mark Your Calendars!

Subversive Witness:

Scripture's Call to Leverage Privilege

by Dominique DuBois Gilliard

taught by Pastor Alan Felton

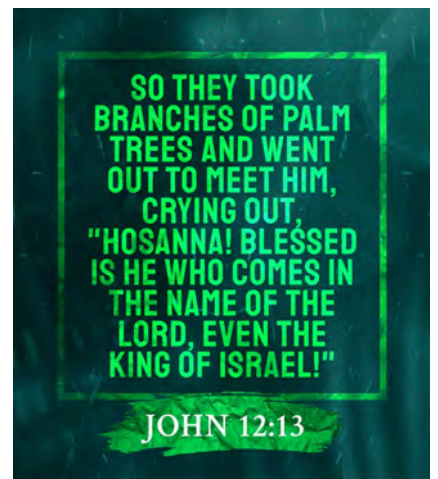
Wednesdays at 6:45 p.m. and Thursdays at 10 a.m., April 23–May 21



Most of us are uncomfortable with the notion that we possess privilege. We often say we hold no power. To do so is in keeping with a Christian sense of humility and meekness. Yet each of us holds some sort of power, and we do enjoy privilege, sometimes in ways we do not recognize.

Yet, as Dominique DuBois Gilliard teaches in this study, Christians can reimagine privilege and exercise power in subversive ways to follow Christ and serve our neighbors. We do this sometimes by leveraging our privilege and using our power, and sometimes we follow Jesus best by forsaking power and privilege.

Join us for this very interesting study!





[\(complete church calendar is here\)](#)

Palm Sunday, April 13

- 8:45 a.m., Worship Service
- 9:45 a.m., Sunday School
- 11 a.m., Worship Service
- 11 a.m., Livestream Service
- 12 p.m., Chancel Chimes
- 12 p.m., Easter Egg Hunt

Tuesday, April 15

- 2 p.m., Prayer Shawl Group
- 7 p.m., Finance Committee

Wednesday, April 16

- 7:15 a.m., Coffee and Prayer
- 5:45 p.m., Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Meal
- 6:45 p.m., Bible Study

Holy Thursday, April 17

- 10 a.m., Thursday Bible Study
- 12 p.m., Holy Thursday Service
- 5 p.m., Chancel Choir
- 6:30 p.m., Holy Thursday Service

Good Friday, April 18

- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Stations of the Cross
- 7 p.m., Good Friday Service

Easter Sunday, April 20

- 8:45 a.m., Worship Service
- 9:45 a.m., Sunday School
- 11 a.m., Worship Service
- 11 a.m., Livestream Service
- 12 p.m., Chancel Chimes
- 12 p.m., Easter Egg Hunt

Monday, April 21

- 1:30 p.m., Susanna Wesley Group
- 7 p.m., Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, April 22

- 7 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Wednesday, April 23

- CANCELLED: Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Meal and Bible Study
- 7 p.m., High School Bible Study

Thursday, April 24

- 10 a.m., Thursday Bible Study
- 5 p.m., Chancel Choir

Easter Flower Cross

Spring flowers have come early and fast this year—and Easter is very late—so we’re hoping there will still be some in bloom for our Flower Cross on Easter Sunday.

Our Easter Flower Cross is created on Easter Sunday using cut flowers and flowering bush cuttings provided by the congregation. These flowers can be from your yard, your neighbor’s yard (with permission), or purchased cut flowers from your favorite market. Flowers can be dropped off at the church on the Saturday before Easter or on Easter morning. All flowers should be placed under the breezeway by the entrance to the narthex. Containers of water will be available in this area for Saturday drop-offs.

The Easter Flower Cross will be part of both the 8:45 and 11 a.m. services, so the earlier the flowers are provided, the better. Please help create this beautiful addition to our celebratory service.



Supporting York Elementary: A February Outreach Effort

As part of their February meeting, the Susanna Wesley Group collected requested paper goods for York Elementary School. When asked, the school said they could use more Kleenex, paper towels, zip-lock bags of all sizes, and disinfectant wipes. The collected items were delivered to York Elementary before the end of February—they were very thankful for the additional supplies.