

What is “Stations of the Cross”?

“Stations of the Cross” is a Western Christian service that allows participants to recall and relive significant moments in Jesus’ life, including the events leading up to, during, and after the crucifixion. This devotion originated as a ritual among early pilgrims to Jerusalem, who would walk the path believed to be Jesus’ last. They began their journey at the place where Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate and concluded at the traditional site of Jesus’ burial, where it is believed that the resurrection occurred three days later. Along the way, pilgrims would stop at various locations associated with the Passion events mentioned in the Gospels, such as the place where Jesus consoled the women of Jerusalem. At each station, pilgrims would engage in prayer, singing, and meditation, reflecting on Jesus’ suffering, sacrifice, and ultimate victory. This practice continues to this day.

The Stations of the Cross service was developed for those who were unable to make a physical pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It serves as a spiritual journey through contemplation of Christ’s Passion. Although the number of stations can vary, the Episcopal, Anglican, and Roman Catholic traditions typically share a set of 14 stations. Eight of these stations are based on events explicitly recorded in the Gospels, while the remaining six derive from “inferences and pious legends.” Some churches incorporate these stations into their building interiors, while others use engravings of scenes or printed images to represent the Jerusalem locations and events.

The service begins with an opening devotion and the Lord’s Prayer. It then proceeds through each station, following a structured pattern that includes a versicle, response, reading, prayer, and collect. Hymns may also be sung or recited during the service. The service concludes with prayers. The theme of Stations of the Cross makes it particularly suitable for use during the period of Lent. This year, we will offer Stations of the Cross on the six Wednesdays of Lent at 6:30 pm, preceding our Lenten Study at 7 pm in the Parish Hall. We invite you to join us, whether you choose to attend a single service or participate in all six. For more information about the event, please refer to the flyer provided.