



St. Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Rd., Timonium, MD 21093

Palm Sunday – April 17, 2011

**In the Name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Ghost.**

Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou Sayest.

On Palm Sunday we celebrate the Kingship of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We relive his triumphant entry into Jerusalem to the crowds' crying "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in Heaven, and Glory in the Highest." Some of the Pharisees asked Jesus to this immoderate outpouring. But Jesus answered: "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." The crowd had got it right. They opened their hearts to him in response to his presence and his mighty deeds of love and power. Yet four days later many of the same people were crying "Crucify him." Their expectations of the Messiah as a political leader would not allow them to accept Jesus as spiritual leader. Their hearts had been opened but their minds were afraid to accept the implications of his message.

"Are you a King?" asks Pilate. Yes, he is a King. "Thou sayest." Yes, he is a King. But His Kingdom is not what the crowd and Pilate think it is.

The kingdoms of the world derive their power from promising to protect their subjects from suffering and

death by forcing compliance with a humanly constructed code of behavior, the breach of which is punishable by suffering and death. It is exemplified by arms and castles, pomp and majesty, flags unfurled as symbols of a unified will exemplified by their King.

Jesus accepts suffering and death as a means of demonstrating obedience to an eternal, wholly other, Kingdom based on Divine Truth and Love. Its power is that of a real communality based upon an indwelling of the Holy Spirit who is sent to his followers after the resurrection. This Kingdom is exemplified by the broken body and outpoured blood of the Son of God expended to allow a fallen people to come into a loving, worshipping relationship with the Father as sons and daughters of God.

"Art thou the King of the Jews?" Pilate asks. Pilate's question is so totally inadequate that no answer could address his underlying ignorance. "Thou sayest."

"My ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts." Jesus is infinitely more than the question supposes. *AMEN*