



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

HOLY WEEK 2020

What is "Stations of the Cross"?

The “stations of the cross” is an activity we hoped to do together on Maundy Thursday, which is the Thursday of Holy Week, the day before the crucifixion. Since we cannot gather in the church house together, we have adapted the stations to be done at home. This can be done alone or with your family, and we have included adaptations for younger family members. We have made both a written document and a video for this - so you can choose what method you prefer. If you want to watch and participate in the activities along with us and meditate with musical interludes, the video is for you! The complete video can be found on our website or on our Facebook page.

What do we do?

This is a time to slow down, to leave the busyness of day to day operations behind and enter into an intentional time of focusing on Jesus. Jesus taught us how to live, not only through his words but also through his actions and his life.

Take your time slowly to go through these activities, you don't need to rush, let the words and activities have time to sink in. Though we can't be together as a church this Holy Week, we can all do this activity in our homes and share in the knowledge that we are doing this together-apart.

This Journey to the Cross is not about an agenda or meeting anyone's expectations. It is simply a time and place for you to draw close to Jesus.

You do not need to do these in any particular order, and if your family needs breaks in between the quiet and stillness, that is okay too. Our hope is that this experience will help you to feel oriented toward Jesus and Easter, even though we can't be in our church building. You are the church, and your prayers are heard by our Holy Creator, whether alone or together.

If you feel comfortable during the experience, snap a photo or two of yourself and your family participating in this activity and share it on our church's Facebook page. You also may find it helpful to have both the written document in front of you and watch the video for clarity.

So please, center yourselves, quiet your spirit, and join us on this journey to the cross - as we remember, contemplate, and meditate on the suffering of our Lord.

Items to Gather From Around Your Home:

1. Paper
2. Pens
3. Candle (one or multiple if you have more)
4. Access to a map (from either computer, globe, paper)
5. Cotton balls (folded up paper towels will do!)
6. Essential oil, perfume, or a scented room spray
7. Some sort of bread or pita or cracker
8. Olive oil (or any kind of oil will do)
9. Hand labyrinth (Printable version is at the end of this document.)
10. Rocks from outside (one for each person in your home)





ACTIVITY 1

PRAYER FOR THE WORLD

James 5:13-16 (NIV)

"13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

One of the privileges and responsibilities that we have as Jesus followers is to pray for one another.

For this activity you will need:

- Paper
- Pens
- Candle(s) [optional]
- Map [optional]

Reflect on some need in your own life, or in the life of someone you know. Then write a prayer on a piece of paper. After you have written it, fold or roll it and stick it in a jar or envelope, or somewhere safe and private. You can do as many or as few as you wish.

OR

Light a candle for someone you know in need, and pray over the candle. Repeat multiple times if you have more candles, letting different family members speak and lead prayers. Or simply extinguish between prayers.

OR

Look at a map of the world and identify a part of the world that comes to your mind that needs prayer. Write down the name of the city/state/country and hold it in your hands while you offer a prayer for them.





ACTIVITY 2

ANointing WITH OIL



John 12:1-8 (NIV)

"Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected,⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he

used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

For this activity you will need:

- Cotton balls
- Scented oil or perfume

Mary poured out expensive perfume on Jesus' feet as an act of worship. Place a drop or two of essential oil or spray perfume on a cotton ball. Smell its fragrance. The fragrance may not be strong at first, but you will smell it for hours, it is long-lasting.

This was an act of worship by Mary that was expensive, extravagant, and pure. It touched the heart of Jesus. Jesus knew he was headed to the cross, and Mary's act of worship was a blessing to him.

How can you pour out your love to Jesus, extravagantly, in a way that will spread the beautiful fragrance of Jesus where you are?

Keep the cotton ball with you these next few days, and let its fragrance remind you that we are called to live every moment of our lives in fragrant worship of Jesus.



ACTIVITY 3

THE LAST SUPPER

John 13:21-30 (NIV)

"21 After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me." 22 His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. 23 One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. 24 Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means."

25 Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?"

26 Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. 27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.

So Jesus told him, "What you are about to do, do quickly." 28 But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. 29 Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor. 30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night."

For this activity you will need:

- Bread or crackers
- Olive oil (or any type of oil) in a dish



Jesus was celebrating the Passover feast with his disciples, knowing that his fate was drawing near.

Tear off a piece of bread, dip it in the oil, and eat it just as Jesus did. As you're eating, think of the heartbreak he must have been feeling at the betrayal of one of his own disciples.

He knew his disciples would soon face confusion and fear.

Contemplate his sorrow and compassion for them.

Close with this prayer:

Loving God,

While we were still your enemies, Lord Jesus Christ, you suffered and died for us, winning the victory over death for our sakes. Give us grace to lift you up as we follow the way of your cross so that all people may be drawn to you. Teach us to humbly serve one another so that the world may know we are your disciples. Amen.



ACTIVITY 4

HAND LABYRINTH

Luke 23:44-46 (NIV)

"44 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, 45 for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last."

For this activity you will need:

- The Hand Labyrinth (The activity works best if it's printed. There is a printable version at the end of this document.)

Use the "hand labyrinth" provided to reflect on how God has directed your life's journey thus far. This is not a "maze", but with your finger, follow the "path" to the inner circle and back out again.

On your way into the center of the labyrinth, pray for guidance on your life's journey. It may be prayer for an immediate situation in your life, or it may be more general, or both. Spend time in the center just speaking and listening in prayer.

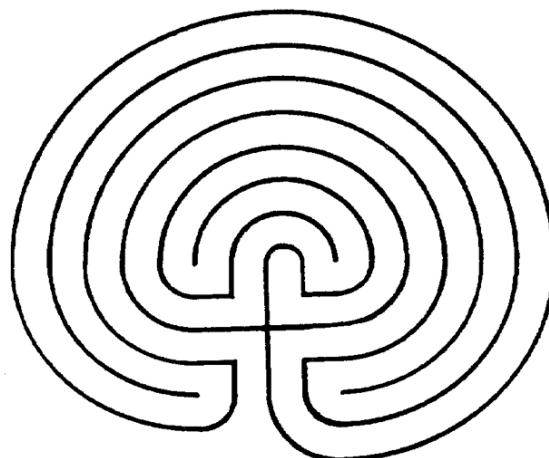
As you work your way out, pray again, "into your hands I commit my spirit." Or you may choose a prayer of your own that helps bring you in tune with God's direction.

Close with this prayer:

"Into your hands, oh God, we commend our spirits... finish prayer

An alternative for children/youth:

Ask them to follow the labyrinth with their finger, praying about anything that comes to mind. When they turn a corner, change prayers. Continue until all the way in. If this is too much, ask them simply to quietly trace the labyrinth with their finger while thinking about their church and their family and God.





ACTIVITY 5

THE STONE OF THE TOMB

Matthew 27:57-61

"57 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. 58 Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. 59 Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. 61 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb."

For this activity you will need:

- 1-2 Rocks per person. You can gather them ahead of time, or during this activity.

Hold the rock in your hand, feel its weight. This rock you hold is a tiny fraction of the size of the rock that sealed Jesus' tomb. Imagine how heavy the rock was that was placed in front of Jesus' resting place.

Can you sense the heavy weight the disciples and those who loved Jesus must have felt as Jesus' tomb was sealed? In their eyes, death had won. This was a stone that no one could move. It was final, Jesus was gone and buried.

Continue to hold the stone, allowing it to get heavier in your hand.

Today is Good Friday, the day that Jesus died.

Keep this rock someplace visible, along with your scented cotton ball. Let it remind you of this day as we wait for Easter to come.

Close with this prayer:

Dear Lord, help us to be mindful of the heaviness of heart that the disciples of Jesus must have felt that day, as the body of their beloved Teacher and Master was laid to rest in a tomb and sealed up with a huge stone. So often we treat whole ordeal of Easter weekend glibly, forgetting the passion of our Lord and the repercussions for those who knew and loved Him. Make us mindful these days, when our own hearts are heavy because of the circumstances of our day--the victims of the COVID-19 pandemic, the sick, the dying, the bereaved. And Lord, we're all in this heaviness of heart together; we suffer and grieve loss in so many ways. Help us, we pray, to hold on to the hope of what is to come--the assurance that the time will come when the stone will be rolled away and we will face a "new normal", even as those disciples did after Easter morning. So, help us to live in the tension between feeling the heaviness of this day and the hope of tomorrow. We pray through our Resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus, AMEN.

PRINTABLE HAND LABYRINTH FOR ACTIVITY 4

