

Aurora Methodists discover upset altar

Congregants arriving at Flowing Forth United Methodist Church in Aurora Sunday found their altar upset and its contents strewn on the floor.

Police weren't called. There hadn't been a burglary or other intruder. Rev. Derek Rogers, Flowing Forth pastor, admitted he staged the scene to illustrate his sermon, "In the Temple."

His sermon reflected on the Biblical account of Jesus throwing vendors and money changers out of the Jewish temple when he entered Jerusalem during the last week of his ministry.

Rev. Rogers' sermon was the second of seven in a Lenten series titled "The Last Week," chronicling Jesus' last week before his crucifixion. The series opened March 1 and runs through April 12. He explained a broken collection plate in the display had been accidentally dropped by an usher.

According to the pastor, "One of the most influential and important weeks in history was the last week of Jesus' life and ministry. However, this last week often comes and goes so quickly in our fast-paced lives that we rarely have time to slow down and understand its importance.

"Often we skip straight from Palm Sunday to Easter without a second thought. With this year's sermons, we are going to embark on a deliberate journey with Jesus through the last week of his life."

The Lenten sermon series continues with:

March 15: "At the Table," by guest preacher Rev. Rich Havard, University of Illinois-Chicago

March 22: "In the Garden"

March 29: "On the Cross"

April 5: "In the Tomb"

April 12: "On the Road"

Rev. Rogers announced a Sunday morning Lenten study series to complement his sermons. The seven-part study series opened March 1 and runs through April 12 from 9 to 10 a.m. at Aurora Christian School, 2255 Sullivan Rd. in Aurora.

The public is invited. Admission and parking are free.

According to Rev. Rogers, "During the study, we'll walk slowly and deliberately through the final week of Jesus' life. The series focuses on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, his Last Supper and his crucifixion."

Call (630) 239-2321 or visit flowingforthumc.org for more information.

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PHOTO: Rev. Derek Rogers, left, views an upset altar Sunday at Flowing Forth United Methodist Church in Aurora. Pastor Rogers staged the scene to illustrate his sermon, "In the Temple." Background is Ally Bockay, worship music leader. (Al Benson photo)

