

Easter Art Walk



**Grace Episcopal Church,
St. Helena CA
April 4, 2021**

Welcome to the Easter Art Walk!

This is an opportunity for people of all ages to spend time in the holy and beautiful spaces of Grace's grounds and sanctuary and ponder the new life we celebrate at Easter. The Art Walk encompasses three spaces: the **patio**, the **sanctuary**, and the **labyrinth**.

Each space corresponds to a different part of the Easter story: the **cross**, the **empty tomb**, and the **road to Emmaus**. In this booklet you'll find Bible passages, reflections, and questions to ponder for each space, as well as activities people of every age can engage as you move through the walk. There will be art and live instrumental music along the way.

If one space speaks to you more than another, feel free to only do part of the walk; if you would like to visit all three spaces, please follow the patio-sanctuary-labyrinth order and be conscious of directional signs and spacing from other individuals/families.

Thank you for coming to explore resurrection!

The Revs. Amy Denney Zuniga and Anne Clarke

→ *Proceed to the patio via the steps or ramp.*

The Cross as a Place of Transformation

From the Bible

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19:25-29

Reflection

Pain, difficulty, and deep suffering are part of this life, and death comes to all living things. Yet the patterns of nature show us that from every death, new life comes. Plants that die become fertilizer for other plants. Plants and animals that die become food for other organisms. Even the grape vines die back each year, going dormant, and must be heavily pruned in order to continue to bear fruit. The process of life, death, and more life is everywhere.

On the cross, Jesus willingly embraced the suffering and death of this world. In his death, we find a pattern of self-giving love that surrenders to this process of life-out-of-death. What was once a symbol of torture, injustice, and shameful death becomes a place of transformation. It becomes a vehicle for love, connection, and community-- as Jesus gives his mother and the beloved disciple to one another from the cross. It becomes the seed-bed for the new creation.

Question to Ponder

Where in your life or in the world have you seen new life come out of suffering and death?

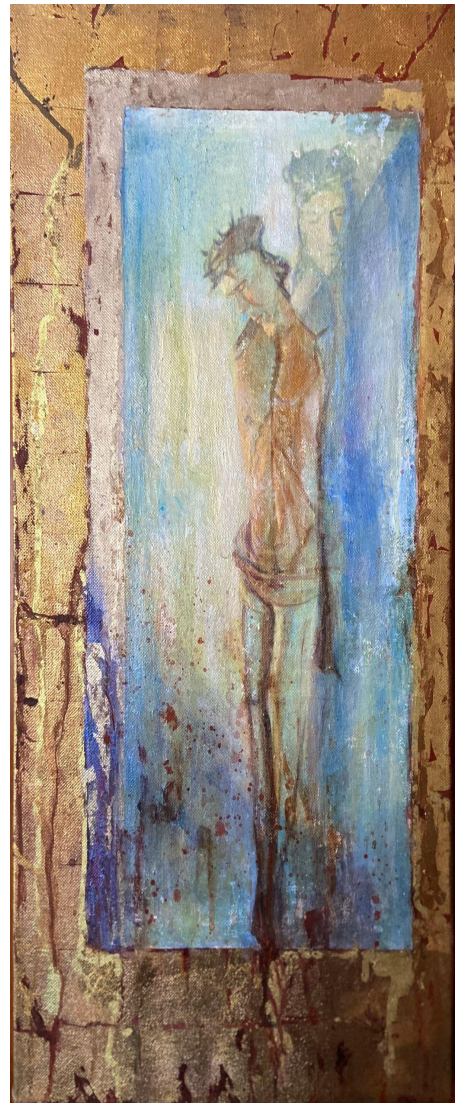
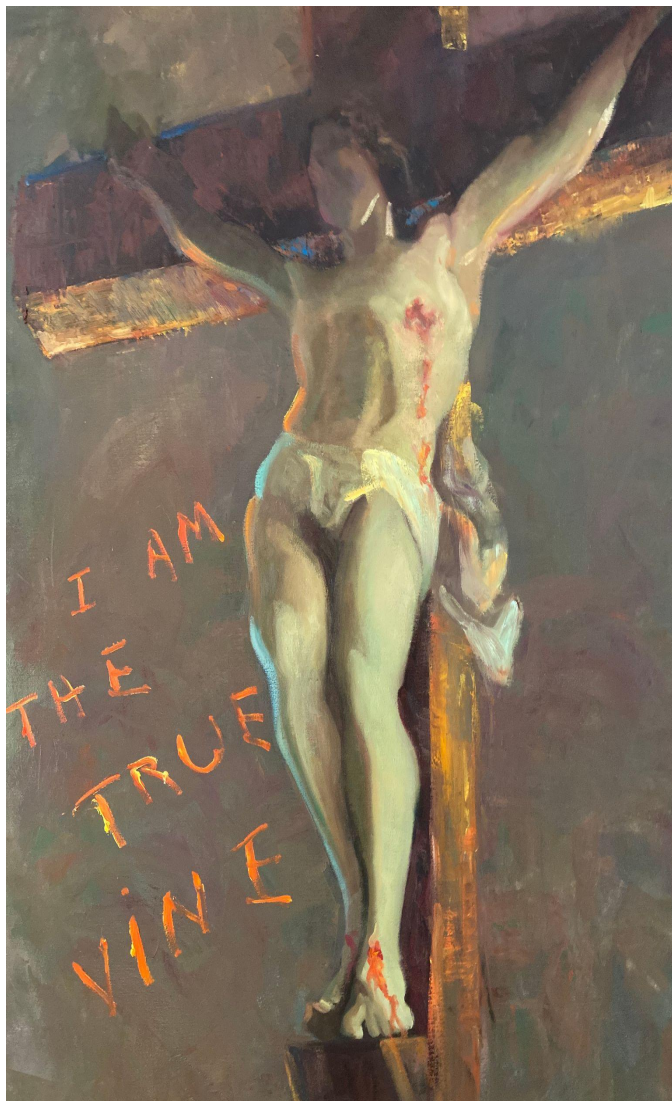
Activity

Listen to the Cross story and take your own cross puzzle home.

Art

The cross in Grace's courtyard is transformed for Easter.

The paintings "I am the true vine" and "Resurrection" depict the transformation in Jesus' suffering.



—→ *Proceed to the sanctuary:*

Enter the double doors if you would like to spend time sitting and praying in the sanctuary. You may also just visit the font and view the church from the back.

Enter the bell tower and climb the steps if you would like to visit the resurrection window.

The Empty Tomb as a Place of Resurrection

From the Bible

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Mark 16:1-8

Reflection

Scholars believe that last verse was the original end of the Gospel of Mark, the oldest book of stories about Jesus in the Bible. It shows the very natural effects of the “terror and amazement” the women experienced at this entirely unexpected turn of events—their fear caused them to freeze up. Yet they didn’t keep the good news hidden forever, Mark implies, or you wouldn’t be reading this book!

The last year has been an entirely unprecedented time in most of our lives. This sanctuary has been empty for more than a year, and for most of that time, silent and sealed as a tomb. Yet in the Easter story the very emptiness is the good news of the tomb. The tomb becomes a womb of new life, a new life that may terrify and amaze, but cannot stay hidden forever.

Question to Ponder

Where have you experienced emptiness in the last year? What new life might be emerging from that emptiness? How do you feel about that?

Art

The Tiffany stained-glass window in the balcony depicts the angel's message to the women at the empty tomb.



The window just to the right of it, by local artist Whitney Leblanc, shows the encounter between the risen Jesus and Mary Magdalene recounted in the gospel of John.



Activity

Jesus is the light of the world that has never been overcome, even in times of darkness and emptiness. Jesus calls us by name and his light shines in each of us. Find at the baptismal font a candle to take home and light for a time of prayer and silence.

New life transforms and grows. Find at the resurrection window a seed paper butterfly; a symbol of beauty, transformation, and something you can literally plant in the ground and watch grow!

—→ *Proceed to the labyrinth.*

You may walk the labyrinth, following the path to the center, resting and praying there, and following the path out (or simply exiting for a shorter walk).

You may sit on the wall around the labyrinth or on the benches in the lytch gate, or enjoy the grass area.

The Road to Emmaus as a Place of Vision

From the Bible

Now on that same day, the day of Jesus' resurrection, two of his disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up

and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24:13-35

Reflection

The disciples had walked many roads with Jesus, had learned from him and lived with him. They experienced the trauma of his unjust trial, torture and death. But they could not understand that experience, or who he truly was, until he walked with and taught them after he rose from the dead. And they couldn't recognize him in his resurrected form until they experienced him breaking bread for them as he had the night before he died. That recognition caused them to abandon their dinner and run the seven miles back to Jerusalem after nightfall.

It is difficult to find the mental and emotional space to reflect on our experiences in the midst of on-going trauma. When we do, our minds and hearts can be open to insights that can be life-changing. Our bodies also can be wise teachers, holding the muscle-memory of both trauma and love and safety, until we are ready to unpack them.

Questions to Ponder

What new perspective, insight or vision have you gained from the experience of the last year? Let your mind and heart engage with your body as you ponder this question. Does your new vision involve a change of direction?

Art

Supper at Emmaus by Caravaggio depicts the moment when Jesus' identity is revealed to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. This is a copy of the work by local painter Marvin Humphrey.



Activity

If a new vision has come to you in your ponderings, or if there is a word, phrase, or image that has come to you during this time, take some chalk and write or draw it on the walkway toward the lytch gate on Oak Street.

Prayers

Reading, reflection, seeking, pondering, laughing-- all of this is prayer! If you wish, take some intentional time before you leave to offer thanks, ask for what you need, and lift up the needs and concerns of others and the world. You may close with the Lord's prayer if you wish:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

—→ *Make your way to Oak Street via the lytch gate. As you exit through this roofed passageway, styled after those in medieval churches in England, look up for a final message of new life!*

